Developing creative practice from induction to assessment

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creative academic magazine

Curating #creativeHE course January 2018
Developing creative practice from induction to assessment

"We can never have enough creativity! We actually need more! Creativity will help us get through the bad times and create good times!" (Nerantzi 2018)

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Jenny Willis

We got 2018 off to a flying start with our first conversation on the #creativeHE platform. This has become a very important space for constructive and creative conversation and social learning for our community. The next 'hands on' conversation is Creativity in the Making (March 6-26th) led by John Rae and Norman Jackson, and is under way as we go to press.

This special edition of CAM focuses on the conversation we had in January. The editorial team is very grateful to Sandra Sinfield for curating the content of that conversation, which she led so ably.

Rather than reproduce the conversation as it unfolded, this time, we offer a curated account of what was a highly complex, multi-threaded exchange of ideas. When we are involved in such discussions it can be difficult to see the wood for the trees; it is only when we look back that we can appreciate the bigger picture emerging and understand the interactive processes that stimulate our development. Technology both facilitates these exchanges and exacerbates the difficulties of following so many simultaneous threads. Thankfully, it also provides a permanent record that we can reread at our leisure, digest and mine for treasure.

CAM#10 is the result of just such a process of reflection and analysis, resulting in a creative artefact of its own. Whilst we work through the four/five days chronologically, we do so selectively. Sandra and Norman have identified significant posts and collated responses to these, then followed with examples of creative practice proposed each day. All conversations are richly illustrated by participants, using a variety of visual techniques. In this way, recurrent themes and be brought together and ideas that were just implicit as we interacted can now be teased out into explicit theories. The following pages will take you through imaginative educational uses of the rubbish we send for recycling, leading to some philosophical questions about identity; next, we look at suggestions for 'spicing up our learning'; on day three, the discussion considered how learning might be extended beyond the classroom; alternative forms of assessment and feedback were proposed on day four, resulting in some wonderful ideas; and on the final day, we began the process of reflection and how to take forward what we had learnt.

Thank you to all the participants in January's conversation, to Sandra for leading the discussion and guest editing this issue of CAM, to Norman for his inspiration and to all our readers. Why not join us in our March event? See page 29 for full details.

Sandra is a lead facilitator in the #creativeHE community forum and a member of the Creative Academic team. She is co-author of *Teaching, Learning and Study Skills: a guide for tutors* and *Essential Study Skills: the complete guide to success at university* (4th Edn), a co-founder of the Association for Learning Development in Higher Education and a Senior Lecturer in the Centre for Professional and Educational Development at London Metropolitan University. Sandra has worked as a laboratory technician, a freelance copywriter, an Executive Editor (*Medicine Digest*, circulation 80,000 doctors) and with the Islington Green School Community Play written by Alan, *Whose Life is it Anyway?,* Clarke and produced at Saddlers Wells. With Tom Burns, she has developed theatre and film in unusual places – and is interested in creativity as emancipatory practice in HE.

Cover image: Catherine Halliwell

https://www.thinglink.com/user/888859886396375041

INTRODUCTION CAM #10

Guest Editor Sandra Sinfield

I am delighted to be guest editor for this issue of Creative Academic Magazine which curates the content of the January #creativeHE course for which I was lead facilitator, aided by Dr Chrissi Nerantzi of Manchester Metropolitan University and Professor Norman Jackson of Creative Academic. Over the week we excavated, explored and voiced ideas about #creativeHE practice from induction to assessment, revealing creative, engaging, playful and empowering practice within and across HE. The underpinning idea was to use a variety of modes (collage, making, drawing, music) to help us conceptualise our own practice and ideas - and then to reinvent or reinvigorate our practice accordingly and through our conversations.

We have established a practice of curating these conversations through the magazine to both organise the content of what is a chaotic conversation and to provide access to the conversation to our community of interest. Curating, and the writing and thinking process that accompanies it is a process of discovery and this is a *post hoc* attempt to both construct and reveal a *de facto* act of collaborative writing which is a method of inquiry into HE practice. Gale and Bowstead[1] argue that collaborative writing promotes the 'folding' of Deleuze adding richness, multiple layers and intensification. Presenting the curation in this (street fighting) way is an embodiment of the hope that participants' voices will resonate with the reader; that they will ignite curiosity and excitement in a way that the more polished and seemingly complete and contained citadel of writing could not do.

Zig-zag through this text, following the threads that intrigue you and if you are motivated add your perspectives to the ones offered here via the #creativeHE platform: the on-line conversation is open and continuous https://plus.google.com/communities/110898703741307769041. So, if something has sparked your imagination or soul please do join the conversation and share your #creativeHE practice with us. And/or join our conversations in the future.

Conversation overview

Throughout the week we explored what creativity means in the context of learning, teaching and assessment in higher education, trying to find practical and meaningful applications in our own practice. The programme ran as follows:

Day 1 Creative induction, introductions: belonging - see Recycling games: https://www.pinterest.co.uk/explore/recycling-games/?lp=true and Nicola Whitton blog - on game design: http://playthinklearn.net/ten-steps-to-game-design/

Day 2 Spicing up learning in the classroom (campus-based, blended and fully online) - see Nerantzi, C. (2016) Learning to play, playing to learn: the rise of playful learning in higher education – Digifest 2016, 25 February 2016, available at https://www.jisc.ac.uk/news/learning-to-play-playing-to-learn-the-rise-of-playful-learning-in-he-25-feb-2016 interviewed by Michelle Pauli

Day 3 Extending creative learning outside the classroom - see #getoutside today - ideas for a walking curriculum: http://www.educationthatinspires.ca/walking-curriculum-imaginative-ecological-learning-activities/ and Andrew Monk & Steve Howard *The Rich Picture: A Tool for Reasoning About Work Context*: http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download;jsessionid=FF7773CF184D964B4E637328E0886C06?doi=10.1.1.135.2419&rep=rep1&type=pdf

Day 4 Assessment and feedback that works (better) - see ENHance student learning and develop your practice: http://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/dlte/ENhance/Pages/ENhanceQuickGuides.aspx (Assessment and Feedback Guides from Napier University developed by Prof. Kay Sambell, Prof. Sally Brown and Prof. Phil Race)

Day 5 Reflecting on the week and moving forward - saw the emergence of the next #creativeHE discussion March 6-20th: EXPLORING CREATIVITY THROUGH MAKING - which evolved from dialogue between Norman Jackson and John Rae.

Get talking - Get reflecting

As always we invited people to participate by posting their responses to our activity suggestions - and to each others' posts in the Google+ community; and to reflect on their experiences by making use either of a physical journal or sketchbook or via a blog (see Emma Duke Williams from Dundee University - who blogged her participation back to her colleagues: https://learningspaces.dundee.ac.uk/ctil/2018/01/22/creativehe-2/). Some forty people freshly enrolled in the programme and it was good to see new people engaging and joining the discussion.

Source

1 Gale and Bowstead (2013) 'Deleuze and collaborative writing as a method of enquiry' in Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education ISSN: 1759-667X Issue 6: November 2013 (http://journal.aldinhe.ac.uk/index.php/jldhe/article/

Day 1 Creative induction, introductions: belonging

After the contemplative introspection of the collage making activity[1], today we invited people to use recyclables that they had been collected to produce a game that could be played by students at induction - to help them bond and belong rather than sit and listen. The suggested activities are collected below and include Paul Kleiman's magic bus trip - where he took his new students to the beach to bond as they made art out of rubbish and found objects. Tom Burns revealed how students built on their own game-making ideas to produce an end of term 'performance' suffused with low stakes competition to provoke engagement - and with a link to a reflective student blogpost of the event. There were powerful conversations about rubbish and rubbish theory - and of the power in the word, 'rubbish' and how we use it to define ourselves especially in educational contexts: 'I'm rubbish at that'. Re-claiming, reinventing and re-purposing our 'rubbish' in focused induction activities became a way of becoming powerful in academia[2]. There was discussion of the nature of academia itself - touching on the threshold concept of phronesis: the joy of exploration without necessarily knowing all the answers[3].

Here are some of the really inventive suggestions

Teryl Cartwright:
In this cooperative version of Rock, Paper, Scissors, the goal is to tape each recyclable object to a proper con necting object to make a collaborative sculpture while making sure everyone can use all their objects. The recyclables must be clean/empty and the whole object used although its shape can be altered - there are only three: bottle, can and paper:

1. First person to take a turn chooses which of three objects to start the game and shares about himself/herself based on the object as follows: Bottle (Bottled up—a concern or joy a person has), Can (Can-did/Can-do—What important choice did a person make recently or what important cause does a person actually do something about?), Paper (Working papers—what problem is a person currently working on or what person challenges him/her right now?)

2. The Connections: Bottle connects to Can which connects to Paper which connects to Bottle

3. The turns must connect to each other as well as the objects connecting to the right recyclable on the artwork. For instance, if a person has shared the Bottle (both in speaking and adding it to the artwork), any of the other two players can go next with either the Can or Paper but not another Bottle.

4. Discuss how the three players connect and how what was shared connected. What's missing? If the tape was assigned a role in sharing, what would it be? What's next?
Tape: I would have used the tape to ask the students why they are here and what bigger thing (on campus or their new community) will they connect to.

Edited responses
+Norman Jackson Great use if imagination +Teryl Cartwright what a powerful force 'connecting' is, and what a great way to illustrate that a lot of human creativity is about seeing and making

Sandra Sinfield I love this activity +Teryl Cartwright! And agree with +Norman Jackson about the powerful force of connecting. I have a keen desire to use this activity with my next !

Mar Kri whenever is see a +Teryl Cartwright post am like...pen and paper quick...lovely activitity...as am thinking through it...would it be useful to ask the group if the tape had a voice what would it be saying ...this may allow the group members to come up with their shared ideas on "how to connect" and tease out ways of connection - what s important for them to feel connected,what they aspire to get from the group, what their aims are.. Not sure if i fully have understood this exercise actually - Are you asking each student to identify with an object ? who has the role of the tape ? all members ? is this working for groups of 3? there s sth in it i see but cant clearly picture it...thanks for sharing Teryl!

Teryl Cartwright to +Mar Kri +Norman Jackson +Emma Duke-Williams and +Sandra SinfieldThank you so much for the lovely comments and feedback. As part of induction (for which my understanding seems to be slightly different I guess because I am from the US), I would have used the tape to ask the students why they are here and what bigger thing (on campus or their new community) will they connect to. Hope that helps. I'll try to read up on everyone else's posts too to get a sense of what I can add if I do get the chance.

Mar Kri A very valid observation +Norman Jackson and a potentially dangerous one ?if a lot of movement is happening online how do we nurture all aspects of the individual on these contexts and what implications could it bring for our teaching if we incorporate these means into our ways of facilitating learning with students . I remember first entering this platform and worrying ...contemplating how much to share (how exposed can I let myself be ?)in a community of 700peiple ...an interesting process for me ,and I mportant qs too as is essentially how -I think -I am and operate .

4

Norman Jackson to +Mar Kri yes we all have to decide how much or little we want to share. But sharing

Norman Jackson to +Mar Kri yes we all have to decide how much or little we want to share. But sharing what it is to be a person is the only way we will be able to empathise with and care for each other.

Norman Jackson

I guess this is all about giving new meaning to stuff we call rubbish. My not very imaginative game is to **'Create Meaning from Rubbish'** by choosing items from your recycle bin that in some way explain (give meaning) to an aspect of you and/or your life.

I just inspected my recycle bins which are very full as the 'bin men' haven't been for three weeks! I noticed on the top were an empty bottle of cobra beer and a can of coke and they reminded me of the splendid and joyful evening we had two days ago with friends that we had not seen for about two years. Just looking at them triggers all sorts of memories of the evening and the stories we told as we shared experiences and events and reminded ourselves of who we once were.

On reflection I guess our recycle bins are deeply personal artefacts as they reflect the things we eat and buy for ourselves, our habits and events in our lives.

Edited Responses

This provoked some great comments and additional ideas (I've edited this Comments thread some n order to separate the rubbish conversation - which has its own powerful dynamic - from the other activity ideas, not least to prevent them from getting lost in the thread):

Sandra Sinfield Thanks for that, Norman. It seems to me that your reflection on your bin has also produced another 'collage' that says something about who you are ... with the joy of this collage residing in the warmth of your interpretation :-D

Norman Jackson The things in my rubbish are artefacts of my life and culture. I followed up by googling rubbish as cultural artefacts and found 'rubbish theory'. How we create new value from rubbish that has little or no value. I guess the task is about providing learners with an opportunity to create value from the cultural artefacts they believe have no value to them because they are being thrown away.

Jennifer Willis I love the idea of interpreting the owner's character and life from the contents of a bin. Maybe that could be the source of an introductory session: several images of different bins, which the students have to discuss in pairs or small groups to guess the sort of person each one belongs to and explain their reasoning (teacher has the answers).

*Emma Duke-Williams I love the idea of interpreting someone else's life from their recycling, as it removes the personal, which could be challenging for some new students - they may find that **too** personal. Also, does the lecturer have to have the "answers" - it can be used to demo that there's no 'right' answer, what's important is the justification that you give.*

Sandra Sinfield Spot on Emma! I think it would be a lovely modelling of research, analysis and deduction and absolutely model that there need not be right answers - but there are cool questions.

Chrissi Nerantzi This conversation has been very interesting. Need to read up on rubbish theory as I often use an activity where I ask colleagues to bin an idea that didn't work and then upcycle it ;) Thank you all for helping me explore new perspectives. +Norman Jackson this rubbish theory seems to relate to objects but for me I can also see it working for ideas ;) What are your thoughts on this? https://www.plutobooks.com/9780745399782/ rubbish-theory/

+Mar Kri I too was seeing that exercise from the perspective of ideas or skills or aspects of self even that a person may not value as much any more - how about a combination of both? to bring in a recyclable object that will represent that idea or skill...or aspect of self? I am thinking this in terms of my skills group...often people in their unlearning process of becoming a counsellor they tend to de-value skills they have as they are not very person centred or ideas they hold...It seems a useful invite to ask them to find new meaning as +Norman Jackson says or RE-fine through RE-cycle their ideas always handy in deepening their self acceptance.

If we think of the word "rubbish" it's a weighty word that we often hear in our childhoods too...connotations of authority and power over talking is what comes to my mind with distant memories and experiences...to actually help people find meaning in their rubbish is the ultimate act of empowerment...i can imagine that having great impact if that "rubbish" is there in front of them...- am now thinking how to then represent the newly formed idea from that rubbish...somehow make sth or decorate the rubbish...change it...give it new format/image ? colour? shape ?

I think am going to use this next with my group.. to elaborate on their skills and help them up-cycle what they may perhaps have rejected in their process of (un-) learning .thanks for this inspiration...I'll keep thinking how to refine the activity to suit best their needs

Chrissi Nerantzi transform it Maria? It will become unrecognisable anyway as new growth comes out of it? So true what you say about power, authority and rubbish. We also say "I am rubbish" etc. meaning worthless... Enjoyed reading your thoughts

Jennifer Willis My own idea was rather pedestrian (as a teacher of languages, you can use anything!) The students imagine they are aliens who have come to earth and are confronted with various items of rubbish. Each has to describe their item in the target language and suggest what it might be used for. Partners or the whole group can ask questions (in the target language) and agree or disagree with the use.

Sandra Sinfield Thanks for this cool idea (not at all pedestrian!). I think that it could be made even more fun if the Student Union was involved and invited to decorate the induction space so that it had the look of the spaceship to which the rubbish had been taken for analysis? This could lead on to discussion about the 'spaceship' - or alien planet - that is HE - and the tools that we might need to survive there?

Paul Kleiman

Induction activity**:** This sort of fits with the theme of recycling. When I worked at the Liverpool Institute for

Performing Arts as Head of Design, we always tried to design an interesting and creative induction activity for the students. A favourite was to hire a double-decker bus and take them all to the beach at Crosby, just north of Liverpool. (This was before Anthony Gormley's wonderful Another Place sculptures were located there). The sea wall at Crosby is made up of thousands of tons of rubble from many hundreds of houses, factories, warehouses etc. that were destroyed by German bombing during WW2. Even today one can find all sorts of materials: glass, tiles, wood, bits of crockery etc. Importantly there is a strong link with place. This isn't any old rubble. It's from the city in which they will be living and studying for the next three years (maybe more). All we say to them is find some people to work with and just make something. Feel free, once you have made something, to join another group. By the end of the afternoon the beach is covered with all sorts of constructions - some quite small and intimate, others quite large. Once we've all walked around and seen everything - and students are encouraged to take as many photos as possible - we make sure that everything taken from the sea wall is put back. We then all got back on the bus and returned to LIPA, where we had arranged some food and drink for all the design students (Year 2 & 3 as well) and we loaded as many images as we could onto a computer and projected them onto the wall.

It was a great way not only to get the new students to know each other by working together on something interesting and fun, but also it was valuing their work, ideas and creativity from day one.

Chrissi Nerantzi

While re-reading today's suggested activities, I suddenly started thinking of the potential to assemble something in groups during induction. Could this be IKEA furniture for example, a flatpack without instructions? What would be the potential? What would students find out about themselves and their peers. http://www.ikea.com/ms/en_US/this-is-ikea/ikea-highlights/Flat-packs/index.html

6

Tom Burns

A couple of years ago we managed a version of this 'recycle that!' activity in our Becoming An Educationist module; not for induction, but as an end of year activity – but this is easily tweaked as an induction activity. Basically one group of our students designed all the activities for one three-hour session to deliver to the rest of the class. (Three weeks at the end of the module were run in this way.) That group decided that theirs would be a recyclables 'making' session – but with a twist – there would be three mini-competitions to gather the best making resources – and then there would be another making competition at the end.

It went a bit like this:

1: Several different bundles of recyclables at the front of the class

2: Divide class into competitive teams – and run several short competitions for points:

* Game of Jeopardy (if this is the answer – what is the question: - our students designed a module revision game: http://www.superteachertools.us/jeopardyx/jeopardy-review-game.php?gamefile=695828#.WmYYYa5l-Ul – but for induction week, current students could design a beginners guide to study jeopardy quiz for you: http://www.superteachertools.us/jeopardyx/)

* Each team volunteered a member for a quick quiz at the front of the class. (For example, How many XXXX beginning with the letter VVVV can you name in a minute?)

* Design a marketing campaign for your unbreakable container: quick run of campaign – points distributed by judges for the best campaign.

3: Team with most points gets first choice of recyclable bundles – and so on down the point list.

4: Each Team then has to use their recyclables to build an unbreakable container for a water-filled balloon.

5: All Teams go into court yard and test all the containers.

6: All Teams celebrate the activity.

7: Team photos.

Here's what the students said about it in a reflective blog post: https://noblechloe.wordpress.com/first-year-learning-logs/first-year/learning-logs-21-to-30/learning-log-week-26/

Which provoked an interesting discussion:

Norman Jackson Great ideas +Tom Burns but the blog really brings these ideas to life. To be able to see the responses, inventiveness, relationships and interactions of students, and their own reflections, adds greatly to understanding how the design works in practice. Thanks for sharing. What is the context for this activity?

Tom Burns This end of year 'performance' built upon a previous revision games activity (where groups of students designed a game to aid module revision). This group noticed the way their peers enjoyed low stakes competition - so built this whole 'performance' week around that - harnessing the game they designed a few weeks back, building in several more games and layers, and getting a really positive response from the other students.

Norman Jackson Thanks Tom Burns it sounds like students have self-identified that novel challenges (low stakes competitions) that they invent are important catalysts for their creativity. I wonder whether these conditions could be related in some way to the finding of Amabile and Kramer's research documented in the 'Progress Principle Using Small Wins to Ignite Joy, Engagement, and Creativity at Work'. Perhaps a challenge in which people pull together to achieve something quickly – like a performance, provides that sense of accomplishment, joy and satisfaction that is closely linked to psychological states that lead to creativity. 'Two forces enable progress: (1) catalysts-events that directly facilitate project work, such as clear goals and autonomy-and (2) nourishers-interpersonal events that uplift workers, including encouragement and demonstrations of respect and collegiality' progressprinciple.com - Teresa Amabile's Progress Principle

Editor: I was moved by the emergence of a discussion about rubbish - and how that word can colour our impression of ourselves at university. The activities designed to help people re-purpose that rubbish - or transform it utterly as they started their learning journeys as valued members of the university community - re-claimed something powerful. Personally, I'd like to bring in a HUGE load of recyclables - and get the students to make a life size model of a *Tyrannosaurus Rex*, something stunning, big, impressive - so that they would stand back surprised and amazed at themselves. I think that this would be a very positive way to be inducted into HE. I leave the final words to Nick Bowskill who said of the suggestions overall: "I think group work is a whole lot better than turning students into an audience at induction isn't it?"

Source

Sandra Abegglen, Tom Burns, Sandra Sinfield (2018) Drawing as a Way of Knowing: Visual Practices as the Route to Becoming Academic in Canadian Journal of Discourse and Writing Redactologie Vol 28(2018)

[2] See also the work of Walter Benjamin - especially on the flea market.

[3] Molinari, J. (2017, June). What makes our writing academic? *reGenring17* Conference, Nottingham on Trent University, UK

Ready, Steady, Go: Collage yourself

CHALLENGE "Using words and/or images from just one newspaper or magazine, create a collage that says some-thing about your creative approach to teaching - or your approach to creative pedagogy. Take a picture of your collage and upload it to the Google+ group."

Drawing on the Visual Practices research from Brighton University in particular (http://about.brighton.ac.uk/visuallearning/[1], we suggested that people introduce themselves by making (and uploading an image of) a collage that captured their feelings about their own pedagogy or about creative practices. In the meanwhile we asked people to gather some clean recyclables (plastic bottles, tin cans, string, paper, cardboard boxes...) for a hands-on maker activity on the Monday.

Source
1 Ridley, P & Rogers, A. (2010) Drawing to Learn, University of Brighton, available online at www.brighton.ac.uk/visuallearning/drawing/

These collages show the fascinating connections and meanings people create about themselves and their lives

Tom Burns
Hello - I'm Tom and this is my collage...
I surprised myself and enjoyed making this collage about me and my approach to teaching. I feel tempted to just ask you - what do you see - and what do you think that says about my approach to creative pedagogy?
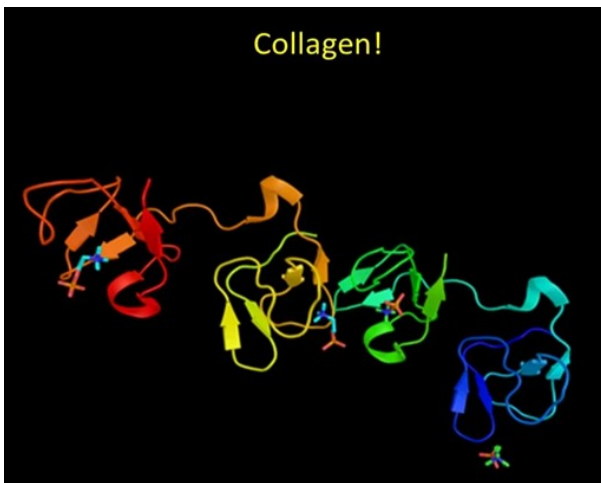
Some responses to Tom's collage

Sandra Sinfield I love that your collage is not a rectangle or a square - it has its own unique shape, determined by the way that you have cut around the pictures that you have chosen. I see Jeremy Paxman and some literally dreaming spires floating off behind him - so, university is a creative challenge? I see drawing implements and feathers and I think that is Marx and Engels - so creative pedagogy is political pedagogy? I see someone cooking - and I think that's a priest and something that just about says 'insulting teachers'...and loads of people working in identical cubby holes - being leapt over by a gymnast. Not exactly sure - but that seems optimistic and hopeful to me!?

Tom Burns I constructed my collage focusing on 'my approach to pedagogy'. What emerged was a focus on pedagogy but specifically pedagogy in the HE context. Although I do believe that different approaches to peda-gogy can be relevant to all teaching and learning spaces I was surprised by the dominance of the context. We are always having to justify our approaches, reasoning and practice and I wonder if being so context driven can diminish creative potential and end up being over instrumentalist?

Jennifer Willis I thought about this a lot last night, and decided the best way to respond was with key words, so here are some: politically engaged; controversial; creative; academic; castles in the air (ambitious); camp; global; iconoclastic. I write this before reading +Tom Burns' response, so don't know how accurate it is! (Tom thought it was 'spot on'!)

Nature's Collage!! by Kevin Byron

Some responses to Kevins post

Chrissi Nerantzi So beautiful +kevin byron Thank you for joning in. What does this represent for you?

kevin byron errr! - the chemical structure of Collagen mixed in with a touch of irony!

Tom Burns Irony always good ! Sometimes more than a touch is needed. Thanks +Kevin

Chrissi Nerantzi Hi both and all, I am wondering about the role of irony in cross-cultural creative activities if there is such a thing/distinction? Also humour? I suspect +Norman Jack-son could also help us with this? From personal experience and being or feeling a foreigner in every country I have lived so far, I have a particular view on this. Would be interested to find out what everybody else things.

kevin byron +_Chrissi Nerantzi_ With regard to humour - the structures appear to be culture free rather like traditional tales. That is to say wherever you go you will hear the same jokes or humorous tales, albeit placed in different cultural contexts. Many years ago, I recall a cringing taxi ride from JFK airport where the cab driver proceeded to tell one sexist joke after another, and they were recognisable as those awful 'Essex Girl' jokes that were in circulation at that time, though he referred to a district of New York rather than Essex. In traditional tales there are many hundreds of culture bound versions of Cinderella. There is no satisfactory theory of how this happens, though one plausible one suggests it's through 'culture drift' when people travel from one place to another. A more dubious theory concerns some kind of globally evolving collective unconscious, such that if a new idea appears in one culture it will also spontaneously appear in other cultures too. The idea of 'The Axial Age' popularised by Karen Armstrong suggested that a variety of spiritual belief systems appeared in different cultures over a period of a few hundred years, and that this could not be attributed to cultural exchange given the distances.

Tom Burns Hello +Kevin - Your game is good - more than good - no need to up it - its knowing what stroke to play and when.

Sandra Sinfield Hi Kevin - this relates a bit to a question that I asked +_Norman Jackson_ in another post this week - and it was about humour. I was saying that as a working class student at Poly, I found the lack of humour really dispiriting - this was a LONG time ago now. At work we all joked and tried to make each other laugh... at Poly, no one seemed to do this - and I found it literally appalling. It is not quite the same now, but it was definitely one of the alienating and isolating 'class' differences that I experienced when I entered HE as a non-traditional student myself…

Jenny Willis

I have put together this collage to show what I have been doing recently in the field of postgraduate education (a rare privilege for me these days!) Those of you who know me will be more familiar with me in my role as founding member of Lifewide Education, and executive editor of, and regular contributor to, both Lifewide and Creative Academic Magazines. I am theoretically retired from my professional life as an educator and researcher in the field of education, but keep myself involved in teaching children in KS1-4 outside school hours.

This week, I was able to bring together my love of teaching, with my research on wellbeing - originally with Norman at the University of Surrey, and since then

developed through a global survey in my capacity as International Advisor on Education and Wellbeing for a mental health charity, Centre for Applied Research and Evaluation International Foundation (careif). In 2016, we joined forces with the World Psychiatric Association and I led a qualitative on-line survey, the results of which are now housed in the libraries of the Houses of Lords and Commons. You will see that my image contains references to theories of wellbeing, the report and relevance of wellbeing to mental health.

This brings me to other elements of my image. I write as an 'expert by experience' of mental illness over sixty years. Together with my husband, a consultant psychiatrist, we have a website and work towards destigmatising mental illness through our respective work with careif and our independent contributions to international conferences e.g. World Cultural Psychiatry, World Federation for Mental Health. As a practising psychiatrist, he teaches his junior doctors and colleagues from other disciplines. This allows me to use my pedagogical skills when we work of his teaching materials. I am also able to use my creativity as in the image where I have redesigned Kentucky Fried Chicken as Buddhism.

This culminated in our leading the British Medication Association's monthly CPD event this week. It is available on the webinar, as indicated in another of the images. I began by talking about wellbeing and sharing some of my research findings. I also set up a copy of the careif questionnaire on our own website and invited those participating to complete it (anonymously) before or after the event. I was nervous of speaking about a subject that is often dismissed as non-scientific to a group of medical practitioners, but I am pleased to have received 34 returns to date. My initial analysis has identified some important issues, as illustrated in the two quotations I have included.

As always, in preparing for our presentations, I was introduced to new dimensions, in this case, the work of Viktor Frankl, which I wish I had read in you youth when my study of French literature resulted in a deep existential void in me. I include this in my image to represent its impact on me.

This, then, is a brief explanation of my collage. I hope it gives you some insight into what makes me tick and how I channel my creativity. Jenny

Sandra Sinfield Thank you for this +Jennifer Willis - your current interest rather takes my breath away! Do you think there are links between creativity and well being? (After years working in Learning Development, I started to believe in a deep connection between creativity and 'presence' and learning.)

Chrissi Nerantzi Hi +Jennifer Willis how wonderful you joined us here and thank you so much for sharing your wealth of experience with us all. We are looking forward to your input during the week whenever you have a little bit of time. I was wondering how we could make sure that students' wellbeing is at the heart of any induction (today's theme) and how creativity could help us in this area. We would love to hear yours and everybody else's ideas in this area. Please feel free to share examples. Speak again soon. C

Jennifer Willis An interesting question +Sandra Sinfield. I suspect it depends on the individual's values and competences. For me, creativity is essential (at the moment, I am very frustrated with myself because my creativity is being hindered by my knowledge of how to get .xlsx to produce the graphics I want, so my sense of self-esteem and hence wellbeing have sunk!)

I've just extracted the data on creativity from the analysis I am working on. Remember, most of the cohort are GPs, all are doctors. Of the 33, 3% felt creativity has no bearing on their wellbeing; 39% said it has a medium impact; 42% said it was very important and 15% feel it is essential to their wellbeing. When compared with the mean score for each factor investigated, creativity has the lowest at 3.6 (on a scale of 1-5). I am sure we would get a very different profile if we used a cohort from a creative arts subject.

Day 2 Spicing up learning in the classroom
(campus-based, blended and fully online)

The second day's posts were prompted by questions about actual practice: we asked participants to share an element of their teaching, learning or assessment that mixed up Active-, Problem-Based- and Play-Based Learning; also asking how they create an atmosphere or space that helps the students to value and engage with a more 'transgressive' approach to teaching and learning. 'Spicing up' led to discussion about embedding storytelling, genre-bending and the many eyes of Russian dolls. We were all impressed by the 3D model of Rome created by Matthew Nicholls - and Emma's paper blogging activity was a great combination of old technologies to explore the new. Norman Jackson sparked a debate with his account of a CPD event that produced drama, video and laughter. The emphasis overall appeared to be on 'serious play'[1] approaches that allowed the participants to find their own way and make their own learning meaningful - rather than of learning trammelled and strait-jacketed by learning outcomes and a 'teach to the test' pedagogy (there is more on this in Paul Kleiman's discussions about assessment, Day 4, below). Trust, courage and humour were the qualities highlighted as essential when implementing strategies and practices that might be seen by the students as unexpected and where the tutor has to 'let go' in some way; to relinquish their own power to make space for the unexpected to happen.

[1] Alison James, Chrissi Nerantzi (Eds) (forthcoming) *The power of play in higher education* http://engagingimagination.com/2016/03/04/the-power-of-play-in-he/

Emma Duke Williams

Blogging was something that wasn't always easy to introduce to students, it's easy for beginners to get sucked into the technicalities – which button do I click? How can I add a picture? What's this for? So, a couple of years after introducing blogging, I used an idea Leonard Low had blogged about, paper blogging. That made so much more sense to students! I've also tried using it for simulating twitter – so I just gave people small post-its.

learningspaces.dundee.ac.uk

Roll forward a few years, when I'd not really used the activity, till the start of this year, when several staff from DJCAD asked me about blogging, so we had a go at paper blogging. The students seemed to enjoy it, and get the idea of what the benefits of blogging are, rather than getting bogged down at the start with technical issues.

Matthew Nicholls

I have been interested to see some of the examples of creativity in teaching here. I am an ancient historian at Reading, working on ancient Rome. For some time I have made my own computer 3D reconstructions of ancient buildings as a research and teaching tool. Students were interested in these and it seemed a good way of introducing some visual creativity to our teaching mix, so I teach our undergraduates how to make their own digital models using free online tools. We had to work out a way of integrating this work into a formal Classics curriculum, and marking it. Video feedback works well.

Someone posted a comment below about how it would be good to see creative wall art in HE spaces, so here is the giant wall image of my ancient Rome model that we put up recently. It's nice to see people stop and look at it. Looking forward to following along over this week.

Edited responses

Jennifer Willis What a lot of work, +Matthew Nicholls! Does your curriculum include Latin? If so, have you thought of getting students to create captions e.g. using prepositions and correct case of the noun? Another idea: directions. Finding where you come to from a given point, using directions. You would need to have landmarks labelled, of course. Third idea: interpreting from the landscape and buildings who lived there and what their lifestyle was like.

Matthew Nicholls Some good ideas there - thanks. Finding routes through the city is especially interesting; I've had students work on what Roman poets say about imagined itineraries through Rome, matching it up to what we can see in the model.

Chrissi Nerantzi The map is a fantastic idea and I think +Jennifer Willis ideas will help individuals interact with the map in different ways. Also wondering if you could add a digital layer to this? Perhaps somebody could help us with this? How could a map used during induction also? We hope you find the conversations useful this week.

Nicholas Bowskill Matthew thank you for sharing a fantastic map. Is that in 3D as well? How did you make it and how much did it cost to have it designed. made & up on the wall like that? Whatever the implications I think its fantastic. I worked in a small local museum once and it would have been terrific to have had something like that on the walls. Well done for being so creative.

Matthew Nicholls Thanks, all! Nicholas, the whole Rome model that generated the wall image is 3D, so all of it or any of its buildings can be viewed from any angle and position. This overhead view worked well for this space. To see more of it you could look at this MOOC we made on Rome based on my work: futurelearn.com - Rome: a Virtual Tour of the Ancient City

*The model was made in 3D software (primarily SketchUp) and this render was done in Cinema4D. The print costs were not huge, arou*nd £1k if I remember correctly (with a bit more to plaster the wall in advance). Glad you like it!

[Nicholas Bowskill](#) *Matthew I can see soooooooooooo many different applications of that. Even more if it wasn't so expensive (for the public). I'd love to see one of Victorian London or perhaps different cities in Victorian England to do compare & contrast exercises. I think your point about spaces outside the class or lecture theatres is really important too. Imagine a department hallway with such things in it. And in formal spaces there could be so many uses. Groups could look at it for different issues (hygiene, entertainment, travel, work etc etc.). I could imagine students doing design work for such things to be made. They might even do 'fixes' based on flaws they saw etc.*

It really brings history to life and it could do the same for architecture, town planning and myriad other things. Wonderful!! Thanks for sharing that and my mind will be spinning for some time over this, I kid you not.

[Sandra Sinfield](#) *I, too, love this +Matthew Nicholls! And like +Nicholas Bowskill, I'd love to break this out of the classroom and have it along the corridors - perhaps bringing some of the other ideas suggested - so that people could add relevant poetry... May be there could be a useful article or two stuck down the corridor as a textscroll (http://www.textmapping.org/using.html) - always useful - but especially pertinent for this era ;-)) - and passing students could annotate the scroll - highlighting key points - adding marginalia...?*

[Matthew Nicholls](#) *This wall map is at the end of the Classics corridor at Reading, and we enjoy seeing people stopping to look at it. We have a Young Archaeologists Club session coming up using it as the starting point for discussions, I think. Like all of you I think this can really lift a space - it's nice visually, as 'wallpaper', but it has real university research content in it which can be brought out for visitors.*

I agree about getting students involved, Nicholas - in fact I developed a third year model here where I teach them to make their own digital models, which is why I came along to join in the conversations here, as it's a 'creative' exercise (though grounded in research, evidence, etc) within a curriculum that conventionally doesn't have that many opportunities for creative activity. You can also make 3D models like this the basis for virtual reality, 3D print outs, and more, all of which I've played around with here. I'd love to see 3D modelling a bit more widely used - the basic tools are free and not that hard to learn.

Norman Jackson

I helped facilitate a week long CPD module last year on the theme of 'Contemporary Issues in Higher Education' through which a diverse group of lecturers examined their pedagogical practices in the context of a number of contemporary issues that are impacting on teaching and learning practices in higher education.

Each session was accompanied by a challenge which was quite tightly specified in the design but when it came to it, I took a risk and decided to let the group interpret the challenge in whatever way they wanted to. 'Spicing up' was a process of letting go, opening up and encouraging new possibilities. The results were fantastic...they self-organised, devised and improvised a number of short dramatic pieces that illuminated a particular issue with intelligence, insight and humour. The results were videoed and each participant created their own which served to curate these performances and other materials relevant to the issue and host their reflective commentaries.

It was a combination of challenge, group dynamics and freedom of self-expression, coupled to curation and reflection on the experience, that made this such a powerful, enjoyable and creative professional learning experience.

Edited responses *As always with Norman's posts - this sparked a lively conversation - including a spicing up activity or two from* [Mar Kri](#)*: +Sandra Sinfield This sounds most wonderful +Norman Jackson. How did you open the course or set the scene so that your participants felt enabled to not only self-organise - but to bring their personalities and most importantly their humour into that classroom?*

[Jennifer Willis](#) *As always +Norman Jackson, you have produced wonderful results with these students. I am playing devil's advocate now, though, and wonder how effective this would be in different disciplines? As prospective teachers, these students were probably used to being 'on the stage' and (hopefully) to experiment. Language teaching also provides a ready environment for role play and imagination. You and I can recall speaking to a group of postgraduates in Beijing many years ago and finding it impossible to engage them. They expected us to be the 'sage of the stage'. I run up against this cultural resistance all the time, even with some school pupils who have been conditioned by different teaching methods.*

Sorry if this sounds a negative note - I am not defeated by resistance! Just wondering realistically whether there are some teaching situations where we are still constrained by targets and external expectations. I am thinking of the GPs I met last week - there was lots of scribbling when I showed quantitative data and quoted 'respected' sources, but could I move them to ask questions?!!!

Norman Jackson I guess it all boils down to meaningful (in the context) and trusting relationships +Sandra Sinfield and developing an ecology within which individuals' creativity could flourish. We did make clear in the introduction and background notes that we were trying to encourage creativity and one of the 'issues' we worked with was creativity in higher education and to some extent this did influence what followed.

The context +Jennifer Willis was CPD module for lecturers in all subjects. There was a good mix in terms of age, gender and subject from scientists and engineers, business, dance, social science, health sciences, English and others.. I think this diversity was an important factor in that many different perspectives could be brought to each issue.

Sandra Sinfield Just a sketch - I come from a working class background - first in family to go to Poly... and one of the hardest things for me was that at college - no one seemed to laugh! At work we told jokes, had a laugh, tried to make people laugh... in this new middle class environment, no one seemed to have any fun... So - how did you get the humour out of the bottle, Norman?

Norman Jackson I didn't do anything +Sandra Sinfield other than give them the freedom and permission to express themselves in whatever way they wanted. These performances were not assessed (other than it was a threshold requirement that each of the daily challenges were completed). They constituted the 'making activity' that produced conversations and experiences on which they could reflect. Story telling was in many cases enhanced with improvised props eg like the paper cut-outs in the photo or bits of lego that sometimes helped to animate the story.

Actually, humour (and irony) was central to all the cameos that were performed it emerged spontaneously and I now think they were trying to find the joy in what they were doing: perhaps in contrast to presentations that dominated other parts of the module. The stories they acted often featured technology as getting in the way of relationships these experienced higher education teachers valued and inhibiting the sort of interactions that they believed were necessary for learning.

Nicholas Bowskill I really admire your open spirit Norman and I know people attending your events do too. i think it's not just trust and humour but you are also very brave. Good luck to you with all your work.

Norman Jackson thank you for your kind and generous words Nicholas Bowskill Perhaps its not so much being brave as trusting that people will make the most of an opportunity if they are given the chance.. yes there is a risk but it's usually worth taking.

Mar Kri I was reading your post on my way to work this morning and something that stood out for me… humor was definitely the word! Besides the fact that i myself at the moment have become far too serious in my role, my students are also about to start placement and so anxiety levels are really high! (a combination of factors why NOW humour stood out for me).

I took this as an invite - thank you - and have taken a risk to invite students as we are moving into group supervision supervising their practice to bring back an object/poem/song/movement that will reflect what their "fantasies" are about what supervision is all about and somehow depict challenges they envisage in their future, the invite was to connect with their playfulness, creativity and humour. I left it as open like that!! [...]

In terms of spicing up learning still long way to go! I love as you know using miniatures...I love Russian dolls...and use them a lot in my practice... Use of Russian dolls could help towards explaining something that has layers, depth, parts… for example in my group Russian dolls could be also used in my attempt to explain the different layers that supervision has - the different eyes we look at : counsellor's own stuff: personal awareness, context - organisation they practice in, the relationship between client therapist...and the core being the client ... in supervision we look at the different influences all these layers have on the person of the therapist whilst monitoring/supporting the client at the best way they can.

Editor: Reviewing the conversations here, I can see that already, people were drawing on some of the alternative induction activities - the humour, the creativity, the 'otherness' of them - and bringing them into proposals for alternative teaching sessions or activities. As rubbish could be worked into art that provoked dialogue as the students created it (as suggested by Teryl Cartwright), so Counselling students could bring in an object, poem, song or movement to begin to surface what 'supervision' might mean to them - and they could explore their feelings not just through professional lenses, but the many different eyes of a Russian doll. As Mar Kri signed off: Hope this to inspire /ignite something in somebody else.

Day 3 Extending creative learning outside the classroom

I love the idea of taking the learning outside the classroom - and even though we are not a Campus University, we have surprised our students by taking a class not in the designated room, but outside in our urban court-yard… One extramural thing that we have also implemented was Get Ahead, conferences for students, by students: one-day events organised by the students themselves, down to room and catering booking, advertising - and organising student speakers for all the workshops. Our practice on the day, was to take our students out of our classroom and into the Get Ahead Conference - so that they could experience in an embodied way some different and exciting aspects of university life.

Of course: "Academics seeking spaces to engage students outside the academy is not a new concept - Eisner (1985), recommended that academics create their own creative space, within which they can engage their students, away from the realms of a fixed classroom curriculum." [1]

So - on the third day of #creativeHE we asked participants when, where, why and how did they take the learning outside of the classroom; inviting them to be self-prompted by first drawing a 'rich picture'[2] that would open up their thinking to their own unconscious - and reveal back ideas, challenges and opportunities that they might otherwise not have perceived or considered.

Get walking?

One of the readings suggested for this topic was #getoutside today - ideas for a walking curriculum: http://www.educationthatinspires.ca/walking-curriculum-imaginative-ecological-learning-activities/ - and **Norman Jackson** reflected upon that further for us.

Gillian Judson has developed the concept of a 'walking curriculum' as a means of getting learners outside the classroom to experience the world http://www.educationthatinspires.ca/walking-curriculum-imaginative-ecological-learning-activities/

Sources

1 Holley, 2013, 'Sojas' Trialectic: offering a re-imagining of learning spaces' viz. http://eprints.bournemouth.ac.uk/23482/1/Holley-Alpinetel-position-paper-2013.pdf

2 Sandra Abegglen, Tom Burns, Sandra Sinfield (2018) Drawing as a Way of Knowing: Visual Practices as the Route to Becoming Academic in Canadian Journal for Studies in Discourse and Writing/Rédactologie Vol 28 (2018)

**START WALKING!** Sandra sets an example by deciding to take a dip.

Norman Jackson

Gillian Judson has developed the concept of a 'walking curriculum' as a means of getting learners outside the classroom to experience the world http://www.educationthatinspires.ca/walking-curriculum-imaginative-ecological-learning-activities/

The simple act of taking a walk—a walk with a curricular focus or purpose—can have multiple positive consequences —many of which are much more profound than we ever imagine. For example, walking can support students' health and well being by getting them moving. It can also emotionally and imaginatively engage learners by changing the "context" of learning ("context" meaning both location and the form of attention and involvement required of students). On a deeper level walking-based practice connects curriculum topics with/in the real world. A new level of curriculum relevance can emerge for students as a result.

A WALKING CURRICULUM

Evoking Wonder And Developing Sense of Place [K-12]

GILLIAN JUDSON
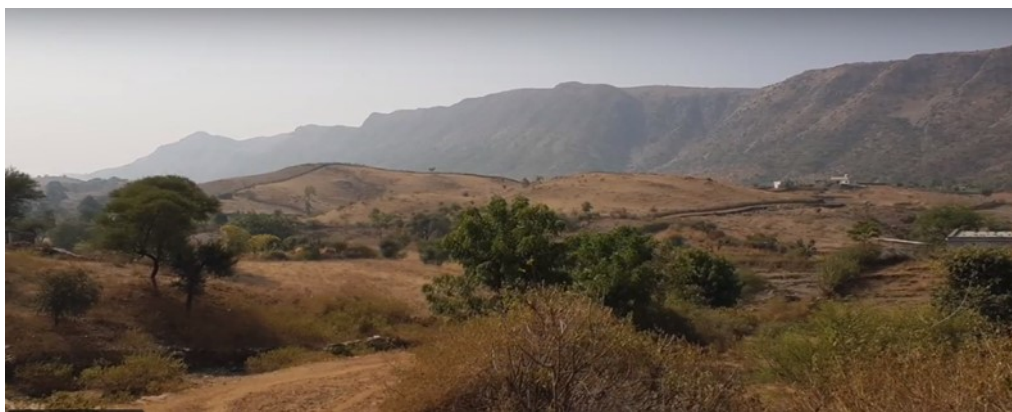
In my past life as a geologist I could relate very readily to the idea of a walking curriculum. It was what I did to work out the geology in the field [and what I did with students when they were learning to be a geologist in the field.] In fact went for a walk recently into an unfamiliar landscape in Rjasthan to look at the geology and ended up listening to the sounds in the landscape. I feel sure a 'walking curriculum' could be used in many subjects in higher education and wondered whether any #creativeHE'rs had any experiences they could share.

Here is a link to my walk in the landscape of Rajasthan
http://www.normanjackson.co.uk/scraps-of-life-blog

And **Gillian Judson** replied with an invitation to surface more ideas from the HE community about implementing *a walking curriculum*:

Gillian Judson Thanks for referencing the work here Norman. I have every intention of doing a second book for Higher Education. I take my graduate students outside now and I am astonished at what it can add to their learning of topics we are teaching (curriculum theory area). Perhaps educators in this HE community will contribute ideas? I have no doubt there would be many wonder-full ways to extend HE into the local places we teach and learn. I am interested in the cross-curricular examples we could generate together. I notice in my work that taking the learning outside with adult/HE learners invigorates a part of them that can often be silenced in "traditional" learning contexts. Wonderful way to engage and develop imagination in learning.

Sandra Sinfield Thanks for lifting the walking curriculum out of the suggested reading and giving it a more thoughtful focus +Norman Jackson! It connects very well also to this week's #LTHEChat which focussed on university and wellbeing. So many people used walking for well being, reflection, stress-relief; but also for thinking through ideas ... and the walking curriculum suggests ways of taking us even further out of our classrooms. As +Gillian Judson says, it would be interesting to see what other walking curriculum ideas there are out there in and across the disciplines.

Chrissi Nerantzi Thank you for this open invitation +Gillian Judson Please feel free to share further details about your new book project so that colleagues and students can identify if they could contribute examples from their practice. +Sandra Sinfield I think just being outside, being in a different space, with fresh air, even it is cold and/or rains, must have a positive effect on our wellbeing and learning. There are definitely opportunities to make more of this. learning doesn't happen (just) by sitting down in a classroom with four walls…
I think.

And so to the ideas

As always there were some excellent suggestions - from reinventing the curriculum itself as an 'outside' or meta space to adventures in India and SecondLife; it was evident that both staff and student learning can be shaken up in positive ways when third space is created as the fourth wall of the classroom is broken down

Jennifer Willis

My zone or learning is what I have termed the 'dynamic curriculum': it is the unpredictable learning that takes place when the curriculum is used imaginatively to stimulate learners' questioning. It is not a physical space and is spontaneous, prompted by the formal strata below it.

The image (overleaf) begins with a typical English language lesson (here KS2 Year 6 curriculum) where I have used the original chapter of a book to devise worksheets that test the learners' comprehension of the text, development of vocabulary and syntactical knowledge.

NB Parents have approved my use of this photo, and it represents only one part of a co-ed group of children.

I draw heavily on the historical and social context, hence we might be talking about Victorian England one week, and Civil Rights in the USA another month. There is a large globe that I use frequently in my lessons so we are developing geographical knowledge, understanding of time zones, different ethnicities and cultures, currencies etc. This layer is what I have called the super-curriculum. English is a perfect vehicle for teaching way beyond the formal English curriculum to include other subjects they study or will study in school.
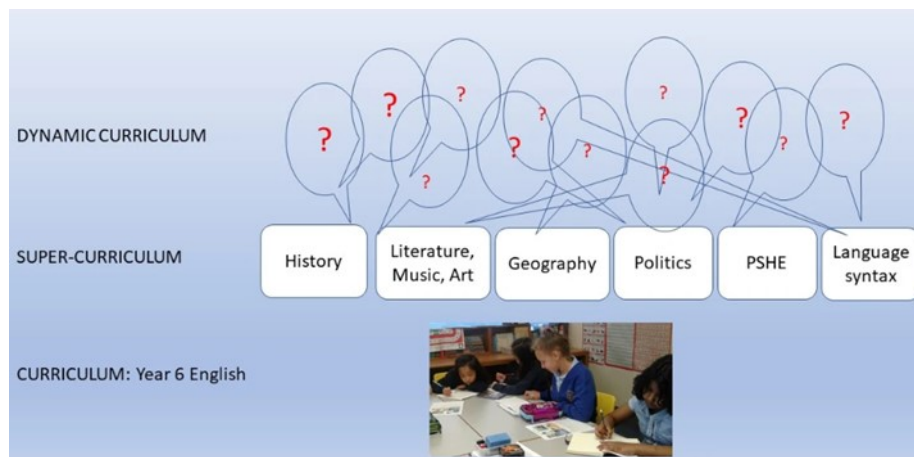
Next, we have the dynamic layer or unpredictable questions. I have some delightful students with whom I have built trusting relationships. They know that, whatever they ask, I will give them an honest answer, tailored to their age. This can occasionally lead to rather intimate revelations of their bodily functions, but generally we are dealing with more serious issues – last night, for instance, they wanted to know what would happen if a debtor in a Victorian debtor's prison could not afford to pay for his food and lodging, and whether you could avoid contracting your fellow inmate's disease by covering your mouth. Discussion of punishment prompted them to compare their own experiences in the 21st century.

Now, I recognise that some readers may feel that I am not fulfilling my role as an English tutor. [...] but my conscience is clear: I owe it to my students to develop them as whole individuals, equipped for adulthood and even a lifetime of learning. This is not mutually exclusive with teaching them grammar, comprehension, creative writing and so on: we have a good record in helping students to pass the 7+, 11+ and other entrance examinations. I would go so far as to argue that it is the zone of the dynamic curriculum that will stay with them longest, and through which they develop the important analytical and social skills that plodding methodically and individually through a text book fails to achieve.

To bring this discussion back to HE, I compare what I am doing with my students to what Norman was talking about in his post on spicing up a CPD session. In both cases, learning is founded on having a good relationship between learner and teacher. Trust enables risk-taking, which in my dynamic curriculum is asking questions and recounting experiences. The students spark questions and go away feeling they have learnt something – whilst enjoying themselves!

Chrissi Nerantzi

Far too often we forget the outside space for learning and teaching and that learning is, can or should be an uninterrupted experience? How much do we actually learn in the classroom? I am regularly using outside and open online spaces with colleagues. There is a particular mixed-reality game we also play (Sell your bargains). This takes place in central Manchester. I have also played it in Newcastle and the Salford area. We have used a version of this in a previous #creativeHE iteration. Have a look at courses.p2pu.org - Creativity for Learning in Higher Education. Really looking forward to your examples.
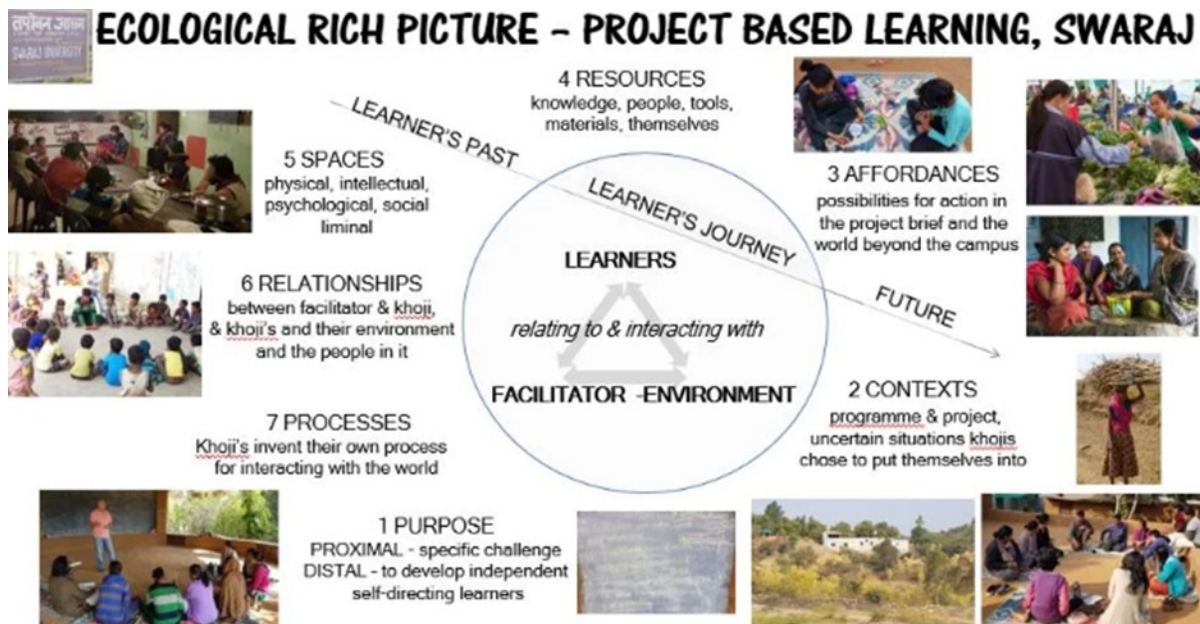

Norman Jackson

Two weeks ago I visited Swaraj University near Udaipur in NW India. This university offers two year programmes aimed at developing social entrepreneurs and its educational philosophy is to enable learners (which they call khoji's – seekers) to develop themselves as autonomous and self-directing. They have very few classrooms and much of the learning is experiential, either project-based or through work placements.

During the week of my visit khojis had a week long project. They had to organize themselves into teams of 2 or 3, decide what to do and go and do it then bring back what they had learnt to the group. The task was – go out into the world outside the campus and interact with it in whatever way you choose, build a perspective based on these interactions and share it with the rest of the group.

From such a simple brief, students pushed themselves outside their comfort zones and some very interesting forms of interaction were developed. From the learners' perspective the whole process was one of tackling the unknown and inventing, adapting and improvising in response to what emerged. I wonder how such an exercise could be transferred into other disciplinary contexts. You can read about my experiences in my Jan 12th blog post. http://www.normanjackson.co.uk/scraps-of-life-blog

ECOLOGICAL RICH PICTURE – PROJECT BASED LEARNING, SWARAJ

Sandra Sinfield What an inspirational visit and what a wonderful project +Norman Jackson. Definitely transferable to all disciplinary contexts I feel. One of our projects was to send our students around the university observing formal and informal learning and learning spaces - and considering what was promoting or impeding learning. The first year, we asked the students to give poster presentations... But after that we decided to push them further - and asked them to represent their findings as poetry or jigsaw puzzles or 3D images,   animation, video, Cabinet of Curiosity, comic book... We then had an Exhibition of their answers which was an exciting and joyful occasion…
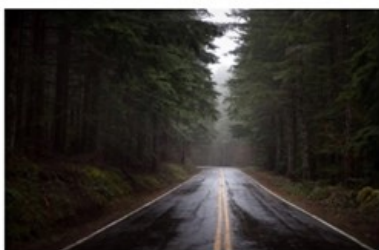
Paul Kleiman

Today's task made me think of learning journeys and the different paths we take. Here are a few possible paths, and a possible caption for each one. You can add your own, and also draw/add your own possible paths.

'A rough path and mountains to climb. Great!'

'It looks quiet but I know there are many doors to knock on, people to talk to, and things to discover'

'It's a long road, but I know there's a hearty meal and a warm bed waiting'

'There's sunlight, I can see sky, and I can see the wood for the trees!'

'OK, it's dark and a bit scary, but the path is lit'

'The road is clearly marked, but do I dare move into the dark forest?'

Sandra Sinfield Thank you for the pictures and the provocative questions. It reminds me of an image mediated dialogue session that we sometimes undertake with students - asking them to choose the picture that best answers a question (for example - What picture best captures what it means to be a successful educationist? Once they have chosen their one picture - in writing: they have to describe it - and then write why it answers the question for them. Then in groups they discuss the pictures and their answers. It always opens up fruitful discussion…

Chrissi Nerantzi Hi +Paul Kleiman also love the pictures and the questions. There is a path in all of your pictures. Wondering about places where there is no path (yet)?

[Paul Kleiman](link)+ +[Chrissi Nerantzi](link) Funny you should ask that. I was thinking about that and about one of my favourite poems...
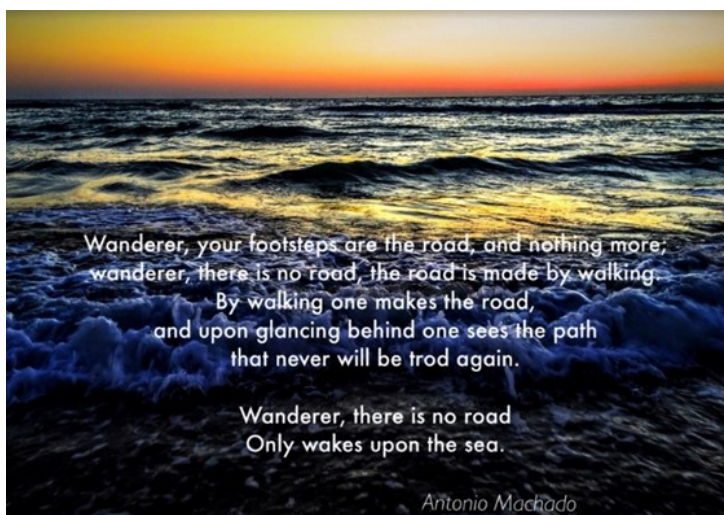
Tom Burns - Adventures in Second Life

[We] worked with a great Computer Lecturer, Alan Hudson, and his students to build their 'skills'. We decided to use SecondLife and tie in with the History of the World in 100 Objects exhibition at the British Museum. The students had to choose an object and build it in SL... and Alan also created a reflective space in SL where the students could meet and talk.

The reflective space was a beach with deck chairs and fires - and when Alan wanted to deliver new 'supplies' he did it by shipwrecking a galleon.

We felt that this broke open 'educational spaces' in whole new ways... and what also intrigued us was the avatars that the students developed for themselves in SL: a Klingon, a young woman captaining her representation of the Beagle and a Bee... The new spaces were inhabited differently, positively and powerfully by the students…

Editor: I too was part of that SecondLife experiment. It was a powerful learning experience for me - seeing how the students helped each other when they entered SL: how they shared tips on re-designing their avatars, on how to claim space in SL and then how to build their representations of a selected object. What was also interesting was how after awhile they felt enabled to more playfully interpret their briefs - with HMS Beagle suspended in mid air - and those students representing themselves not as idealised objects - but as a Klingon or a bee. Gibbs[1] says that the word knowledge means to 'have sport' with ideas - to play with them, mix them up, mangle them - re-work them; however, so many university practices seem specifically designed to prevent this from happening - positioning the student forever as novice supplicant rather than engaged participant. Arguably, as with the real life, real time activities, this SecondLife challenge, that tutor, those students enabled a 'third space' where the rules of games, gamers and gaming trumped the apparently isolating and competitive discourse of HE. This virtual space allowed the students to more fully be themselves as they became academic - and more on their own terms. That seems to be a focus of the ideas that emerged this week: that we need to create, re-discover and embrace practice of a playful and empowering bent.

Source

[1] In Burns and Sinfield (2016) *Essential Study Skills: the complete guide to success at university* London; Sage

Day 4: Assessment and feedback that works (better)?

On one of our modules, Managing the Assessment and Feedback Process, at London Met, we champion the development and use of assignments that are more creative and engaging than the traditional essay, report or exam. In our own practice, we decided to replace a Group Presentation with a more creative and more difficult alternative: Group Production of a multimodal artefact (5min max) plus a 500-word critical written piece. We were astonished at the creativity demonstrated by our staff when challenged in this way - and the staff reported back that they now felt able to explore alternative assessments with their own students.

The task on the fourth day of #creativeHE was designed to get participants thinking about assessment and feedback - and sharing the more engaging, perhaps more multimodal, assessments that they used themselves, and it started with a musical provocation:

To seed thoughts on assessment please read this blog – and listen to the song: http://www.nomadwarmachine.co.uk/2017/12/02/ticky-tacky-feedback/ - and then choose a song or poem that represents assessment - and share an assessment that is not an essay, report or exam.

There was a flurry of responses:

Nicholas Bowskill I haven't got a song but I do have a creative example of assessment. Twitter research posters! Students create a poster to display a piece of research and attach it to a tweet with a specified hashtag. The twitter-based conference is open to the whole world and other academics and members of the interested public raise questions and give feedback. Its public engagement and its a wider audience giving feedback. Its usually academics in different universities around the world so they get multiple perspectives and sources of feedback. Its free, its creative, flexible and fun. Its also really useful & engaging for everyone involved. I also like it as an alternative to a general hashtag chat which are also good but perhaps topic-focused? It provides another way of structuring dialogue in twitter too.

Matthew Nicholls +Sandra Sinfield Only a little bit - e.g. a case study here, around p.52. discovery.ucl.ac.uk - discovery.ucl.ac.uk/1558776/1/A-Connected-Curriculum-for-Higher-Education.pdf

I do quite a few workshops on digital modelling for educators but have not written up a long account. Can you suggest any useful venues for writing something further on this?

discovery.ucl.ac.uk/1558776/1/A-Connected-Curriculum-for-Higher-Education.pdf

Discovery.ucl.ac.uk

Paul Kleiman Recently I finished a year long project working with an arts-based institution to redesign their entire approach to assessment. The project, adapted from my work on negotiated assessment and assessing creative arts practices, has been written up as a case study in the just published HEA publication 'Transforming Assessment in Higher Education'.

https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/hub/download/Transforming%20Assessment%20in%20Higher%20Education%20-%20A%20Case%20Studies%20Series.pdf
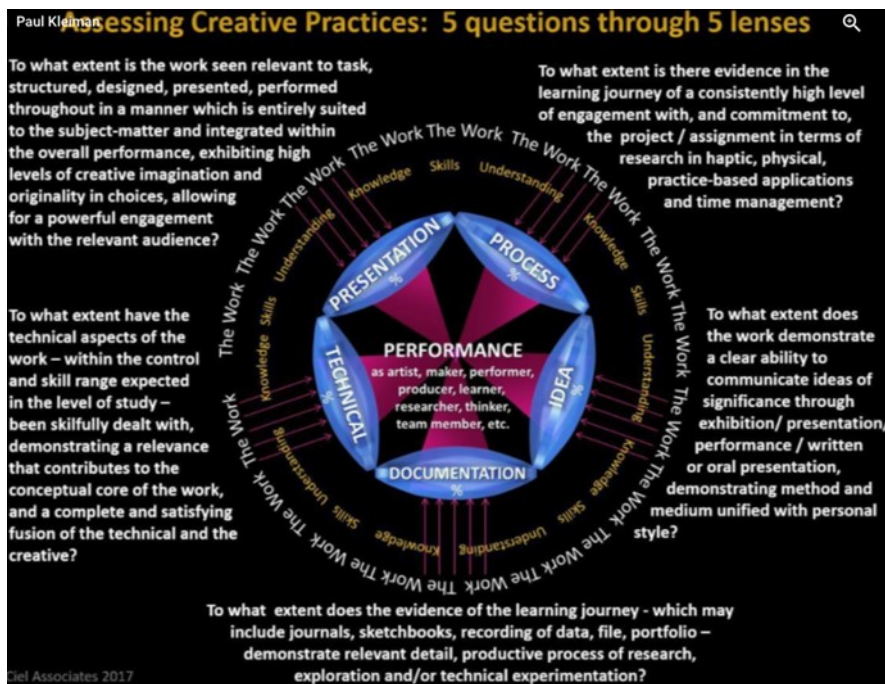
The 'headlines' are:

- *- an holistic approach to assessment*
- *- assessing all work through five 'assessment lenses'*
- *- replacing atomised, reductionist learning outcomes with a clear and coherent set of high expectations*
- *- assessing student work on the extent to which it meets those high expectations*
- *- a ten point grading system.*

Two things currently missing from the scheme, with the plan to implement them once the current design is fully embedded are:

1. Negotiated assessment

2. The sixth 'assessment interview/tutorial' lens: a dialogic encounter providing an opportunity to explore to what extent is the student able to articulate their understanding of what they have done, what they have learned, what they have achieved (or not).

Overleaf is the diagram of the current scheme, with the five lenses and the five assessment expectations - it's Case Study 2.

Assessing Creative Practices: 5 questions through 5 lenses

To what extent is the work seen relevant to task, structured, designed, presented, performed throughout in a manner which is entirely suited to the subject-matter and integrated within the overall performance, exhibiting high levels of creative imagination and originality in choices, allowing for a powerful engagement with the relevant audience?

To what extent is there evidence in the learning journey of a consistently high level of engagement with, and commitment to, the project / assignment in terms of research in haptic, physical, practice-based applications and time management?

To what extent have the technical aspects of the work – within the control and skill range expected in the level of study – been skilfully dealt with, demonstrating a relevance that contributes to the conceptual core of the work, and a complete and satisfying fusion of the technical and the creative?

To what extent does the work demonstrate a clear ability to communicate ideas of significance through exhibition/ presentation/ performance / written or oral presentation, demonstrating method and medium unified with personal style?

To what extent does the evidence of the learning journey - which may include journals, sketchbooks, recording of data, file, portfolio – demonstrate relevant detail, productive process of research, exploration and/or technical experimentation?

Paul Kleiman's assessment model

Emma Duke-Williams I've now got 2 earworms competing - the Little Boxes one, and, the first one that sprang to mind when you asked about songs, Brick in the Wall. (I'm not a great listener to music - radio 4 is on 99% of the time ...)

Matthew Nicholls I developed a module teaching ancient historians and classicists how to make computer reconstructions of ancient buildings (I've posted a bit about my work in this area elsewhere). The challenge for the assessment, in a department centred largely around essays/exams, was how to make these creative inter-pretations of the past comparable to 'conventional' assessments in their marking processes, learning outcomes, accessibility to the external examiners, etc. To do this I coupled the creative 3D assessed element (the actual digital model) with a written commentary explaining the various choices and decisions that the student made during the reconstruction (essentially, 'what's the evidence for that?'), and that seemed to work well. I use video feedback a lot in this module, especially for the mid-way mini-assignment, as voice commentary over a screen grab video of me exploring their model is a lot more useful than just written feedback. It's a fun module to teach and even to mark!

Sandra Sinfield +*Matthew Nicholls* I love the sound of that! AND... how rare it is for us to be able to say that we enjoyed the marking! I think that should be one of our goals, set something that the students will enjoy wres-tling with - and that we will actually enjoy marking! Have you published on this? If not - I definitely think you should. If you have - do send us a link? :-D

Paul Kleiman +*Matthew Nicholls* Sounds great. I'd be interested to know how your more 'traditional' colleagues viewed this.

Matthew Nicholls +*Paul Kleiman* Thanks. It's generally been viewed very positively, I must say (and well support-ed by the University with grants for computer equipment/time) Others here are also working on broadening out our assessment mix; just this morning I had a meeting with a colleague who is proposing a creative writing exercise as part of a new module on Nero. So there's appetite for more creativity in assessment (partly to address concerns about making our degree programmes more clearly geared to skills/experience that interest employers). Not everyone is interested in this sort of thing, and there will always be a need and place for more conventional assessment, but that's fine; a diverse mix is what we're after. Some of the stories and examples here will be useful - I am enjoying reading about them.

Don't play that song for me Both Emma Duke Williams and Jennifer Willis chose Pink Floyd's 'Another Brick in the Wall' as their song - Jennifer explains why:

Jennifer Willis

I have chosen Pink Floyd's 1979 hit, Another Brick in the Wall, to answer this question. It is not the sort of music that I would normally follow, but it was an authentic representation of my reality of the time: four years into teaching, in what was known as an SPA (special priority area aka socially deprived!) adjoining Paddington Station, every day was played out in drab grey surroundings but animated by boisterous, street-wise adolescents. The regulated blocks of flats in the video were typical of the homes our children came from.

Clearly, the song is all about regulation. This was strongly resisted both culturally and because we had not long before raised the school leaving age to 16: for most, education was not valued, and parents expected us to discipline their children in the way that was then their cultural norm i.e. physically. For if education was irrelevant, behaviour was paramount. Older readers will recall the scandal around William Tyndale School, a primary where the teachers determined the curriculum, with apparently chaotic results. We did our best, channelling movement through the corridors and between floors like a well-ordered road system, something captured in the video.

The children singing in Another Brick in the Wall were from local schools. Their multi-ethnicities, but shared London accent, were typical of my students. Despite this rich diversity, school was still putting everyone through the same mincer and aiming to produce consistent brick-shaped citizens. We hadn't yet discovered video and security cameras, but we monitored students from strategic locations: the school gates, the toilets, anywhere where mischief might be perpetrated.

The question asked specifically about assessment, so how could you assess performance if compliance with performance was resisted? To be honest, we did have some inspirational teachers, from whom I informally learnt a lot as I covered a lesson in a different department. My own initial attempts relied first on showing pupils that I was not like the endless streams of supply teachers, here today, gone tomorrow. I was there and I meant business, I believed in them and would demonstrate that they could succeed. This often meant having differentiated expected outcomes, not easy in a rowdy group of 30, but it was made easier when the ILEA (Inner London Education Authority) began to produce resources with colour coded tasks and assessment.

Then I did weird things: I would arrange to take a class to the local Safeways, armed with worksheets on the French products on sale. Back in class, I would test them on what they had seen and learnt. Testing did not have to be formal – oral question, especially if the class was split into teams, was always popular (and still is!). As a languages teacher, I was also at an advantage in that assessment included oral use of the language, allowing the less literate to have a chance of succeeding.

I have cheated slightly in my response to this question. It was such a great idea that I have used it to paint a picture of the era and nature of secondary education at the time. As a profession, we recognised that assessment as we had known it was no longer viable: it did not recognise the diversity of achievement and it was not preparing learners ready for the workplace. We were about to embark on a fraught period of change, as one new examination model after another led to the 1988 Education Reform Act and subsequently SATs! Which brings us to what happens beyond school. Still we are asking the same basic questions in HE as we were tackling in units such as the Surrey Centre for Excellence in Professional Training and Education fifteen years ago…

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HrxX9TBj2zY&feature=youtu.be

And Norman Jackson demonstrates what can happen when we let the students themselves curate their own learning and tell their own stories.

Norman Jackson

A few years ago, when we were piloting the Lifewide Learning Award at Surrey University we took the decision to let participants choose how they wanted to represent their learning and development, believing that giving them this freedom would encourage their creativity. We told them that we would accept a shoe box full of artefacts as long as they could explain the meaning of those artefacts in terms of their own development.

Table 11.2 Categorisation of portfolios in the pilot study n=28

'Shoebox'; literally a physical container into which representations of learning are deposited and explained	0
Handwritten diary essentially text based – could be a Word document	9
Scrapbook containing text, photos, drawings and diagrams, and other artefacts like tickets/mementos of events	8
PowerPoint	1
Digital story	1
Blog or wiki	6
E-portfolio	1
Personal website	1
Mixed media – part physical part virtual	1

Chapter 11 in N J Jackson (ed) Learning for a Complex World: A lifewide concept of learning, development and education. Authorhouse

We were not disappointed. One particular form of representation impressed me greatly. We expected that participants would create an e-portfolio but many decided to create a physical scrapbook to document their learning. They brought the artefacts they had created in their scrap book to life by telling us their stories. Effectively they were creating and recounting their stories of making meaning from the things they did in their lives. +Jennifer Willis might want to comment further on what for us was a seminal learning experience.

SHOE BOX!
BLOG
SCRAPBOOK
E-PORTFOLIO
VIDEO DIARY
DIGITAL STORY
VIDEO FILM
SLIDE SHOW
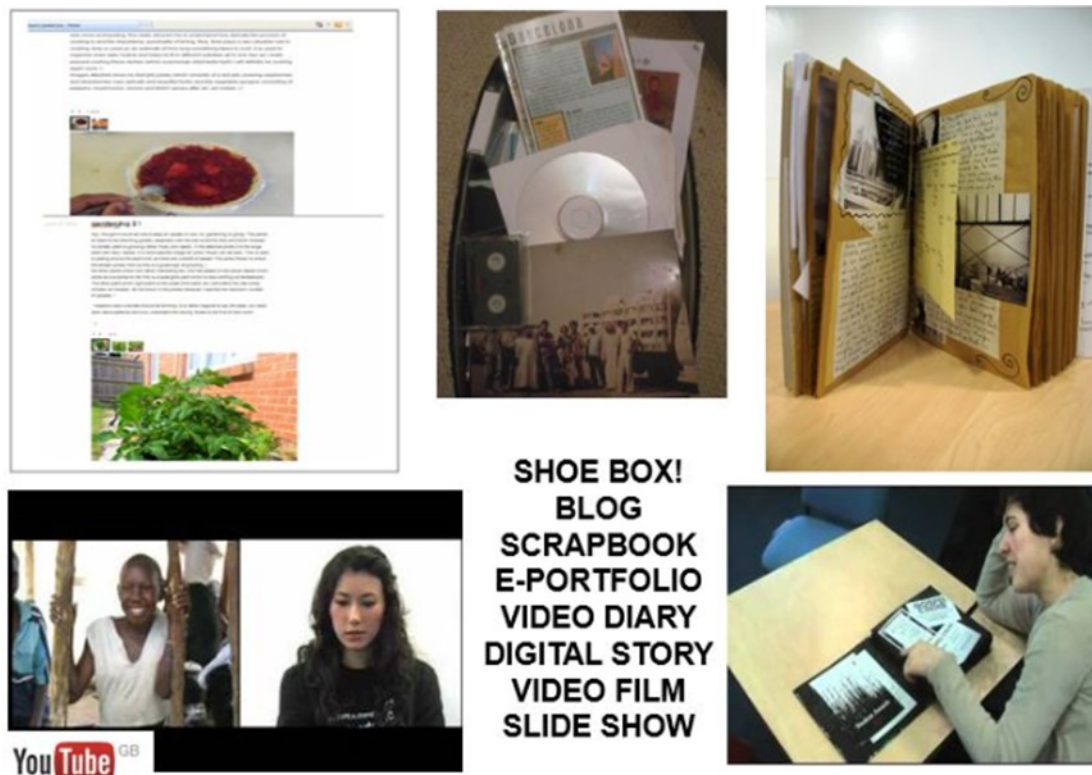
… and which sparked the most excellent dialogic consideration of assessment:

Nick Bowskill I remember that well. It was really ahead of its time in many ways. I think they refer to this as Universal Design nowadays. That's where you allow participants to respond in a variety of ways. Seeing some of these wonderful artefacts makes me think how a course could be almost a Museum of Learning on This Course. In such a view it becomes a curated collection of meaning developed across different cohorts.

Either way, thank you for sharing that Norman. Fantastic

Sandra Sinfield I love this example +Norman Jackson - and thank you for those pictures - I want to see more! Does anyone else have similar experiences of assessment practices where student curiosity was piqued - where engagement was high? And - importantly - where you were surprised and delighted by what participants produced?

Nicholas Bowskill +Sandra Sinfield Lots of examples from our workshops including 2nd years recording podcasts for new arrivals to hear before coming to formal induction (and afterwards). They were then invited to raise questions about the content of the podcasts as part of the formal session. It was surprising how many other non-first years welcomed the chance to listen to them as well (could listen on phones, in cars etc). Not strictly assessment or maybe a kind of formative assessment in the way they are hearing feedback on their shared futures and about exams to come etc. .

Sandra Sinfield +Nicholas Bowskill EXACTLY! The more I've been engaged in online 'stuff' the more I have real- ised that at its best, an assignment is an act of curation of the learning - and that it must be owned by the student for it to have any meaning at all. It's one reason that we have asked our students to represent their work in different ways. I've banged on about this alot - but as poetry, jigsaw puzzle, knitting, video, anima- tion, comic book, 3D object and Cabinet of Curiosity. We have suggested song or dance - but no one has attempted that yet. I do think that a collective art work should be allowed as an assignment on a course - in one MOOC I did (that was not assessed) - we wrote a collective poem in Titan Pad (https://titanpad.com/ sXgaTJMniP) - and at the end of a major project, as well as writing our formal report, we produced a collective friendship quilt. I have a vision of an end of course assessment point, where the students sew together their quilt squares, whilst reminiscing on the course. This would be videoed, edited by the students - and together the quilt and the video = the assessment.

Chrissi Nerantzi What a wonderful collection of artefacts +Norman Jackson and thank you for sharing further examples +Sandra Sinfield and +Nicholas Bowskill in a range of media. There is still something special about an artefact we can hold in our hands, touch it, smell it. The share-ability however, seems to be maximised and speeded up via digital networked technologies. When I use activities in my teaching to model learning through making, often colleagues reach [for] and prefer the low-tech approaches. I am wondering if this will change over time when technologies become even more part of the fabric of everyday life?

Paul Kleiman *Norman's 'shoebox' example reminded me of an assessment we used to run at LIPA (no images I'm afraid). Following a series of seminars on the major art 'isms' of the 20th century, first year design students had to produce a 'visual portfolio' in which they found and notated - via art, architecture, music, film and fashion - examples of each of the ten 'isms' covered on the course. 10 isms x 5 art forms = 55 examples. Most students produced a file-based approach. But one handed in a shoebox. It was carefully wrapped in parcel paper, and was covered in various stamps, etc and looked as though it had travelled around the world. Inside there were 55 assorted letters, postcards, photographs etc. For Cubism, for example, there was a postcard correspondence between the student and Picasso about his approach to painting. All beautifully produced. This carried on right through the box with different artworks and the artists, filmmakers, musicians etc. Who created them. A joy to experience and to assess.*

Norman Jackson *Thanks +Nicholas Bowskill +Sandra Sinfield +Chrissi Nerantzi and +Paul Kleiman for your comments and sharing your experiences. I think the idea that we are curators of our own learning is really important, but in a world that encourages self-directed learning the expectation of curation must be under-pinned by the freedom to represent and curate in the way we find most meaningful and useful. This is the way we find joy in what we do. The 'shoebox' example you share +Paul Kleiman is a wonderful example of this.*

Paul Kleiman *A bit more on artefacts. A while back now I was at a learning and teaching conference. One of the workshop sessions was on the student experience, and final year students had been asked to produce an artefact that represented their experience. Each table was given a different artefact to examine. One table had what looked like one of those waterproof alphabet books for babies/toddlers that you can use in the bath. The graphics and colouring were typical for those type of books, except A was for Assessment, etc!*

On our table we had a rather mysterious object: a small, plain, wooden box, painted white. Taking the top off revealed sheet after sheet of what looked like white hand-made paper, each covered in tiny writing which was, on close inspection, like fragments from a rather unhappy diary or journal. Taking out the last sheet revealed a large, beautifully polished black pebble sitting in a bed of white cotton wool.

So we had something black and beautiful lying in, sitting under, and in a box - all white. It turned out that it made by a female fashion student at a leading art school. She was a white Zimbabwean who had a huge pride in and attachment to her African roots, which she wanted to reflect in her work. All through the course, how-ever, she'd been told to forget her 'African-ness' as it would be a block to success.

Creating artefacts (or using existing ones e.g. those 'History of X told through 100 Object) to tell real and important stories and to illustrate our learning journeys can be very powerful learning.

Jennifer Willis

Before I reply to +Norman Jackson's refer-ence to the interviews we did with students regarding their portfolios and the whole process of reflective learning, you might be interested in some other research I did at Surrey. It is now out-dated data, but I think the principles are still valid.

I undertook the huge task of analysing how each faculty/programme assessed their students, then homed in on assess-ment of professional competences (what and how). Here is the over-view.

Table 1 Regulations for assessment of professional training: departmental modes by percentage

Faculty	Programme	By workplace 30-50%	Student report 30-50%	Presentation Up to 10%	By visiting tutor 5-20%	Attendance of briefing/ debriefing Up to 20%	Additional academic work Up to 30%	TOTAL P CREDITS
FAHS	Dance & Culture	29	27.5		11.7		31.7	120
	Economics	50	29	8.3	12.5			120
	English Literature	16.7	50	16.7	16.7			120
	Film Studies	33.3	23.3		13.3		30	120
	LTS (work placement) (40 wk)	25	50		16.7		8.3	120
	LTS (work + study placement) (40)	25	50		16.7		8.3	120
	LTS (study only)						100	120
	Music	33.3	33.3	8.3	16.7	8.3		120
	Music & Sound Recording	33.3	33.3	8.3	16.7	8.3		120
	Politics	41.7	33.3		16.7	8.3		120
	Psychology	37.5	33.3	8.3	20.8			120
	Sociology	37.5	33.3	8.3	20.8			120
	Theatre Studies	29	27.5		11.7		31.7	120
FHMS	Biochemistry	33.3	50		16.7			120
	Chemistry*	33.3	45.8	8.3	12.5			120
	Microbiology*							
	Nutritional Sciences	N/A to programmes studied						
	Health and Social Care							
FEPS	Computing	54.2	33.3				12.5	120
	Mathematics	54.2	33.3				12.5	120
	Electronic Engineering	54.2	33.3				12.5	120
	Physics	30	45	5	20			120
	Mechanical, Medical & Aerospace	37.5	41.7	4.2	16.7			=% degree
	Civil & Environmental Engineering	37.5	41.7	4.2	16.7			=% degree
FML	Management	30	60		10			=% degree + 120
	Law (per placement)*	50	16.7		16.7		16.7	60

Curie Scott In my previous workplace we had a professional development unit per year across health professions (essentially study skills and PDP) where students could submit any types of product for assessment. It did not last because of difficulties marking. Q1 is about marking. In another yr 2 nursing unit students produced a 4min film as assessment. The final session was a film showcase. The student and I presented at workshops using it. Happy to share more

Jennifer Willis Thank you +curie scott, I would love to hear more about your work. Coming back to the Award we piloted at Surrey, it had amazing results for the students who took part, but it required a lot of work on the part of mentors, internal and external evaluators. I am sure the award winners will have found it invaluable in their career paths, but Norman and I left the University at the end of SCEPTrE's period of funding, and the University chose not to continue with the award scheme. We have written about the pilot and our findings in a number of publications, so I won't repeat what you can read there. Essentially, the 4th year UG students had to work through various self-reflective tools, and had to produce a portfolio. The way in which they did the latter was open-ended, so we had shoe boxes, albums, video diaries etc., as Norman illustrates. I audio interviewed a number of the students, and then selected some of them for a second interview, this time video-recorded. They spoke to me about how they had gone about the task and what it had meant to them. Here are a few of the comments they made:

* The main benefit for completing this award is that I have been able to take bird's—eye view of my personal development. My journey was one that was very personal and very important to my future employability and this allowed me to view the small steps I was making towards a very big change. The award has been very valuable to my learning and I found it acted as a form of closure to the problems I had overcome, which felt like a huge release of the built up anxiety and worry of those problems following me from university and into my career.

* The award has made me a more rounded individual. It has made me develop my skills further and also build on new skills as well. This is very important when looking for a work placement or a graduate job in the future. It has been useful to me so that I can record all my experiences that I have gained in the last year all in one portfolio. I have learnt values such as corporate and social responsibility which I did not understand before and I also implemented in my experiences.

* This award has given me the permission to spend quality time on the process of reflecting on what it is I am gaining through my experiences here at university; to highlight my strengths, but also my weaknesses - what I find challenging - and allow me to work on and improve them for my future personal and professional life.

*It offered me the opportunity to reflect on some very personal situations and events in a creative way. Since taking up Law my chance to be creative had diminished and as such I had lost interest in my course at times. This reflected in my Level 2 results. The award reminded me that I can still direct my creativity in different ways and apply that into my own learning.
Importantly for me it offered a structured way to truly appreciate exactly what 2010 meant to me – a year of great achievement that I will value personally for the rest of my life.

Notoriously bad at keeping up momentum in my studies and managing my time effectively I also found the award useful at regaining control in that area because I recognised early on what my weaknesses were and was able to accommodate this in a practical way. I am now realistic with my time and goals and so far have seen successful results.

* Probably one of the greatest benefits of the award was the fact that I had to regularly reflect on whatever I did and how it improved my capabilities, both professional and personal. It is through this reflection that I learnt most about myself, I discovered intricacies of my learning (both explicit and implicit) and how I have developed as a 'whole person'. I can understand now that many skills gained in one field are transferable and therefore could be easily, in more or less similar capacity, applied to other spheres of life. I also think that taking part in the award proved to be a very personal journey and in a way helped me to discover who I am, what are my strengths and weaknesses etc.

* I have truly learned that it's ok to not be perfect. Imperfections are what make us human and add character to our beings. It's time to embrace who I am and who I am becoming and to get involved in the process of development. I do not wish to accept my flaws and refuse growth, however I will not allow them to hold me back in becoming who it is that I aspire to be.

*I enjoyed travelling such a lot that this is important to me in the future. The places I went also create talking points to some law firms as they have offices or connections in places I've now visited such as Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi. It could mean that I have the opportunity in the future to either return to these places or work in an international firm incorporating this love of travel.

I work very hard and the award has taught me the kinds of work that I have participated in; such as in retail, entertainment and events and now the legal sector. It also helped me focus on the way I learn and setting out a timeframe to finish things by. Making my portfolio in itself required setting aside time purposely to finish the project. The fact that I did manage to hand it in on time and not neglect my studies supports the fact that I can manage my time effectively.

Having a scrapbook of my photographs and personal reflections is also a good way to remember where I've come from and where I am headed to.

*I will always appreciate the role of the life-wide support program in helping me to live a fulfilling life that would help in meeting my true needs and those of others as well. Having emphasized on the need of maintaining a balanced life that is filed with physical, spiritual and emotional health as a way of serving our society in a better way, the life-wide program will always be useful in promoting my wellbeing. Moreover, the important skill of evaluating my strengths and weaknesses will always be useful in helping me to improve my performance capabilities. I have also found it useful to genuinely serve my society as a way to happiness and self-fulfilment.

Space does not allow me to do justice to the enthusiasm and sheer joy with which the students spoke of their experience. I am not sure if the interviews are still available on line – if they are, Norman can give us the links.

Emma Duke-Williams This thread is so full of inspiring ideas! In early Feb, I'm doing a series of posts in our "Learning X" (learningspaces.dundee.ac.uk - LEARNING | Digital Learning Hub) - on Innovation in Learning - as we're a Technology team, it should be slanted towards the digital - but so many ideas here that I'm sure we can summarise - and, of course, pen & paper are technologies!

Chrissi Nerantzi +Sandra Sinfield A range of media is definitely what I support and we have enabled this through our digital portfolio. However, I am wondering what challenges, if any, the range of format creates for the marker. For example how do you compare the marking experience of a 30 mins film different from marking with the marking of a written reflective narrative with X words? And let's say you have 50 students who submitted a video? Looking forward to your thoughts around this if you have related experience and ideas.

Paul Kleiman +Sandra Sinfield In the very days of PALATINE, the national subject centre for performing arts in HE, I received a phone call from a colleague who worked in the subject centre for materials science. She'd just had a phone call from a materials science colleague in a large university. He had been 'rather adventurous' and instead if the usual assessment had set the students to produce posters. His problem was that while he was comfortable undertaking the normal standard assessments, he had no idea as to how, or what, to assess in regard to the posters. How, for example, should he mark good science badly presented? Alternative assessment is a great idea, but it does throw up the question of assessment competence e.g how DOES a scientist mark an arts-based presentation of the science?

Emma Duke-Williams +Chrissi Nerantzi Length of video ... that's a difficult one! If I was saying Write a x-words reflection, then I'd use a conversion of c.120 words/ minute, and use that as a guideline for a recorded section and be a bit more flexible than the +-10% (speech is about 125-150 words a minutes, so gives them a bit of leeway) If there's no limit to the word count, then hard to put a time on it.

Emma Duke-Williams +Paul Kleiman When I've done things like that in the past, I've set it as a relatively small component, but also looked at what I was assessing, so, for our MSc students, presentation skills were critical, so equal weighting. For others, the content was more important, so I tried to get the weighting such that fabulous presentation, but awful content =fail (or bare pass), while fantastic content and awful presentation would be a good B, but not quite an A. But the relatively low weighting would be unlikely to impact on the overall grade. But, I agree, need to be clear what's being assessed and how it fits in with overall course outcomes (thinking whole degree, rather than unit level). Peer evaluation of presentation can be good, they'll identify presentation that's appropriate for an audience of peers, even if it's the academic who has to judge the accuracy of the content.

Assess that!

The discussion of alternative assessments was provocative and inspirational, at the same time, there is an awareness of the multiple pressures that surround assessment *per se* and alternative assessments in particular: how do we assess fairly and transparently? How do we set challenges that transcend our own comfort zones - and then assess in a way that neither stifles that creativity nor negatively impacts on the merit of the whole assessment process? This prompted my own post back to the community:

Day4/5 Thoughts - how do we judge alt-assessments?

I love dipping into Gonzo Scientist and their annual Dance Your PhD Competition. I was browsing today and found this winner from the Social Sciences: Judit Pétervári from Queen Mary University of London with "The evaluation of creative ideas— **analyzing the differences between expert and novice judges** ."
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXzPH3iQV8E&feature=youtu.be

Which leads into some useful thought problems in re alt-assessments: How do we mark them?

I know that when we encourage alt-assessments, many academics panic a little: How will we judge them? How can we properly assess and grade them?

Staff are used to being the authority figures - and indeed - students expect and want us to be. But does this lead us into a hyperreal criticality that in the end serves to diminish and reduce our students - and keep too much of the power in our own hands?

Of course - we can co-develop criteria with the students...(as suggested by +Emma Duke-Williams)...

But I would like to propose that, may be not all the time but definitely some of the time, we set students tasks where we are not experts.

Okay, we will know the subject matter, but we should definitely NOT be the experts in the 'form' or genre of the task itself...

This way we expressly open ourselves up to the possibility of being surprised, delighted and impressed by our students.

This I think is a powerful, liberatory opportunity for all of us?

Coda: In our own Managing the Assessment and Feedback module (at LondonMet and flagged up in the introduction to this day's task), for our creative group assessment we generate assessment criteria with the participants, adapting them from the generic MALTHE criteria. We then engage in 360 degree marking - with self-, peer- and tutor marks being allocated and equally weighted (though the tutors adjudicate if the aggregated marks of the tutors and those of the students cross a grade boundary). During that assessment event, all the presenting and marking is done together in an afternoon. The artefacts are shown, the critical writing is read, questions are asked and answered - then we all mark, one group artefact/presentation at a time. This is a challenging experience and some might be wary of implementing such practice in undergraduate programmes - but why not? It is definitely a way to make assessment meaningful and owned. Another proposal came from the twittersphere from Sandie Donnelly of Cumbria who suggested that assessment Panels be set up consisting of both expert and non-expert markers... Mind you - how would they assess this:

Tom Burns

Here is a Maze that a student produced as a 'Capstone' project reflecting on all their university experiences. Coincidentally I bumped into this student yesterday and although many years later when I reminded her of the project she remembered vividly ... How much hard work it was but more importantly as she started to remember it she became animated and began talking me through the process...10 years later!

Sandra Sinfield. I LOVE this! And can you email me the pictures directly so that we can use them in the curation of that run of #creativeHE?

Joy Whitton¤Hi Tom, it sounds like she was proud of her achievement. What discipline/profession was this for, as a capstone? Did she say what she learned and if so, what kind of things did she say? Joy¤

John Rae◻I really like it too - and wondering about the origins of the text that your student used to create the maze - and the meaning of that. Attached is part of an artifact that a small group of my students made last year - they made it to learn about organisations, in this case an organisation with goals around sustainability. All this makes me look forward to our next conversation about 'making'.

Tom Burns◻+Joy Whitton and +John Rae I think that we were influenced by the same project that +Simon Rae talked about - where students produced artefacts that reflected their experiences at University of the Arts. We were also part of a CELT at that time - and created bursaries for students to create their own reflections at our more non-traditional university. Students made video, cartoons, art poetry and a PPT - but this maze - we loved it... And we still use it - taking it into PGCert sessions and asking staff to analyse what it says about university. The walls and floors of the maze are constructed out of her assignments - and assignment feedback sheets - there are small handprints on the walls - and small footprints - getting lost. The only colour is the exit. In many ways this is a bit of a shaming comment on teaching and learning at university - and so different form, say, a labyrinth where the journey is inward and outward, you cannot get lost - and it can be contemplative and serene.

Tom Burns◻+1◻+Joy Whitton and +John Rae - it was a capstone project by accident - we offered bursaries to see what students would literally 'make' of their university experiences. The outcomes dazzled us - and revealed that for the students this had acted as a capstone project. It would be brilliant to actually set this as an alternative perhaps to a final year dissertation or project?

Day 5: Reflecting on the week and moving forward

The whole week stressed creative pedagogy in and out of the classroom and from induction to assessment. We asked participants to produce collages, develop games from rubbish and to think through ideas using drawing and songs. On the final day we asked participants to approach their meta-reflection in a similarly creative way - utilising collage, drawing, poetry, song, a digital artefact - or just a doodle:

Now that the week is drawing to a close, take a moment to reflect on the week as a whole… Could you now make and share your reflection or final thoughts - either:

• Make a (new) collage inspired by your approach to creative learning, teaching and assessment - or

• Paint or draw or compose a poem or song that captures your approach to LTA - or -

• If really inspired, individually or in a group make a digital artefact (video, animation, VoiceThread, Story-Bird, Powtoon) that captures your reflections - or

• More simply - say which new approaches or strategies that you might now use in your own practice - or

• Just doodle it: https://www.ted.com/talks/sunni_brown

Jennifer Willis replied:

Here are some of the things that have got caught in my imagination this week.

[Magicalmarta](#)

Greetings from sunny Sarasota, Florida! I am sharing my newly created vision board for 2018 as an introduction. My name is Marta Daviodovich Ockuly and I am in the completion phase of my dissertation (ABD) at Saybrook University. I have 20 years of experience as an award-winning creativity professional, and have taught for creativity in higher education for the past 7 years. My research focus is: Reimagining the way the Creativity is Defined, Inspired, and Developed in the 21st Century. I am introducing a phenomenon-based, descriptive definition of creativity which inspires imagination, creative action, and increased self-identification with personal creativity. I believe adult creative potential is a huge untapped resource. At this time in history we must also differentiate human from computational creativity. I'm excited to join this conversation!

[Nicholas Bowskill](#)

Hi Marta,
I'm just catching up today and noticed your message. Your work sounds wonderful and I think your image/ representation is really interesting. Have you done a lot of this kind of thing and have you any examples from your research that stand out to you as interesting? Hearing you're in America makes me think about intercultural creative work. I think sharing representations of diverse thinking on a topic would be really interesting don't you?

I have saved **John Rae**'s contribution till now - for one thing, it is this that has sparked dialogue between Norman and John - leading to the two-week making version of #creativeHE that they will lead. It reveals how what starts in our real lives can enter our classrooms - be transmuted by thought and effort - and then taken back into the world again to spark *action*[1]

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Herder and Herder

John Rae

I have been thinking about this notion of 'outside the classroom', struggling a little to come to terms with it, apart from thinking about the physical connotations of a classroom and so forth. It is a bit more complicated for me because I do a lot of my teaching online, so the 'classroom' is my office, alongside students' homes, and the web platforms we use to interact, often across continents. One thing that I am starting to dwell on, encouraged by this conversation, is that much of my students learning also occurs in their workplaces. At this stage I should point out that many of my students are masters-level, studying health services management. Most of them already manage hospitals and so forth so clearly those environments are going to impact on their learning one way or another. My colleagues and I frequently build on this by asking our students to dip into their workplaces and then to write, say, a business plan that relates specifically to their work.

Something that I've been trying lately is getting students to make art that represents a high-level issue that they are dealing with at work. One of my students — let's call her Sharna — made art that represents workplace violence and some policy responses to that. Sharna's painting is below, and I thank her for giving me permission to reproduce it.

The image refers to many things. One focus is the nurse who has her hands tied behind her back, 'struggling', as Shauna said, in dealing with her experience of workplace violence.

What I would like to especially highlight in this conversation is not what the painting represents, but how Sharna used her painting, and I think I see a synergy here with what others have posted. I know that Sharna learnt a lot about her own views about workplace violence through this art-making, but I was really surprised about how Sharna used the painting at work, almost as a management tool , afterwards: 'What I loved about this assignment … obviously I have the capacity to share it with people I work with. I showed it to 20 or so of my staff ... it actually spurred more genuine authentic conversation', Sharna said. Interestingly, I had another student report a similar use of the art that she made. I think she showed her image to even more of her staff than Shauna did.

I am not all that sure what to make of this but I am certainly interested in the fact that this learning, which occurred outside the university in terms of physical and online teaching contexts, was so significant to the student and impacted so many other people. Did the dynamic interaction that occurred come from working 'outside' the classroom? Did that help in some way? Who benefits from working outside — my student did but should one be thinking beyond that? Are there also disadvantages — even dangers — of working outside?

NEXT #creative discussion March 6-20th- EXPLORING CREATIVITY THROUGH MAKING

The next discussion will form around making an artefact for exhibition in the forum. +John Rae will lead this project which will unfold over two weeks. You do not need to be an artist or artistic to participate. We are interested in exploring how creative ideas emerge in the circumstances of our life and how we choose to embody and represent our ideas in making something or making something happen.

EXPLORING CREATIVITY THROUGH MAKING
#creativeHE Forum March 06-20th 2018
facilitated by John Rea & Norman Jackson

Our contribution to Open Education Week March 05-09th 2018

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Creative Academic champions creativity in all its manifestations in higher education in the UK and the wider world. Our goal is to support a global network of people interested in creativity in higher education and committed to enabling students' creative development. Our aim is to encourage educational professionals to share practices that facilitate students' creative development in all disciplines and pedagogic contexts, and to connect researchers and their research to practitioners and their practice. Our ambition is to become a global HUB for the

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