

Science and Mathematics Education Centre

**Retracing passion on possibility: Re-enchanting the art and science
of web project design for educating children**

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Declaration

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgment has been made.

This thesis contains no material, which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university.

Signature: *L.M. Loane*

Date: 29th August 2015

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For Douglas

Thank you for love, patience, encouragement, humour and the life we have.

I love you.

For Gilbert, Poppy and Gwyneth

*Live a life of curiosity filled with art, conversation, nature, love, laughter
and a desire to be present and in harmony with mystery and wonder.*

I love you. Thank you for understanding.

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this land, past and present, and to the traditions and
stories they hold and tell.*

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Words for Peregrination ...

*“Not only do teachers and learners together need to tell
and choose; they have to look toward untapped possibility
– to light the fuse, to explore what it might mean to
transform possibility”*

(Greene, 1995, p. 42)

“Imagination, like wonder, allows us to value something.”

(Lear, 2007, p. 447)

*“Alice said ... I’m not going in again yet. I know I
should have to get through the looking-glass again – back
into the old room – and there’d be an end to all my
adventures!”*

(Carroll, 1872/1994, p.81)

Imagination is more important than knowledge.

Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world.

*(Albert Einstein, What life means to Einstein. An Interview by George
Sylvester Viereck, Saturday Evening Post, 26th October 1929)*

Creativity takes courage.

(Matisse, 2011)

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An Abstract

This thesis emerges from the first days of the establishment of an innovative centre, called e-magine, for teaching teachers to use ICT and the Internet in and across classrooms in Tasmania. Three projects, The Flat Stanley Project, The MindsEye Monsters Exchange, and The Bunyips Project, became popular as collaborative Internet web project phenomena. After some years of designing and implementing professional development programs for teachers, the questions what is a web project and what is its purpose in educating children still haunts me, and a new era of teaching using web projects began. I wanted to journey through web project life-worlds with children and gather their thinking, artefacts and understanding of web projects.

The thesis re-presents my inquiry into my unresolved questions, I stand in possibility and endeavour, to retrace them and understand them through some hermeneutical, phenomenological and ontological dimensions of web projects for educating children. My inquiry draws forth two new approaches — the first imagining and creating a tool to frame dialogue with children that takes the form of a pack of cards, the second a tool, which I refer to as an alethiometer, that is a variation on a compass to navigate and interpret learning. A third aspect of my inquiry involves an exploration of work, game and play within web projects, and journeys into a different imagining and enacting of Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development as a Zone of Proximal Engagement.

Drawing deeply from a human science approach that involves hermeneutic, phenomenological and poetic imagining, this thesis explores three web projects, The Flat Stanley Project, The MindsEye Monsters Exchange, and The Bunyips Project, and narrates the lived experiences of these three web projects using the new tools in primary school classrooms. Capturing thematically conversation-dialogue undertaken with

children, descriptions of visible behaviours and inferred perceptions offers varied perspectives of children's experiences of web projects. Emerging themes include naming a design structure for web projects (visualisation), thinking of how children work within web projects (interaction), children's sensations of work, game and play (activity), how children approach their web project tasks (approach), and the intimacy and distance children feel towards web projects and the fictional beings the projects are built around (proximity).

Throughout, children's literature is for me an interpretive and contextual medium, and "writer friends" (Conle, 2000, p. 210) assist me, as I investigate and create spaces for reflection, meaning-making and imagining possibilities for understanding my questions. This thesis constitutes an inquiry that explores imagining, attentive listening and understanding the powers of multi-modal speaking when working with children. It invokes possibilities for re-enchanting the teaching and learning that happens in web projects in ways that might excite curiosity in both teachers and children about becoming inventive and passion-full towards ordinary things in extraordinary ways.

Preludes to a Quest—Setting a Quest Landscape for this Work

What, why and how are small words in length. However when framed in a question, they offer limitless potential as provocateurs to inquire, question and wonder. This thesis is a venture that grows from two questions, which are small in length. The potential scope of the questions is vast, and I set them down here like knights of old who set forth their intent before they set out on a quest.

What is a web project?

What is a web project for?

This thesis is my odyssey for understanding web projects. It is an inquiry that intentionally seeks out and uses the narrative quest genre to interpret a lived experience and therefore has enfolded into it phenomenological and hermeneutical patterns of description, wondering and interpretation.

It is a quest, another small word that speaks of illimitable possibility, and quest is a recurring word and theme in this thesis. Quests are an ancient and engaging literary genre which have universal appeal across dimensions of time. They have an ability to transition and live in the contemporary, as well as the ancient, the lived world and the imagined, remaining both familiar and intriguing, whilst staying true to ancient notions of mystery, wonder and enchantment. Values of heroism, overcoming challenges and an attainment of meaning are familiar and noble goals within a quest realm.

Christopher Booker (2004) writes in *The Seven Basic Plots: Why we tell stories*, of quests containing the following characteristics, “the call”, “the journey”, “arrival and frustration”, “the final ordeals” and “the goal” (p. 83). Quest as a description of phenomenological-hermeneutic inquiry is apt, as each of the characteristics listed are

identifiable in the writing of this quest narrative, and in the lived experience it documents.

A quest is described by the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (2007) as “Any search; the object of this. A search; the action of searching and to go in search of something” (p. 2434). Enriching and describing the word ‘quest’ as I use it in my thesis is my purpose here. Etymologically the word ‘quest’ traces and echoes a journey of meaning from the Latin *quaerere* to seek, inquire, and tracks its evolution through the mouths of those who spoke it to those who speak it now via Old French and Middle English, rooting it squarely in a landscape of oral tradition within the cultures of medieval worlds, and transitioning into the literary and digital cultures of the 21st century.

Quest is described as a noun in the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (2007), “In medieval romance: an expedition or adventure made by a knight or group of knights to obtain some thing or achieve some exploit.” As a verb, or action a quest is described as “in search of something” (p. 2434). In my research I am questor, a seeker of understanding and alternative possibility.

Writing, A Thickening of Lived Experience

This inquiry is a lived experience of writing as a method of inquiry (Richardson L. , 2000, pp. 253-255) and asks, as does David Bohm (2004a) at the beginning of his essay *On Creativity*, that one is mindful of the following,

Words can indicate or point to something in the minds of the readers that may be similar to what is in the mind of the writer. I would like, thus to indicate to the reader what it means to me. If you will read in this spirit, you can then see whether, and to what extent my notions make sense to you. (p.1)

I am a teacher and therefore much of what I write explicitly and implicitly is drawn from my experience of teaching, my relationships with children as a teacher and my relationship with the books, documents and traditions of the schools and communities I teach in, in the real world and the cyber world.

I love art, and I have, for as long as I can remember, been fascinated by making—and by this I mean the act of bringing things into being which are harmonious and express myself aesthetically, be it through and with drawing, working with text, print making, sewing, knitting, painting or needle work. This work is crafted and re-shaped, pinned together, sewn and embroidered in a manner reminiscent of how I work with materials when I am making. This thesis features drawings and images I have made to give insight to my thinking, explaining and describing. The drawings accompany my experience of thinking and become both object and subject in the methodology of my inquiry. They help me to think about what I am doing and give form to what inhabits my thinking (Arendt in (Young-Bruehl, 2006, p.80) in order to present them in the public spaces of my thesis. For instance, the first of my drawings explains the scope of my inquiry, and becomes a metaphorical anchor point that moors my thesis. The images from my scrapbook are photo images of pencil drawings, and at times are not as sharp or bright as I would like them to be. The photos enable me to weave my scrapbook into my thesis as part of my telling.

The other medium I use to make things is language. I paint, embroider, shape and re-shape this thesis giving it dimension, focus, brightness and colour through a deliberate and mindful use of a centi-culture of language (Malaguzzi in Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1998). I combine words, phrases, text fonts and styles into creating aesthetic objects in manners that express life-worlds captured within, between and through the pages of narrative. ‘Life-world’ is a term that recurs in the thesis suggesting

the space where we experience the world we inhabit and that inhabits us in our everyday existence (van Manen, 1990). “Life-world” suggests that my imagining and interpretation of life experience has “thick description” (Geertz, 1973 p. 312), thick texture—phrases that encapsulate purposeful descriptions of inner-worlds as well as visibly and invisibly lived experience. “Thick”, “thickened” and at times talking of “thickening meaning”, inscribes and traces Clifford Geertz’s (1973) borrowing of Gilbert Ryle’s notion of “thick description”, as “thinking and reflecting” and “the thinking of thoughts” onto my acts of meaning making through writing, drawing, collecting, pasting, arranging, re-arranging and making.

The first drawing, Figure 1, *The Landscapes of this Thesis and Companions to my Inquiry* indicates where this thesis sits within a landscape of scholarly thought and philosophical inquiry—my drawing shows a canvas upon which I embroider my narrative. Drawing and sketching sifts and sorts through ideas. The graphic (Figure 1) looks like an atom, and whispers of the essences stitched together to form the tapestry-canvas of my inquiry. The act of drawing my thesis’s tapestry-canvas and calling it the landscape of this thesis re-presents speaking as showing. A deliberate act, embracing and utilising a centi-culture of language, of which I write about in pages to come. I am laying bare at the outset an example of living my thinking—ways of being I describe theoretically and aspire to honour.

There is in Figure 1 an overlapping series of elongated ovals that represents the landscape of the thesis. Each oval represents a field—adults, art, imagination, scholarly inquiry, philosophy, children, children’s literature, beings from a world within and a world outside the self, web projects, science and education. The fields intersect and surround a yellow centre which is encircled with blue to suggest its emphatic density. That the elliptical representations of the fields and companions to this work are set

slightly off-centre suggests my beginning tentativeness as I set out on my quest. As an interlacing of scholarly inquiry with lived experience, this becomes a landscape in the realm of the human sciences where a phenomenological poetic quest narrative can take place.

There are two terms I use in my documenting and interpreting and I must grasp them clearly before going further — ‘outwith’ and ‘within’. In this thesis I mean ‘within’ to refer to one’s inner world of imagining and thinking. A world within is often invisible to others, unless one chooses to make it visible by communicating it to others through word, image, action or voice. ‘Outwith’ is of Scottish origin. It is used to describe someone who has lived out of a place for a time. I use it to describe the world we occupy and live in, and which is visible to others, the world we share outside our inner lives. Thus in relation to the children that I work with I am like an ‘outlander’, outwith the children’s inner experience of web projects—I am living outwith the way they are living within the web projects. My reader too is like an outlander, living ‘outwith’ my thesis life-world.

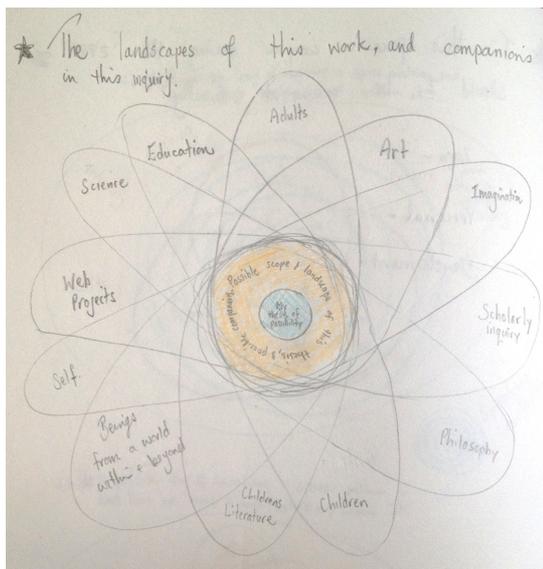


Figure 1. *The Landscapes of this Thesis and Companions to my Inquiry*

A Bricoleur – “I’m a great hand at inventing things”

In *Through The Looking Glass* Lewis Carroll’s knight talks to Alice about his inventions, “I’m a great hand at inventing things. Now, I daresay you noticed, the last time you picked me up, that I was looking rather thoughtful?” (1872/1994, p. 133). I recognise in the knight a creative disposition akin to my own, and imagine myself as an ‘inventor knight’. I am introduced to Claude Levi-Strauss by Sherry Turkle (2005) in *Life on the Screen. Identity in the Age of the Internet*, and to “theoretical tinkering—by which individuals and cultures use the objects around them to develop and assimilate ideas” (p.48). I seek out Levi-Strauss and recognise my ‘inventor knight’ self in his descriptions of thinking and making. Multiple qualitative methodologies that occur in this thesis may be viewed as *bricolage*, and I as researcher, *bricoleur*. I am a “Jack of all trades or a kind of do-it-yourself person” (Levi-Strauss, 1966, p.17). Levi-Strauss (1966) describes *bricolage* as a work of combining, shaping and re-shaping a set of elements in a new way (1966, pp. 16-26). Working as *bricoleur* leads me into making a unique thesis. There are ideas and phrases, which have been spoken before by great thinkers, philosophers, artists, writers and scientists and they are used with care in a manner unique to my quest-narrative , because I am me. Evelyn Fox Keller (1983) writes in *A Feeling for the Organism – The Life and work of Barbara McClintock*,

Every scientist comes to his (her) subject with a world view that is uniquely his (her) own – a world view reflected by his (her) relations to people as well as to his (her) subject. Each brings a distinct set of interests – interests stamped by his or her own personality. As this study illuminates its palette of colour, it discloses my interests , my world view, and my moral and ethical self. So from the outset the subject of this study, the object of this

study, and how it is brought forth is all indelibly stamped with,
through and by who I am. (p. 49)

Stamped with who I am and the life-world of my being brings thus originality to my work, in its conceptualisation and presentation. I recognise Italo Calvino's (1987) words as those of a writer working as *bricoleur* "that writing is purely and simply a process of combination among given elements" (p. 17)—it is as though he has watched me work.

There is no equivalent for *bricoleur* in English, its closest translation being 'handyman', but Levi-Strauss' does not use it like the English. Levi-Strauss's (1966) *bricoleur* collects and holds elements on the basis that "they may come in handy"(p18). Originality becomes a construction of the gathered in which elements are not procured according to a predetermined design, but emerge from a complete reorganisation of the collected elements. Things are organised in a way, which would never have been "the same as 'one' vaguely imagined nor as some other one which might have been preferred to it" (Levi-Strauss, 1966, p. 19).

I thicken the meaning of *bricolage* in relation to creating a unique thing with words spoken by Brenda Ueland (2013),

everybody is original, if he tells the truth, if he speaks from himself. But it must be from his true self ... Jennings at John Hopkins, who knows more about heredity and the genes and chromosomes than any man in the world, says that no individual is exactly like any other individual, that no two identical persons have ever existed. Consequently, if you speak or write from yourself you cannot help being original. (p. 4)

I write, and speak from myself, and narrate a story that is original in its telling, and is as such, a new object, and subject, a new contribution to teaching and learning research and knowledge.

In the concrete life-world of lived experience, a close knit set of practices in inquiry provides ways of understanding the puzzle of understanding, and creating new tools, methods and techniques to deepen and apply it in school classrooms. Bricolage works well for me to explain my multiple qualitative methodologies because it is pragmatic, strategic and self-reflexive. In relation to the object and subjects that appear, I can situate myself ontologically as well as epistemologically as an educator in a classroom and as a real life person. Practising hermeneutics and phenomenology particularly permits me this. In *bricolage* I can bring together, in unifying gestures, patterns and practices found in ethnography, essentially those of auto-ethnographer, memoirist, poet and *bricoleur*. Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln (2008) explain how this might happen in qualitative research.

The qualitative researcher as *bricoleur*, or maker of quilts, uses the aesthetic and material tools of his or her craft, deploying whatever strategies, methods, or empirical materials as are at hand (Becker, 1998,p.2). If the researcher needs to invent, or piece together, new tools or techniques, he or she will do so. Choices regarding which interpretive practices to employ are not necessarily made in advance. As Nelson et al. (1992) note, the “choice of research practices depends upon the questions that are asked, and the questions depend on their context, and what the researcher can do in that setting”. (p. 5)

Thus my methodology is going to emerge. It includes writing as a method and methodology of inquiry. My writing evolves from speaking—me speaking with children, children speaking to me and my inner speaking. I use “speak” and “speaking” and other variants of these words throughout my work and add texture and meaning to these words in coming pages. The writing forms that tell my scholarly journey are narrative prose, visual representation (visual speaking) and a final found poetic response. My thesis echoes with my accumulated life experience, habits of mind and living, situated in Tasmanian and Australian culture. As *bricolage* my work feels more complex than that of a handyman. My making and doing as *bricoleur* is like the *bricolage* spoken of by Joe Kincheloe (2001), a complex mix of philosophical, observational and interpreted lived experiences, creating a synergy gathered from multiple perspectives enabled by life on the boundaries where knowledge disciplines and fields collide (Kincheloe, in Denzin and Lincoln, 2001 pp. 679-691).

My research’s axiology, its ethics, aesthetics and moral values, is expressed implicitly and explicitly within and through this thesis and follows my own moral requirement to contribute to the discipline and field of good education, to ensure I honour children’s voices, observed experience and their perceptions of web project experiences. Sitting at the moral core of my teaching and learning is a desire to ensure that children are provided with the greatest opportunity to be the best person they can be in their living, at school, and beyond, and because of this, imagining, re-imagining, creating and wondering oscillate at the centre of this thesis’s axiological sphere.

Epistemological threads interlace, holding this thesis to particular times and places. They are threads, which are reflective, subjective and transitional. My research is organised in ways that emerge from an intentional seeking of possibility arising from my disposition towards “epistemological pluralism” and “constructionism”—learning by

making (Turkle & Papert, 1991). My scholarly focus is a study of lived experience within the ordinary goings on of school life and it is because of this I refer to my research as hermeneutically and phenomenological (Gadamer, 1975/2006; Gallagher, 1992; Sokolowski, 2000; van Manen, 1990) My hermeneutical phenomenological disposition orients my interpreting and seeing, allowing me to observe the ordinary in ways that make it extraordinary.

Figure 1 might be viewed as a visualisation of a hermeneutic circle. The circle at the centre of my atom-like drawing shows a space where the whole of my thesis can sit, and at the same time it shows each ovular section drawn to represent this thesis's field of inquiry, dimensions of experience, and subjects, sitting potentially in balance, while possibly suggesting a tension that holds the parts together in the context of the whole. As I muse upon my drawing I think of language and its malleability, of piecing phrases and sentences together, and that as we speak or write we continually re-contextualise and clarify our thinking of each part in relation to the whole.

I imbue Figure 1 with atom like characteristics, motion, oscillation and energy. Picture the image I have conjured dancing and spiralling in a space of possibility. As I do this I intuitively find myself led into the tensions and balances I imagine to exist within a hermeneutic circle. Figure 1 is a conversation using visual language and it speaks just as clearly of the hermeneutic circle as the following words.

The circular dynamic between part and whole becomes a way of describing the (pre-philosophical) structure of everyday human understanding. Experience, thought and language are hermeneutic in the sense that they involve a constant dynamic between fore-conceptions, which are grounded not in nature but culture, and interpretation. Together they comprise tradition, which is not just

inert past but also a dialogue between past, present and future.

(Lawn, 2006, p. 57)

Knitting is something I do. Knitting, I meditate stitch by stitch, inch by inch, on tension, looseness, tightness, just rightness, needle size, yarn colour and thinness or thickness, pattern, utility. My mind and hands are occupied during times of anxiety and what others might view as idleness, listening to music, to speakers, calm in the midst of activity like children's play or a group discussion or partying. I can knit understanding with my needles and yard into a textured fabric with pattern, purpose and artistry. My drawing, *Knitting a Thinking Journal and Thesis into Being* (Figure 2), shows this kind of textual enrichment.

My drawing of knitting is a visual metaphor, another tool or heuristic, for showing the way in which my thesis comes together—how it is made. It shows the knitting together of, and forming of ideas and thought into an object to sit in wonder upon. It knits together my ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology into an artefact of living interpretation. The knitted object in my drawing represents this thesis-narrative.

And where is a Literature Review?

Literature reviews are part of a traditional structure of academic papers, however a newer tradition is taking hold in narrative inquiry. I have not included a traditional literature review in this work. Conle (2000) writes of a different approach to literature reviews in narrative inquiry. She writes,

Many narrativist researchers in education continuously weave explorations of the literature into their work as the need arises to understand a particular issue from a wider perspective. This mode is particularly congruent to narrative studies because it allows the

exploration of literature to be integrated into the storylines. (p. 209)

Conle’s words reflect how I have constructed this thesis. I refer to literature and weave it in where it fits, to strengthen meaning and build connections and contexts.

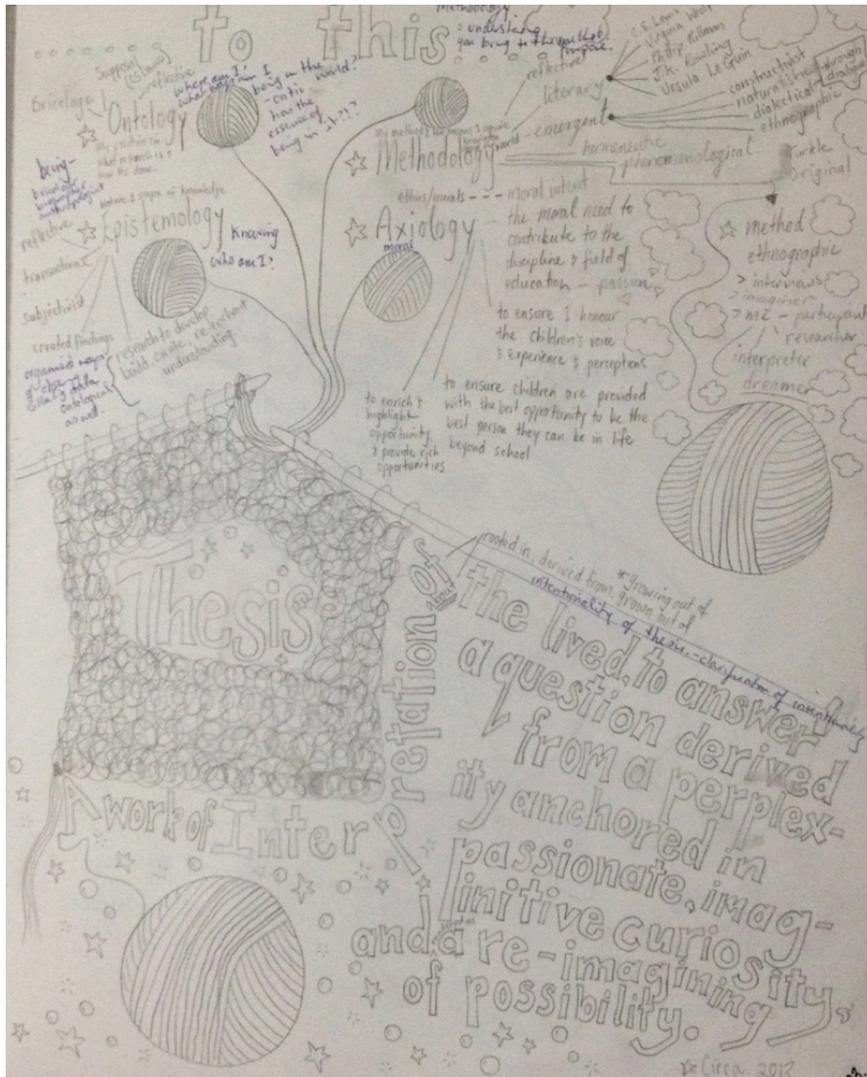


Figure 2. Knitting a Thinking Journal and Thesis into Being

The circle I gather around my subject of research—my philosopher, scientific, literary, writer, artist and child companions are my “writer friends” (Conle, 2000, p. 210), and they are pulled into my work because I have “personally come into some sort

of relationship, some sort of conversation” (p. 210) with them that encircles my narrative quest.

Weaving literature through this thesis demonstrates my desire to link my inquiry to the world beyond my experience of web projects and this thesis. Again I defer to Conle (2000), she writes, “I wanted to link the particular, individual life-world that I was exploring to the world around me” (p. 209). I link an individual life-world that I explore, and create, to the world in the process of creating this thesis.

Lingering, Moodling and Thinking Through in Different Ways

Carl Leggo, professor and poet, says,

More and more I find my living and teaching and researching
are poem-making—meandering, lingering, constantly surprised by
twists and turns revealing views and vistas that take the breath
away and then fill me with oxygen enough to explode the lungs.
(Leggo (2001) in Prendergast, Leggo, & Sameshima, 2009, p.
xxxiv)

From the very beginning of this enterprise I was exploding within. I began to keep a scrapbook (Figure 3). It so fills me with *joie de vivre* that it always sits beside me as I write. There in are pencilled and pasted all the graphics and ideas within this thesis, toyed with, represented, “thickened” Geertz’s (1973, p. 312) and “moodled” (Ueland, 2013, p. 32) upon, a kind of thinking-collage, visual poem-making. I imagine my scrapbook sitting within the centre of my atom-like drawing in Figure 1.

I also imagine my scrapbook as the ‘knitting needles’ in Figure 2, the means for knitting together the landscape, characters and challenges which comprise the scholarly dimension of my inquiry quest. Melding together thoughts, knitting a metaphor for

pinning down ideas, connections and possibility, a way to give them form and stability so that they cross from words to a nailed down, needled down state. I recall Virginia Woolf's words in Nigel Nicholson's (2000) biography of her, "Unless you catch ideas on the wing and nail them down, you will soon cease to have any" (p.78).

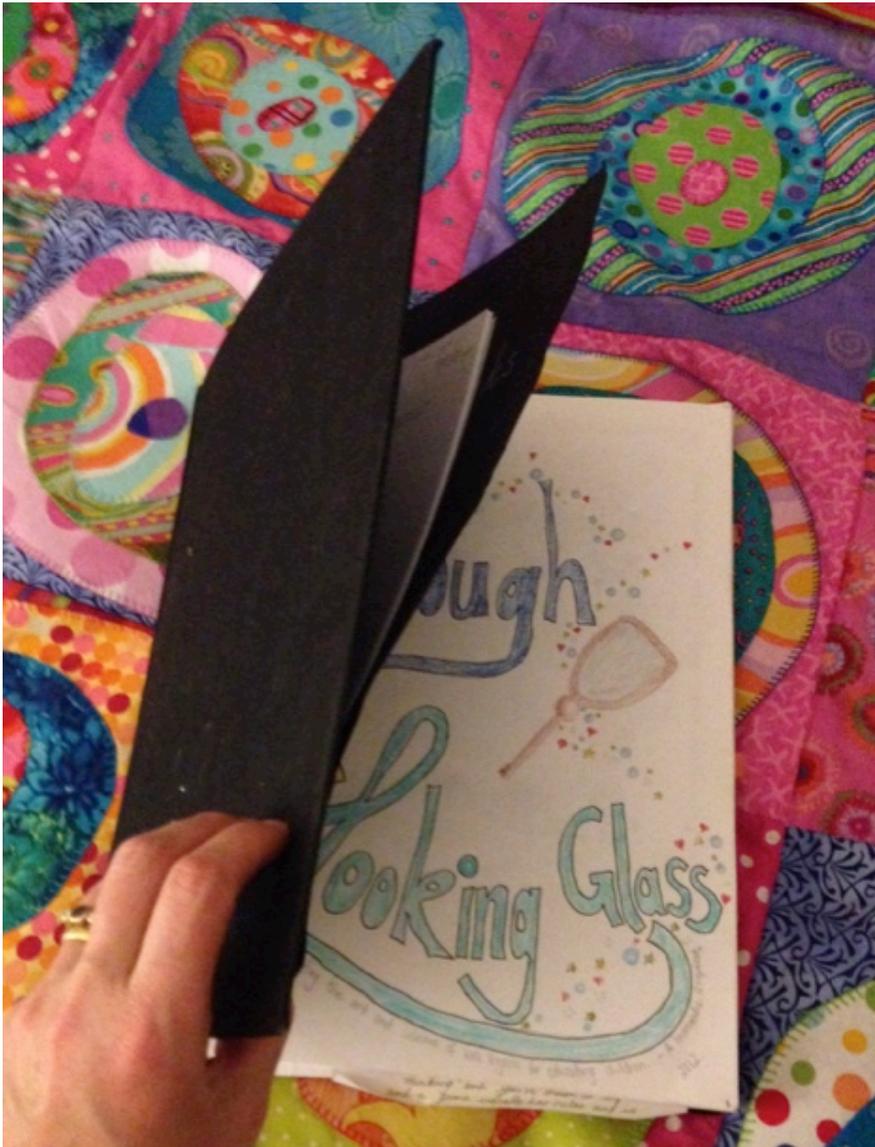


Figure 3. My Scrapbook, glimpsing within

My scrapbook is alchemic—it converts base materials into gold, where my thoughts, imaginings and re-imaginings are set down outside myself, making them preciously visible outwith. My quest to find out what a web project is, and what web projects are for, takes me to new possibilities in ways I had not imagined when I set forth in my knightly guise (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Me, in my Knightly Guise

Chapter 2 is a retelling of how web projects entered my professional life and thinking in the first place and how they became evocative objects for my own thinking and my children's learning.

In the diversity of my *bricolage* and the knitting together of the themes of my thesis and scrapbook with unifying gestures, I travel through new visualisations of how to talk with children, how to ignite children's wondering and imagining, and fire up their

learning within web projects. In two gestures, Chapters 3 and 4, I create a first new and original pack of cards. These cards create opportunities for making children's thinking visible and encourage and value a centi-culture of language (Malaguzzi, 1998) for children to express themselves. A second set of cards appears in Chapter 4 and enables the children to compare and contrast web projects with a number of popular work, game and play activities such as dress-ups, Lego©, NXT-Lego© and chasings.

Listening to the children with intentionality brought about many conversations to linger within, sort and sift through, and interpret, Chapters 5 and 6. Patterns become displayed in the children's learning as visualisations, interactions, activities approaches and proximities exhibited in Chapter 7. Out of these acts of pattern- and connection-making, wondering and *bricolage* (Levi-Strauss 1966; Turkle, 2005), an alethiometer (Pullman, 2007) emerges, Chapter 8, as another unifying gesture to help navigate and interpret the children's thinking. As well the alethiometer becomes a way to evaluate experiences of web projects, which often appear to be too ineffable to describe and seem sometimes inexplicable in terms of the more profound reasons we might believe make web projects worthwhile in primary classrooms.

With the pack and set of cards I learn to guide children's speaking of web projects, and witness what could possibly hold children in a thrall of web project enchantment. With my alethiometer I can learn to sense the autonomy with which children can move between and through dimensions of work, game and play. In chapter 9, I learn how teachers, if they come into their full teaching presence, can learn to use web projects to enchant learning.

In my gesturing towards a unifying kind of understanding, as *bricoleur*, I can venture on, exploring zones of potential understanding that I can locate within the self, and

choose to moor it in Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978 and 1987) to which I have been long attached before coming to think of this known proximal zone in a different way, as a Proximal Zone of Engagement, Chapter 10.

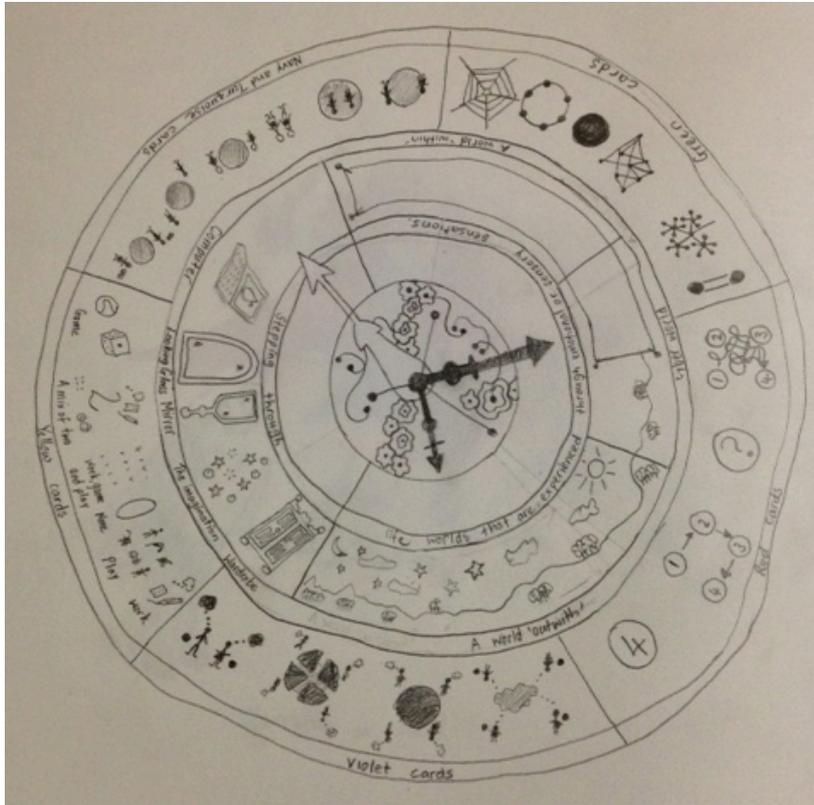


Figure 5 An Alethiometer to Navigate this Quest by

Living and humouring a disposition towards re-imagining possibility, I bring mindfulness into the magic of small, ordinary questions that precipitate my quest. In my closing Chapter 11, I come full circle into the magic that mindfulness promises to teachers, possibilities for enlivening web projects as both art and science as a way to re-enchanted education. In circling 360, I come back to the beginning, to Chapter 1 (pp.41-42) to Carroll's poem and I make my own love gift to teachers and children to tell of my research—I offer a found poem.

Chapter 1 — *Stepping Through*

In *Through the Looking Glass* (1872/1994) Carroll's prose describe Alice's *entré* and quest , into a parallel world. He writes,

Let's pretend the glass has got all soft like gauze, so that we can get through. Why, turning into a sort of mist now, I declare! It'll be easy enough to get through –

She was up on the chimney-piece while she said this, though she hardly knew how she got there. And certainly the glass was beginning to melt away, just like a bright silvery mist.

In another moment Alice was through the glass, and had jumped lightly down into the Looking-glass room. (p. 21)



Figure 6. *Through the Looking Glass* (Leibovitz, 2003, p.250)

Alice's transition from her visible, everyday life-world through to a parallel looking glass world is an act of "stepping through", a liminal moment signalling a crossing. The

looking glass world in the first few minutes that Alice inhabits it, is a room ordinary, extraordinary, perplexing and bewitching. When I think of Annie Liebovitz's image of Alice stepping through the looking glass in her fashion spread for American Vogue in 2003, I feel myself pulled into it and imagine myself as Liebovitz's Alice—stepping through into a research life-world. The anticipation of what may lie beyond the threshold in the image is magnetic. I want to enter that place. I muse on the enthusiasm, fascination and thrill Carroll's Alice radiates as she begins her adventure—both ordinary and extraordinary. In my inquiry, children step through into web projects in a way that mirrors Alice's experience. They step from their routine, everyday encounters with schooling into a happening that appears ordinary until it is shown through the *minuté* of their speaking to be extraordinary.

In my inquiry there is more than one looking glass and there are different ways that I use a looking glass metaphor. My looking glass is used to illuminate, reflecting different observations, connections and imaginings within my thesis. One looking glass is digital, another is conversation, and yet others show themselves as I quest forward. The structural arc of this thesis is modelled on a broad tradition of texts, which fall under the genre of narrative, particularly fantasy, fairy tale and quest.

In the poem that forms the epigraph of *Through the Looking Glass* (1865-1872) Carroll speaks of his work as a fairy tale. I think of both Alice books as fairy tale-fantasy-quests, grouping them with stories such as *The Chronicles of Narnia* (1950-1956) and *The Harry Potter* (1997–2008) novels. I use the terms fairy tale, fantasy quest, quest, story, narrative tale and narrative quest interchangeably in my thinking and at times in this thesis. This research is written in the vein of a quest, and it echoes with fairy tale and fantasy elements. It describes a constructed life-world, which is a collage of technology and fairy tale, art and science, natural and man-made, contemporary and past, imagined and real.

This thesis journeys through a poly-modal life-world of my lived experience, and through making this disquisition becomes—a looking glass of my creation, a portal and a reflective material. I use my looking-glass-monograph to purposefully look into another world—a possible world that sits within and outwith.

This thesis's life-world mirrors Alice's looking glass world, there is a cast of characters, and there are settings, challenges and landscapes. My efforts to describe, and interpret my inquiry about children and web projects draws not just from Carroll's works, but also scholarly works from philosophy, science and art, and works written by authors I love. The authors I pull into my *bricoleur's* circle write for children, young adults and adults, and their works are imbued with elements of re-imagining, fantasy, fairy tale and quest. I lose myself amongst these "writer friends" (Conle, 2000, p. 210) again and again—J.K. Rowling, Ursula Le Guin, C.S. Lewis and Virginia Woolf. The authors I reference are not limited to the literary kind, who spin prose into narrative, I also include screenwriters and poets.

I view myself as writer within these pages, in a manner not dissimilar to the way Drusilla Modjeska describes her writerly inquiry in the opening pages of *Stravinsky's Lunch* (2001), a work about Stella Bowen and Grace Cossington Smith, two Australian artists, both enigmatic, one a bohemian, the other a spinster. Modjeska writes,

They are like mirror images of each other, two sides of a coin. One left a memoir and hundreds of letters. The other left barely a word – instead the glory of oil and crayon and watercolour, and the elliptical evidence of her sketchbooks. And yet there is something in their stories that is the same, not the content but the struggle and achievement, the dilemma and preoccupation, courage and hard-won wisdom, differently expressed.

I tell their stories, similar and different both, as a koan in my own practice as a woman and writer. I tell them to understand.

(Modjeska, 2002, p. 22)

Stravinsky's Lunch (Modjeska, 2002) is an ethnographic inquiry spoken through a finely spun, scholarly narrative that meditates on two people, the way they speak of their lived experience and the objects they create in their living, and of which they speak through. Modjeska's work is a telling in which I participate, as reader. I read, interpret and live within an ebb and flow of ideas bound by paper, its pages enfolding me in the telling of a story, and as cited in *The Philosophy of Hans-Georg Gadamer*, I have "no other function than to disappear completely into the achievement of the full harmony of understanding" (Alexander, 1997, p. 339). Modjeska's words resonate with what happens in the narrative I inscribe—myself and the children in this thesis become "like mirror images of each other, two sides of the same coin" (Modjeska, 2002, p. 22). The children leave hours of speaking behind them, and I, an aesthetic scrapbook of words and images and my thesis, in a kind of "narrative echoing" (Conle, 2000, p. 202). In the children's and my artefacts there is, "something that is the same, not the content but the struggle and achievement, the dilemma and preoccupation, courage and hard-won wisdom, differently expressed" (Modjeska, 2002, p. 22). And like Modjeska, I tell the story of this research as woman and writer, and to understand.

Writing as a Method of Inquiry

Laurel Richardson (2003) shows how writing as a method of inquiry is a way which might well describe the scribing and knitting together of this work. She says,

... although we usually think about writing as a mode of 'telling' about the social world, writing is not just a mopping-up

activity at the end of a research project. Writing is also a way of 'knowing' – a method of discovery and analysis. By writing in different ways, we discover new aspects of our topic and our relationship to it. Form and content are inseparable. (p. 345)

My writing is not a mopping up activity, it is a way of coming to know a scholarly object, scholarly experience and scholarly inquiry focused on a subject (phenomenon), that utilises writing as a method of inquiry (Richardson & Adams St. Pierre, 2008, p. 473). Caught up in *Stravinsky's Lunch* I see the possibility it offers and inspires. It provokes understanding through a crystallisation and refraction of object and subject (Richardson & Adams St. Pierre, 2008, p. 478). Laurel Richardson and Elizabeth Adams St. Pierre (2008) in *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials* describe validity for post modernist research texts using a crystal as their metaphor. I take up their idea of crystals as a metaphor to describe my writing as a method of inquiry, they write,

The central imaginary is the substances, transmutations, multidimensionalities and angles of approach. Crystals grow, change, and are altered, but they are not amorphous. Crystals are prisms that reflect externalities and refract within themselves, creating different colours, patterns and arrays casting off in different directions. What we see depends on our angle of repose – not triangulation but rather crystallisation... Crystallisation, without losing structure, deconstructs the traditional idea of "validity"; we feel how there is no single truth, and we see how texts validate themselves. Crystallisation provides us with a deepened, complex, and thoroughly partial understanding of the topic. Paradoxically, we know more and doubt what we know. Ingeniously, we know there is always more to know. (pp. 478-79)

Crystallisation sits with my metaphor of “stepping through” to explore that which maybe experienced outwith and possibly within. Crystallisation is another that helps explain the validity of writing as an act of inquiry.

Earlier I spoke of the circular patterning hermeneutics can be said to have and of my scrapbook narrative of this work. Writing, scribed as text, or as an amalgam of graphic language and written word, is a way of knowing, and a method of discovery that shows a hermeneutical and phenomenological disposition. I have constructed texts that, constitute, each one, different expressions of the same phenomenon, they are objects created by adopting a crystalline disposition towards a common lived experience.

I pause.

I have three threads that spin together to create this thesis—the lived experience I investigate, my scrapbook and the writing of this text.

What can be said of my experience as researcher, seeking understanding by adopting crystalline, refracted writing as inquiry methodology?

I reflect.

I imagine the three threads, spinning into one and by donning my crystalline lens, I see that they can be seen as an example of living within, between and through a hermeneutic circle. Chris Lawn (2006) explains the hermeneutic circle in the following way,

The whole is to be understood in the relationship to the parts, and the parts the whole. A good way of illustrating the hermeneutic circle is to think about the activity of reading a novel. When reading one is always anticipating a total meaning in the text; the resolution of narrative conflicts, the working out of the

story and so forth. The reader always has in mind a desire to make all of the individual parts of the text fit together by anticipating the book's overall meaning. The meaning of the book is seen as unfolding and the end of the book is its resolution. At the same time as anticipating a totalised meaning one is always in the process of reading one small part of the work; first a word, then a sentence, then paragraph. These parts of the work contribute to the total meaning of the work so one can speak here of a constant movement between parts and the whole. The signification of the words in a text are not to be taken in isolation but as a unit of meaning that is constantly in the process of modification in relation to the implied meaning of the text. (pp. 46-47)

Jerome Bruner (1996) says,

The object of hermeneutic analysis is to provide a convincing and non-contradictory account of what a story means, a reading in keeping with the particulars that constitute it. This creates the famous "hermeneutic circle" - trying to justify the "rightness" of one reading of a text not by reference to the observable world or the laws of necessary reason, but by reference to other alternative readings. (p. 137)

My narrative inquiry text is one reading, and as part of a whole. It is also, significantly, a whole in itself. My alternative text, my scrapbook, as a parallel yet different expression of my experience of a hermeneutic circle becomes integrated within the whole in circulating patterns. Both presentations spin threads that are expressions of understanding communicated as writing and display my eclectic disposition towards research method and methodology.

Entwining Speaking with Conversation and Dialogue

Kenneth Paul Kramer and Mechthild Gawlick (2003) quote Martin Buber from *The Way of Man*, “There is something that can only be found in one place. It is a great treasure, which may be called the fulfilment of existence. The place where this treasure can be found is the place on which one stands” (Kindle Edition, Loc 151).

And in this thesis, the place in which I stand, is a speaking and talking of possibility. The treasure spoken of in this text’s “life of dialogue” (Kramer & Gawlick 2003, Loc 185) is the *telos* that underpins this thesis, a seeking to understand. My thesis is an act of speaking in which understanding is located within an interplay between myself, the phenomenon I study and this text. It is comprised of elements and aspects that are found in cyberspace, the real world (outwith, experienced with the senses and lying outside) and a world within (a life-world situated and inhabited within the self, in the mind).

In my quest, speaking holds a unique place. It can be seen as parts within, and as the whole of this thesis. In my inquiry, harmony in talking is the fairy dust that turns everyday lived experience into magical re-enchanting. Speaking in the form of talking and graphical showing is the primary means of data collection in my quest. I use talking with the words speaking, conversation and dialogue. Bohm (2004b) writes that,

dialogue comes from the Greek word *dialogos*. *Logos* means ‘the word’, or in our case we would think of the “meaning of the word”. And *dia* means ‘through’ ... A dialogue can be among any number of people, not just two. Even one person can have a sense of dialogue within himself. (p. 7).

He goes on to say, “Dialogue may not be concerned directly with truth – it may arrive at truth, but it is concerned with meaning. If the meaning is incoherent you will never arrive at truth” (p. 43). In this thesis truth is shaped and re-shaped through dialogue as a disclosure of possibility, it is concerned with seeking to understand, make meaning and as “the impulse for truth” (Sokolowski, 2008, p. 21). I have more to say on this in the coming pages. This research is derived from dialogue that takes form through conversation anchored by five thematic points.

I knit into my meaning of dialogue, “the passionate and disciplined process of inquiry and dialogue itself, as the dynamic conversation of a community that keeps testing old conclusions and coming to new ones” (Palmer, 1998, p. 104). Parker J. Palmer (1998) goes on to write,

It is our commitment to the conversation itself, our willingness to put forward our observations and interpretations for testing by the community and to return the favour to others. To be in the truth, we must know how to observe and reflect and speak and listen, with passion and with discipline, in the circle gathered around a given subject. (p. 104)

I contemplate.

I pause.

This narrative shows my commitment to the conversation of my *telos*. I observe, reflect, speak and listen, with passion and with discipline within a circle of objects and living things gathered around children’s experiences of web projects.

This thesis works to be “*a stream of meaning* flowing among and through us and between us...out of which may emerge some new understanding. something new which may not have been in the starting point at all. something creative” (Bohm, 2004b p.7).

I imagine this thesis as a living conversation which is sustained by, and which respects, and speaks as a community of truth as described by Palmer (1998) in *The Courage to Teach*, he writes, “The hallmark of a community of truth is in its claim that reality is a web of communal relationships, and we can know reality only by being in community with it” (p. 95).

Being in community, is inscribed into the layers of living that my thesis recounts. Margaret J. Wheatly and Myron Kellner-Rogers (1999) write about this.

When we link up with others, we open ourselves to yet another paradox. While surrendering some of our freedom, we open ourselves to even more creative forms of expression. This stage of being has been described as communion, because we are preserves as our selves but are shorn of our separateness or aloneness. Yet the meaning of who we are changes through our communion with them. We are identifiable as ourselves. But we have discovered new meaning and different contributions so we are no longer the same. (p. 53)

I dance on an edge of understanding and then step into recognition. An example of being in community is when the children speak with me about web projects. And when we each, surrender part of ourselves, and also open ourselves to creative forms of expression, and in doing so discover new meaning, and are shaped and re-shaped in its disclosure, we transcend each others' web project experience and make it our own.

Mellifluous dialogue is a harmonious expression of being in community, and it is visible in the children's web project speaking as lyrical melody, rhythmic cadence, a pentachord of harmonious dialogue that shows itself to be an example of dinergy. György Doczi (1981) describes dinergy as harmonious patterns that reveal themselves through nature and music, which are the result of,

...the energy creating process that transforms discrepancies into harmonies by allowing differences to complement each other. Dinergy accomplishes this through the power of certain proportions, analogous to musical and root harmonies, well known since antiquity, chief among them being the golden section. (p. 13)

The harmonies that embody the truths, found in design in its myriad of forms—art, nature, music, poetry and architecture, and expressed as the golden section or “golden thread” (Wales, Juniper, & Skelly, 2010, p. 85) are observed and intentionally used to guide the presentation of this thesis to speak in a manner akin to “the grammar of harmony” (Wales, Juniper, & Skelly, 2010, p. 88). Connections are made and possibilities are presented that are mindful of the harmonies that are present in the patterns of nature and can be seen as examples of the golden thread or section. When the children and I speak of web projects, I surrender to honeyed conversational rhythms, and melodic cadences of conversation that derive from lived experiences of web projects. I picture in my mind each conversation, maintaining its identity, and merging into a greater pattern, a complex whole where imagining happens, a golden space where the grammar of harmony is sought out and listened to.

Doczi (1981) describes this intersection and space of creation in the following way, “The power of the golden section to create harmony arises from its unique capacity to

unite the different parts of a whole so that each presents its own identity, and yet blends into the greater pattern of the singular whole” (p.13).

I work on the capacity of this thesis to become a blended, singular whole. Whether expressed through drawing, pattern, conversation or painting, to become harmonious in its telling and its spinning of speaking, conversation, and dialogue into method and methodology. Within it, speaking becomes more than talking, it assumes an identity of conversation-dialogue, a golden speaking, where ideas happen.

Seeking Conversation-Dialogue and Ways of Listening.

“In most gardens,” the tiger lily said, “they make the beds too soft – so that the flowers are always asleep.”

This sounded a very good reason, and Alice was quite pleased to know it. “I never thought of that before!” she said.

(Carroll, 1872/1994, p. 35)

This small exchange between a tiger lily and Alice illustrates and demonstrates an ebb and flow that leads to a new perspective and it is arrived at through, and with conversation-dialogue. A sense of translucence and clarity of thought as ideas are brought forth, and new connections are made in dialogue requires attentive listening.

Arriving in understanding through intentional listening of conversations, where learners converse, interact, imagine, create and learn is part of the hermeneutical and phenomenological *telos* of this thesis. Speaking occurs in the traditional oral manner as well as through the use of forum boards and e-mail, which I view as talking through writing. As talking about web projects happens and is cultivated, opportunities for developing connections between existing and new knowledge is fostered—learning is nurtured. Talking and speaking provide opportunities for learners, and enables learners to experiment with their thinking and ideas through language, particularly metaphor. By

observing, noting down, listening intentionally and guiding conversation I gather up the conversations for hermeneutic reflecting.

In Peter Weir's (1989) film of Thomas Schulman's Academy Award winning script for Best Original Screenplay, *Dead Poet's Society*, a story of children trying to be heard, there is a conversation between a student (Dalton) and the teacher (Mr Keating),

[Keating stands on his desk]

John Keating: *Why do I stand up here? Anybody?*

Dalton: *To feel taller!*

John Keating: *No!*

[Dings a bell with his foot]

John Keating: *Thank you for playing Mr. Dalton. I stand upon my desk to remind myself that we must constantly look at things in a different way.* (Schulman, 1989)

Meaning reveals itself in many ways and this thesis undertakes to attentively listen to children's experiences of three web projects, *The Flat Stanley Project*, *The MindsEye Monster Exchange* and *The Bunyips Project*. Part of my inquiry's intentionality is to purposefully listen to children and take up Mr. Keating's challenge and "constantly look at things in a different way" (Schulman, 1989). I mindfully set out to look from different viewpoints. I deliberately shift my perceptions, re-examine assumptions and make fresh connections. I create a web project investigation life-world with the children where making meaning of lived experience becomes visible, and opens up the world of web projects in a unique way. I do this to consciously shift my existing assumptions and open up ways of conducting my inquiry and interpreting the lived experiences I study. I undertake an original conceptualisation of research dialogue with children through the use of a pack

of specially created cards to support talking focused on the question “What is a web project?”

I pause.

I notice that I use the words ‘speaking’, ‘telling’, ‘talking’, ‘dialogue’ and ‘conversation’ interchangeably when I refer to children speaking with me about web projects.

The meaning of each word entwines in conversation-dialogue. I play with the words as an act of wondering, an exploration of nuance.

Conversation is derived via Middle English and Old French from the Latin *conversari*, keep company with. *Con* (with) and *versare*, from *vertere*, to turn. It suggests, “keep company with, in turn.” The *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (2007) defines the contemporary meaning of conversation to be “the informal interchange of information, ideas, etc., by spoken words; ability or proficiency in this. An informal spoken interchange, a talk” (p. 513).

“Speak” joins its variants as another important word family in my thesis. I give these words a thread of meaning from my *Oxford English Reference Dictionary* (1996) “make known or communicate”, “hold a conversation” and “communicate feeling” (p.1390). I spin this thread, adding to its texture. I use “speak” rather than “say” or “said” to enliven my telling, communicating conversational qualities that vibrate with varying strengths of energy that may be present in children at any one time.

Knitting conversation purposefully into formal conceptualisations of dialogue broadens dialogue to include a sense of informality and brushes an exchange of ideas with *joie-de-vivre*. I believe allowing such injection of delight does not diminish the authenticity and purpose of conversation and dialogue—it bolsters it. This fits

comfortably with children and the way in which they interact, talk and play. I am not suggesting that the speaking I enter into with children in this thesis is informal waffle, but that it has a sense of informality overlaying a structure and purpose built around the object, subject, focus and experience of this understanding quest. The conversations in this thesis are structured around a set of questions, prompts and props with the express purpose of exploring and retrieving meaning about children's lived experience of web projects within a set of defining parameters.

Barbara McClintock, geneticist and Nobel Laureate, lived "in conversation" (Turkle, 2011, p. 19) with the objects of her research and as Turkle (2011) cites in *Falling For Science. Objects in Mind*, and Keller (1983) writes,

Over and over again she tells us one must have the time to look, the patience to "hear what the material has to say to you," openness to "let it come to you." Above all one must have a feeling for the organism"... "McClintock's feeling for the organism is not simply longing to behold the "reason revealed in this world." It is a longing to embrace the world in its very being, through reason and beyond." (pp. 198-199)

I am living in conversation with myself, the children and the web projects in this research.

Hans George Gadamer (1975/2006) speaks of "the conversation that we are ourselves" (p. 370),—five words only, illustrating the central role conversation plays in his hermeneutics. He urges us to see ourselves as conversation. As Lawn (2006) suggests that when Gadamer says, "... 'we are a conversation' ... we are thoroughly bound and bound up with language"(p. 80). Limiting the scope of language to a landscape of adult dialogue and conversation is potentially problematic in this quest. If

we are “bound and bound up in language,” might this be assuming this is what happens mainly in adult language?

I pause.

I champion a view that children speaking in conversation-dialogue can be more than talking dominated by adults. The conversation-dialogues that unfold seek to actively include a variety of speaking forms, including representational speaking. Conversation-dialogue becomes a living experience of linguistic pluralism, emphasising thoughts and speaking children contribute there by minimising a risk of adult dominated conversation that could eventuate, and tilt this work’s lived experience towards an adult’s experience of web projects.

Gadamer (1975/2006) writes in *Truth and Method*,

...all writing is a kind of alienated speech, and its signs need to be transformed back into speech and meaning. Because the meaning has undergone a kind of self-alienation through being written down, this transformation back is the real hermeneutic task. (pp. 394-395)

I view this as an invigorating possibility. The real task of Gadamer’s hermeneutics, says Lawn is to “[revitalise] the written word in such a way that it returns to the condition of speech over writing” (Lawn, 2006, p81).

I turn back to *Truth and Method* and pause on the following words, “Understanding occurs in interpreting” (p. 390). My thesis as a portal through which flow ideas between myself, the children, the web projects and my reader. I research, work, and write, hermeneutically, interpreting meaning to more deeply understand the lived educational experience of web projects. I apprehend and aim to imbue meaning to words, returning

them to ‘speaking’, not ‘speech’—I desire words to be active, and present in conversation. There is more to say in the coming pages of conversation, dialogue and valuing many forms of speaking.

I pause.

It is as through the subject of this narrative quest, the mode of its telling and the methodology of its doing has chosen me.

A Preference for Quest Narrative as Method and Methodology.

As I compose this text I show a preference for inquiry as narrative. Not just as a form for presenting research but also as a research methodology. By using narrative to describe my approach to writing this thesis, I enrich its usual meaning of spoken and written word with other representational forms of storytelling (collage, montage and visual essay), giving my expression of narrative a colourful, vivid and multi-modal meaning, an example of *di cento* (I will enlarge on this term in the coming pages).

As well as writing as hermeneutic methodology, my work loosely explores narrative structure as a possible interpretative framework in which I can interpret, and when writing I can “become-other, becoming of that of which we write and think” (Probyn, 1996, p. 153).

Narrative, as story, is at the heart of hermeneutics, as Bruner (1996) says, “the comprehension of narrative is hermeneutic” (p. 137) and I think of the writing of narrative to also be hermeneutic. In choosing narrative as part of my methodology I disclose my narrative self with and through text—as “action and speech” (Arendt, 1958). Hannah Arendt says,

Action and speech are so closely related because the primordial and specifically human act must at the same time contain the answer to the question asked of every newcomer: “Who are you?” This disclosure of who someone is, is implicit in both his words and deeds ... This disclosure of ‘who’ in contradistinction to ‘what’ somebody is – his qualities, gifts, talents, and shortcomings, which he may display or hide – is implicit in everything somebody says and does. It can be hidden only in complete silence and perfect passivity. (pp.178-179)

I write purposefully and as Ueland (2013) says, with “every sentence [I] write, [I] have learned something ... It has stretched [my] understanding” (p. 15).

Alongside this thesis, sits the other narration of my inquiry, the scrapbook (Figure 7) filled with words, images, drawings and collages—a lived and living human and hermeneutic artefact of my research, a phenomenon that reveals possible connections between meanings. My scrapbook injects meanings into the written work of the greater narrative, expressing sensory experience as it unfolds. Carola Conle (2000) wants to bring theoretical and artistic endeavour to the writing of thesis as narrative, narrative as inquiry and narrative as quest. Her work values narrative as a valid and deeply lived form of inquiry, she writes,

By letting our academic and our existential roads become one road in a narrative project, a tension-telos dynamic will pull us along toward greater understanding of our actions, our life and our traditions. In this sense, it is never completely subjective, but contributes to an understanding of those traditions. (p.212)

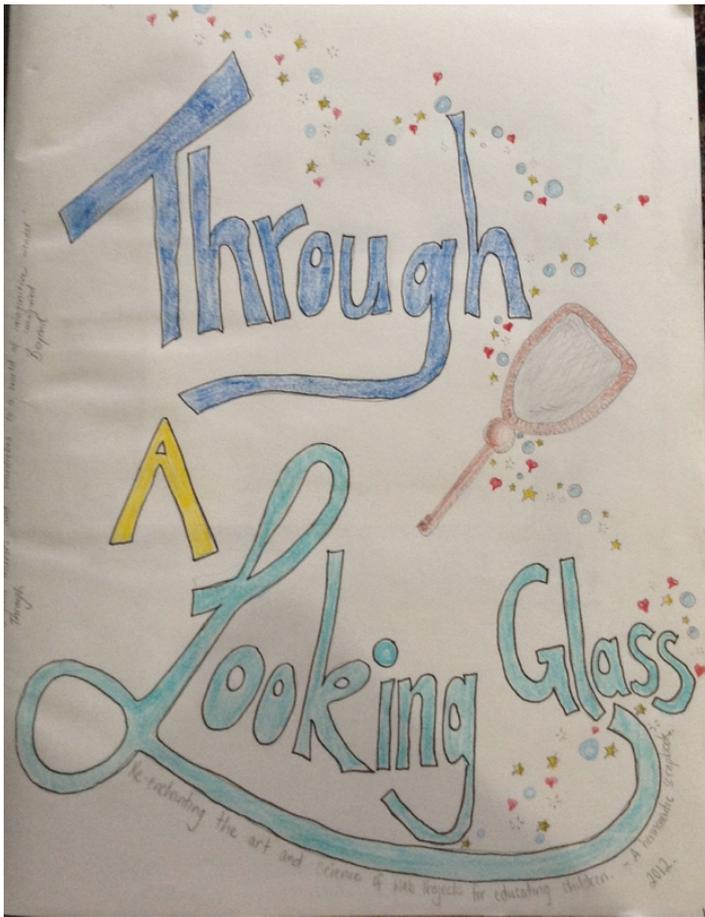


Figure 7 My scrapbook

Conle (2000) continues her thoughts, writing,

By merging theoretical and artistic endeavours that are firmly anchored to experiential phenomena with a personal/social tension-telos impetus, we perhaps stand a good chance to produce work that at the very least, is personally meaningful. At its best, the personal will be permeated with underlying cultural issues that narrative will clarify, or expose, and thus give the work a wider social significance. (p. 212)

I pause.

Seeking understanding, affirms itself as my *telos*, my quest.

Narrative is my speaking style and a strong thread in my emerging methodology.

I unfold, mould, re-mould and enfold.

In this thesis, narrative is both method and methodology.

Inquiry as Narrative, Narrative as Quest

This text as work, inquiry, art and narrative is the telling of a quest as action (doing), and as meaning (understanding). Just as knights embarked on quests seeking truth in the form of objects and ideas, I as questor, seek truth in the form of meaning and understanding, and an object, in the form of this thesis. I transition through this thesis's subject and inquiry focus, and recognise it to be a type of narrative-quest text.

Conle (2000) talks of narrative as quest and her words resonate with my thesis experience. She writes and quotes Donald P. Verene (1991),

The quest for knowledge about one's own life and identity is an ancient one and has motivated work which in self-narratives are not primarily literary pursuits, but fall into a tradition "grounded in the ancient project of self-knowledge"(Verene, 1991). These inquiries are philosophical quests relying on the possibility that to "understand something is to discover its origin and to [narratively] recreate its genesis (Verene, 1991, p.71)" in Conle, 2000, p.191).

Conle (2000) continues to assist me in my understanding of narrative as quest when she writes using Alasdair MacIntyre's (1984) description of a quest,

"[It] is clear that the medieval conception of a quest is not at all that of a search for something already adequately characterised, as miners search for gold or geologists for oil. It is in the course

of the quest and only through encountering and coping with the various particular harms, dangers, temptations and distractions which provide any quest with its episodes and incidents that the goal of the quest is finally to be understood (p.219)” (in Conle, 2000, p. 192)

Conle’s words echo a sense of quest that resonates with my own interpretation of what a quest is within this inquiry, Conle (2000) writes,

In narrative inquiry, the telos is inexplicit. It is the tacit end-in-view that drives the inquiry. The writing in personal narrative inquiry is therefore not arbitrary, but develops within the writing and within the dynamic of the writer’s life. One might compare it to a quest that presses for acknowledgement through inquiry (Conle, p. 193)

Jeff Howard (2008) writes of quests from a digital gaming perspective, and I refer to the quests he describes as ‘gaming quests’. Howard views gaming quests as an intersection of quest narratives and quest games, enfolding into his view the idea of gaming quests as unifying meaning and action. In his work *Quests: Design, Theory, and History in Games and Narratives* Howard views games and narratives as complimentary to one another and not in conflict with one another, he identifies enactment as a key to understanding his conceptualisation. Howard describes the idea of enactment examining the words of Jesper Juul,

Juul concisely defines the difference between a (gaming) quest and a narrative by focusing on the issue of performance activity, which requires the player of a game to cause events to occur through effort rather than passively observing as these events unfold.

Rather than dispensing with the events of narrative altogether, as many ludologists propose, Juul suggests that a game can be interactive and contain a strong story if a player must enact events. This quality of (gaming) quests can be more accurately referred to as ‘enactment’ rather than ‘interactivity’...enactment refers not just to random changes created by the player in a simulated world but rather to the overcoming of specific challenges that results in particular events. Enactment requires active, goal oriented effort, often in the form of balancing long-term and short-term goals. (p.1)

This thesis comes into being as both a quest-story, and as a lived journey. It is quest-narrative and narrative quest, two sides of the same coin. In my speaking I use both terms, and select which to use depending on the nuance I seek to highlight. Using quest first accentuates the journeying and seeking aspects of this work, using narrative first emphasises the story and lived experiences that are spoken.

Quest Narrative as Epistemological Pluralism

In the early 1990s Turkle and Seymour Papert (1991) wrote a ground-breaking paper entitled ‘Epistemological Pluralism and the Revaluation of the Concrete’. When I discovered this paper, I was fascinated. I had discovered a way to address an uneasy awkwardness that comes over me when I research and interpret. I do not wish to write and interpret with an empirical voice. I want to set forth ideas for consideration within a mindset of possibility. After reading this specific paper, I recognise that my unique way of viewing and working within the world, and my ways of telling this inquiry is valid and has scholarly integrity. I realise that my approach and way of being in my work is pluralistic rather than empirical. Turkle and Papert gift me, and allow me, to see a way

forward that is congruent with my own way of interacting, inhabiting, expressing and interpreting the world around me.

The projects appear to have been the same in their doing, yet the words the children speak communicate different experiences. Both cards acknowledge an experience that has aspects of togetherness and independence. Perhaps the children's speaking is referring to different stages of the project? My small conversationalists have moved on. This conversation is left hanging, and leaves my thinking in a place of unknowing, a space of negative capability (Keats, 2009) and I leave it there for now.

Encounters which Hint of Time.

Whisper a hint to Time, and round goes the clock in a twinkling.

(Carroll, 1865/1994, p. 84)

This narrative is not limited to my experience of stepping through a looking glass, it examines children's experiences of a web-based task and how deeply they live an experience (Turkle & Papert, 1991). It is not a chronological work and as such hints of time but is not tied to it—it deals with time as impression contextualised by a life stage, sometimes sitting in parallel with the physical world, and at other times with the internal world of the storyteller. Carroll's works *Through the Looking Glass* (1872/1994) and *Alice in Wonderland* (1865/1994) are examples of this. Carroll constructed and escaped into a parallel life-world not dissimilar to the making I describe in this inquiry. He also acknowledged in his work the distance between adulthood and childhood, and I wish to do that here as a point to orient myself by.

It seems right now to share Carroll's poem from the opening pages of *Through The Looking Glass* pre-empted before. The poem evinces a distance between childhood and adulthood that Carroll (1872/1994) observed.

Child of the pure unclouded brow
And dreaming eyes of wonder!
Though time be fleet, and I and thou
Are half a life asunder,
Thy loving smile will surely hail
The love-gift of a fairy-tale.

I have not seen thy sunny face,
Nor heard thy silver laughter;
No thought of me shall find a place
In thy young life's hereafter -
Enough that now thou wilt not fail
To listen to my fairy-tale.

A tale begun in other days,
When summer suns were glowing -
A simple chime, that served to time
The rhythm of our rowing -
Whose echoes live in memory yet,
Though envious years would say 'forget'.

Come, hearken then, ere voice of dread,
With bitter tidings laden,
Shall summon to unwelcome bed
A melancholy maiden!
We are but older children, dear,
Who fret to find our bedtime near.

Without, the frost, the blinding snow,
The storm-wind's moody madness -
Within, the firelight's ruddy glow,

And childhood's nest of gladness.
The magic words shall hold thee fast:
Thou shalt not heed the raving blast.

And though the shadow of a sigh
May tremble through the story,
For 'happy summer days' gone by,
And vanish'd summer glory -
It shall not touch with breath of bale
The pleasance of our fairy-tale.

(pp. 10-11)

Carroll's poem speaks of being child and adult in all its complexity and simplicity. He writes of his fairy tales as love gifts to Alice. He speaks of growing up as an inescapable space that develops between being adult, and being child. Carroll's poem illuminates and acknowledges the prominence and seriousness of fairy tales, enchantment and magic in the life stage of childhood.

It is possible to imagine and imbue in Carroll's poetic conversation with Alice, an adult yearning to recapture the magic and enchantment of childhood. His text hints at a wish for a space lying betwixt and between childhood and adulthood, a space of transition. A life-world in which one can be child and adult, adult and child, where time does not determine identity according to chronology.

As an adult I admire, and yearn for the moral clarity children display when questing, as they move seamlessly between a tangible adult world with all its limitations and revelations, and an unrevealed childhood, a frontier world, full of possibility and imagining. Enchantment, imagination and the promise of "I suppose" and "I think..." are unequivocal in importance in childhood life-worlds. "We are but older children, dear" (Carroll, 1872/1994, p. 11), is a sanguine appeal to Alice and all children. It

speaks of a desire to be accepted by children as another child as well as an adult. I make a similar appeal to the children in this thesis. I wish to be allowed *entré* into their experiences of web projects and be accepted as a companion that is not adult.

By welcoming children's expressions of their experiences and working to suspend adult judgement as a visible element of method and methodology, I hope to hear and see what children have thought, observed and connected in their experience within this thesis. It is a noble aim, and I make it visible and lay it here as a core value of this quest narrative.

As this work is populated by children's thoughts and experiences then time is experienced differently to an experience of chronological time, time is suspended, slowed down and at times speeds along. Time in this thesis, is lived as experience and is valued by the depth of impression an experience leaves. This way of being in time means that events may be linked out of time because of the value a child affords to an idea, conversation or series of conversations. This thesis is also an experience of diminishing time, it tells of an experience in which the gap between childhood and adulthood feels reduced as I am brought into the children's world of web projects.

Noble Ideals

Quests hold to noble ideals, and therefore it is essential to talk of ethics and authenticity in regard to the life-world of this thesis. My inquiry actively honours these principals and is built upon the intent that no harm shall be done. The research undertaken with children is conducted with the full permission of the children's parents. The correspondence between myself and the parents of the children clearly outlines that involvement in this research is voluntary.

Written parental permission is given on the understanding that parents can withdraw their child at any time, that the information provided by the parents and children will be kept separate from personal details, and that notes taken during the project will not have children's names or identifying information on them. Parents are fully aware that the notes will be kept securely for 7 years from the date of their child's participation before being destroyed.

During this inquiry, parents and their children are fully aware that this research is being undertaken with the approval of Curtin University of Technology, Western Australia. Parents read and signed consent forms, which stated that they understood the purpose of, and procedures of this research. Parents have been provided with information about this research, understand that they stand to not benefit from this, and have the opportunity to ask questions about their children's participation.

The children's words and graphic contributions to this thesis are genuine, only their names have been changed. Each child is assigned a pseudonym. It is by this name that the children's experiences and contributions are shared. The correlation of pseudonym and name is recorded within my hermeneutic scrapbook, which is kept securely and separately from the children's written work and parental documentation.

I pause.

I think of the children's speaking as an agent that lessens the distance a pseudonym may give, thinking that the more children speak the more a potential distance may diminish as the children's characters are shown.

I move on.

The ethical integrity of this thesis is further bolstered by my intentionality to work in a way that honours the children's speaking, and to treasure the objects the children

create during the web projects and their recollection of their lived web project experience. I work with persistent intentionality to ensure the children's voices are situated prominently in this inquiry-quest.

Di Cento

In the telling of this thesis I intentionally work for the voices of the children to be listened too attentively—to be heard as truth speaking. As cited by Roya Pugh (2000), Felipe Fernandez-Armesto talks of the desire to be noble and ethically honourable with truth in the closing words of his book, *Truth – A History*, “Whenever we get an intimation of truth – whether we feel it, listen for it, sense it or think it out for ourselves – we should expect it to talk to us and we should be able to try, if we like, to express it for others” (Fernandez-Armesto, 1997, p.229 in Pugh, 2000, p.3).

This narrative quest is a study grounded in a tradition of hermeneutic interpretation as described by Shaun Gallagher (1992) in *Hermeneutics and Education*,

Hermeneutics must deal with things through the medium of language. Gadamer's suggestion, that hermeneutics must make things “speak”, reminiscent of Plato's proposal that the truth of things is arrived at by considering objects in the mirror of speech: “ everything that is reflects itself in the mirror of language”. The human being encounters the world and everything in it through language. (p. 6)

And as such the hermeneutic approach I take in this thesis legitimises not just a language of adult words, adult rules of language, turns of phrase and expressions, it also embraces language spoken by children—a language of children. Ludwig Wittgenstein (1961/2001) wrote of language “The limits of my language mean the limits of my world”

(p. 68). Carroll (1865/1994) writes in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, "Alice felt dreadfully puzzled. The Hatter's remark seemed to have no sort of meaning in it, and yet it was certainly English. 'I don't quite understand you,' she said, as politely as she could" (1865/1994, p. 83). Small fragments of conversation during 'The Hatter's tea party' when knitted together with Wittgenstein's words suggest a monoculture of adult language, and draws to attention a hierarchical nature that modes of language are given in our culture

I give language meaning beyond that given to it by the character Humpty-Dumpty when he speaks of talking and says, "When I use a word ... it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less" (Carroll, 1872/1994, p. 100). I expand language to include multiple modes of language and conversation. I believe children have their own modes of expression and ways of communicating, which are not limited by the rules of spoken and written adult language.

Loris Malaguzzi (1998) in his poem *Invece il cento c'è* (No way. The hundred is there) found in the opening pages of *The Hundred Languages of Children, The Reggio Emilia Approach – Advanced Reflections* passionately describes an idea of language among children as being a *centi-culture* (*centi* – one hundred) of communication modes.

Invece il cento c'è

*Il bambino
è fatto di cento.
Il bambino ha
cento lingue
cento mani
cento pensieri
cento modi di pensare
di giocare e di parlare
cento sempre cento
modi di ascoltare
di stupire di amare*

No way. The hundred is there.

The child
is made of one hundred.
The child has
a hundred languages
a hundred hands
a hundred thoughts
a hundred ways of thinking
of playing, of speaking.
A hundred always a hundred
ways of listening
of marvelling, of loving

*cento allegrie
 per cantare e capire
 cento mondi
 da scoprire
 cento mondi
 da inventare
 cento mondi
 da sognare.
 Il bambino ha
 cento lingue
 (e poi cento cento cento)
 ma gliene rubano novantanove.
 La scuola e la cultura
 gli separano la testa dal corpo.
 Gli dicono:
 di pensare senza mani
 di fare senza testa
 di ascoltare e di non parlare
 di capire senza allegrie
 di amare e di stupirsi
 solo a Pasqua e a Natale.
 Gli dicono:
 di scoprire il mondo che già c'è
 e di cento
 gliene rubano novantanove.
 Gli dicono:
 che il gioco e il lavoro
 la realtà e la fantasia
 la scienza e l'immaginazione
 il cielo e la terra
 la ragione e il sogno
 sono cose
 che non stanno insieme.
 Gli dicono insomma
 che il cento non c'è.
 Il bambino dice:
 invece il cento c'è.*

Loris Malaguzzi

a hundred joys
 for singing and understanding
 a hundred worlds
 to discover
 a hundred worlds
 to invent
 a hundred worlds
 to dream.
 The child has
 a hundred languages
 (and a hundred hundred hundred
 more)
 but they steal ninety-nine.
 The school and the culture
 separate the head from the body.
 They tell the child:
 to think without hands
 to do without head
 to listen and not to speak
 to understand without joy
 to love and to marvel
 only at Easter and at Christmas.
 They tell the child:
 to discover the world already there
 and of the hundred
 they steal ninety-nine.
 They tell the child:
 that work and play
 reality and fantasy
 science and imagination
 sky and earth
 reason and dream
 are things
 that do not belong together.
 And thus they tell the child
 that the hundred is not there.
 The child says:
 No way. The hundred is there.

Loris Malaguzzi

(Edwards, Gandini, & Forman,
 1998, pp. 2-3)

The conversations, drawings, instances of play and texts created by children, as described in this poem, are the natural languages children share their experiences, observations, thoughts and discoveries through. The children's contributions in this thesis are spoken in a spirit akin to Malaguzzi's hundred languages and vibrate with *The*

Reggio Emilia Approach to education which he lived within. Reggio Emilia, a small northern Italian city is the home of a unique approach to early childhood education recognised around the world. Carolyn Edwards, Lella Gandini, & George Forman (1998) explain the underpinning pedagogy of the approach in the Reggio Emilia schools,

This approach fosters children's intellectual development through a systematic focus on symbolic representation. Young children are encouraged to explore their environment and express themselves through all of their available "expressive, communicative, and cognitive languages," whether they be words, movement, drawing, painting, building, sculpture, shadow play, collage, dramatic play, or music to name a few (p.7).

Gandini who worked alongside Malaguzzi coins the term 'graphic language' to classify all linguistic modes that show rather than are spoken. *Di Cento*, comprising of graphic language, written language and speaking, are spoken and listened to in this thesis of web project experiences. I anglicise this idea and use linguistic phrases in my mind, such as centi-culture, centi-culture of language, and language centi-culture to refer to *Di Cento* as I quest forward.

By doing this I nurture meaning, which is true to the moral ideal of authenticity. I hope to retrieve and interpret the children's contributions to my inquiry through the mirror of speaking. Conversation, illustration, writing, participation and the web projects the children participate in act as contexts for a centi-culture of language acting as mirrors—reflecting thought, understanding and meaning.

I see myself as a type of poet who uses a centi-culture of language as a mirror. My hope is to use it to "engender poetic, playful dialogue as I peer out through my senses and describe my experience of what I think a possible reality to be" (Wheatley &

Kellner-Rogers, 1999, p. 12). I enfold into my sense of self as poet the idea of myself as philosopher and I wish to travel through this quest as poet-philosopher. As a questing, poet-philosopher I work in a manner that values the potential of possibility that a linguistic centi-culture provides. In the closing pages of this thesis I make a poem, a “found poem” as poetic response to my quest and its narrative.

The ideal of authenticity and being morally honourable to the children is a key desire of mine in this thesis. I am particularly keen to be morally responsible and honourable with the contributions of the children. By liberating the idea of language to a centi-culture, a complex dilemma arises regarding the interpretation of what is said. Especially when one reflects, pauses and questions a possible expectation I have inadvertently set forth, a centi-culture of conversational modes could mean one hundred interpretational possibilities for the thinking which is shared and observed.

How do I choose which interpretations to use and listen to?

For solace, a way through this feeling of *aporia*, I turn to Lawn (2006) who interprets Gadamer and reminds us that this perplexity is central to hermeneutics and is possibly as Gadamer says, its essence. In *Gadamer: A Guide for the Perplexed*, Lawn (2006) explains Gadamer’s interpretive hermeneutics, “The written text does not change but the interpretive possibilities, that is, for Gadamer, the truth possibilities do, as they are endless” (p. 62). I consider this statement and acknowledge that a possibility of multiple interpretations can be seen within this thesis as problematic and also as a threshold offering multitudes of possibility.

I therefore share my interpretation of web projects as one of many. I find that in doing so I align myself with Turkle and Papert’s (1991) re-valuing of the concrete. I

view myself as re-valuing graphic representation, and situate myself within a dialogue that has grown from philosophers and scientists who think and create works that are built through and with a kinship of epistemological pluralism, that is “accepting the validity of multiple ways of knowing and thinking” (p. 161). I align myself with this epistemological conversation because I offer possibility and dimensionality through, and with, my act of making meaning. Rather than seeking single answers and solutions, which echo correctness, and an authoritative approach to reasoning, I open myself to possibility and see where multiple ways of thinking and knowing may take me.

My living of this inquiry through graphic language is not presented as part of this thesis, it is recorded in my scrapbook, which documents my experience of being in this inquiry with graphic and written language. It is called *Through A Looking Glass, Re-enchanting the Art and Science of Web Projects for Children: A Hermeneutic Scrapbook* (2009-2015).

In my scrapbook, I make visible my speaking with a hundred languages (my centi-culture of language). I deliberately re-embrace graphic language, and in doing so, re-value and raise the importance of this form of speaking. I intentionally work at using graphic languages in my scrapbook, and thoughtfully in this thesis, to represent and express my thinking in a deliberate act of speaking through a centi-culture of language.

In this thesis language intentionally interlaces and diminishes the space between child and adult by adopting a centi-culture approach to language—speaking. In this web project quest graphic languages, spoken language and text are all highly valued. Through a centi-culture of language I construct a life-world, revealing landscapes, characters, patterns, objects, challenges and possibility that may have remained invisible had I only used spoken conversation.

Inhabiting the world of this thesis hermeneutically allows an effortless transition, re-orientation and shifting between, with and through the object and subject this thesis is spun from. I interpret, and narrate an experience of web projects with a *di cento* interpretation of language, and in doing so show this inquiry to be phenomenological.

A Linguistic Centi-culture as a Looking Glass

Woolf (1942/1970) talks of words in her essay 'Craftsmanship', found in *The Death of a Moth*, in a manner that reinforces the longevity and malleability of words, their origins and meanings. Her essay reminds me of the magical ability words have to collect meanings and nuances, like retro fitted accessories on a car. I imagine the words enlarging their scope of meaning. Woolf writes,

Now, this power of suggestion is one of the most mysterious properties of words. Everyone who has ever written a sentence must be conscious or half-conscious of it. Words, English words, are full of echoes, of memories, of associations – naturally. They have been out and about, on people's lips, in their houses, in their street, in the fields, for so many centuries. And that is one of the chief difficulties in writing them today – that they are so stored with meanings, with memories. (p. 37)

As I describe my observations, my connections and my thinking through individual and linked words, (spoken, written and graphic) I am forever reminded of the history enfolded into them through centuries of use, and of the tenuous hold newer words have on meaning because they are younger members of our language. By examining words (graphic, spoken or written) and the space of meaning they occupy, new perspectives

and opportunities for re-enchanting meaning may be noticed, playfully tested and adopted into this narrative's centi-language.

Chapter 2 — Evocative Objects

Re-examining the history and evolutionary meaning of a word is one way to seek a different perspective of the familiar. To seek a different view of an experience is just as critical in a quest for meaning.

The phenomena of web projects are for me, magical and riveting and I think of them as evocative objects (Turkle, 2007). Turkle's sense of an evocative object is that it is a muse, something that fascinates, provokes curiosity and creativity, and invites intimate conversation with it. Turkle notes "evocative objects bring together thought and feeling" (p. 9). This narrative, this thesis, and the web projects in it, bring together thought and feeling, and show themselves to be evocative objects and in doing so they hold within them ways to re-enchant that which has become disenchanted by way of rationalism, and the recession of mystery from lived experience.

Max Weber (1922) writes in *Science as a Vocation*,

The fate of our times is characterized by rationalization and intellectualization and, above all, by the 'disenchantment of the world.' Precisely the ultimate and most sublime values have retreated from public life either into the transcendental realm of mystic life or into the brotherliness of direct and personal human relations. It is not accidental that our greatest art is intimate... (pp. 524 - 555)

I write this quest to re-value wonder and re-value enchanting and to pull into teaching the power of evocative objects as agents of learning.

Web Projects, Evocative Objects

This thesis is more than the story of one object, it is the story of the making and collecting of “evocative objects” (Turkle, 2007) that belong to web projects and their fictional characters and mythical beings (bunyips, monsters and Flat Stanley). It combines the story of the children who participate in the web projects, the story of each web project, and the story of the creation and interpretation of research. Each of these facets of my inquiry has an ability to hold me in its thrall as I situate the web projects and their accompanying beings “‘betwixt and between’ on a boundary between worlds” (Turkle, 2007, p. 15), specifically children’s life-worlds.

As an evocative object sits betwixt and between boundaries a fuse lights in my mind. I think of web projects and their associated characters as possible kinds of transitional objects (Turkle, 2008; Winnicott, 1953), bridging worlds within and worlds outwith, allowing seamless crossings between experiences of work, game and play.

I pause.

I follow the smouldering, sparking idea as it gathers speed and brightens.

I think.

I arrive. I sit in a place of possibility.

I imagine...

I imagine the collection of evocative objects unique to this research, capable of binding together the art and science of their being.

I wonder.

I pause.

I look within.

I remember some words from ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) Television's *The Afternoon Arts Show*, "Without art, science cannot express its ideas and without science, art has no form or structure to draw upon" (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 2009).

My research works to make visible possible shifts in conceptualisation that children experience, including their sense of relational proximity to dimensions of work, game and play in the classroom or online, and how a sense of autonomy may set in motion transitional experiences of cyber worlds, worlds within, worlds outwith, and worlds of work, game and play. The web project is as one—object, subject, experience and focus—a phenomenon that pulls me in and holds all of my attention. To capture the pull and evoke the nature of my object, subject, focus and experience, of web projects I seek to draw and write, to fuse together art and science poetically. The complex nature of my evocative object, subject, focus and experience, leads me to agglutinate these words into object-subject-focus-experience. I begin to use this hyphenated term in my speaking. Putting these words together and joining them with a hyphen conveys in shorthand the evocative and complex nature of my quest's leitmotif.

Honourable Intentions

Alice moves through a foreign Landscape in *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass* in a manner she hopes is honourable and which transverses the questions and challenges that are continually thrown her way. Before she can begin to navigate the world she finds herself in, she very sensibly chooses to pause and look a little further, beyond her immediate range.

Of course the first thing to do was to make a grand survey of the country she was going to travel through. ' something very like

learning geography,' thought Alice, as she stood on tip toe in hopes of being able to see a little further. (Carroll, 1872/1994, p. 45)

Like Alice, I imagine that I move through my quest landscape, familiar yet unfamiliar, full of perplexing questions and puzzles in an honourable manner.

I pause and survey the landscape I see before me.

Noble heroes and heroines in fantasy narratives often live by a strong moral code, highly attuned to a sense of right and wrong, truth and falsehood, and what is real and chimera.

I pause.

How will I navigate this quest with these noble ideals and ensure that I honour my code of gallantry and moral integrity?

I pause. I wonder. I imagine with my graphic language.

I draw. An image takes shape on my scrapbook's page.

I pause.

Is the meaning of truth more than seeking to understand and find meaning in this thesis?

Woolf (1929/1981) in her literary conversation, *A room of One's Own* writes,

“thus confident and enquiring, I set out in the pursuit of truth” (p. 26), and this too is part of my quest. Pugh (2000) in her thesis, *Moral Imagining, Self-Understanding and Transformation: The Designing of Professional Learning* writes,

In Charles Taylor's *The Ethics of Authenticity* (1991) we find illumination of what we might mean by the “moral ideal of

authenticity". The moral ideal that Taylor assists me to express and that I am concerned to retrieve, is for the self to become inwardly and outwardly through relational conversations that give significance to love, respect, compassion, honour, purposiveness, relevance and responsibility in communion, on a social level as well as an intimate level, as ways for living in community and in the world that is earth. (Pugh, 2000, p. 3)

Authenticity and a desire to be morally noble and honourable with truth as described by Pugh elucidates, expresses a wish I have for my inquiry. Ueland (2013), writer and teacher enriches authenticity, the desire to be and live truly as oneself and the ideal of being morally noble and honourable in truth through her reminders of "really living in the present." She writes, "It is when you are really living in the present - - working, thinking, lost, absorbed in something you care about that you are living spiritually... [and morally]" (p. 59, my brackets).

Ueland (2013) talks of a group of children painting her, and the portrait they make,

...each was a portrait of me and my personality (infinitely more so than a photograph), and each was a portrait of the child who painted it and her personality. This always happens in writing or painting: what you are, you show. (pp. 51-52)

Being mindful of my moral code and desire for authenticity as I write, ensures that the portrait I speak and show, is to display what I am as researcher and individual. The writing of, and the reading of this work as a portrait is to reveal truth. The painting medium, a centi-culture of speaking, paints a portrait of the children in this work as a mix of the children's personalities, the web projects' personalities and of my personality. In creating this portrait, my moral essence is vulnerability revealed, as is the potential

moral essence of the children and the web projects, and as such, I believe it strengthens the moral imperative of this work to vouchsafe the good in being human.

Questing to Understand

Quests are a journey for knowledge, and truth. I have stated my *telos* as seeking to understand and find meaning—I imagine arriving in a perspicacious space.

What other nuances of truth, are glimpsed and spun into this quest to understand?

John Dewey, teacher, philosopher and provocateur enfolded into his meaning of truth, a poetic and artistic essence which can be traced to his familiarity with the poetry of John Keats. Jim Garrison (2010) in *Dewey and Eros: Wisdom and Desire in the Art of Teaching*, explains truth in a manner reflecting both Dewey and Keat's interpretation,

Imagination for Dewey and Keats is a *daimōn* [*daimōn*, a guardian of our destiny (Garrison, 2010, p. xiii)] mediating aesthetically between constructed truth and harmonious beauty until two become whole in wisdom, Dewey introduced this mediation by reflecting on what may be Keats' most famous lines:

Beauty is truth, truth beauty – that is all

Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

(Garrison, 2010, p. 83)

This idea makes my heart sing and reflects an artful explanation of what truth and understanding can be. In this thesis truth is not empirical. It is not measured on a scale of right, or as rigid doctrine. In this thesis my understanding of, and chosen expression of truth is as an artful and sensory experience which unfolds as “disclosure of something, or the unconcealment of something” (Garrison, 2010, p. 82) and through

such an experience arriving in understanding. Garrison unfolds Keats and Dewey's sense and expression of truth and in doing so enacts disclosure and unconcealment, he illuminates,

Dewey (1934/1987) connected this passage [the one I cite directly above] to a letter...in which Keats attested. "What Imagination seizes as beauty must be Truth" (cited p.40). Dewey (1934/1987) clarified the basis for this connection by observing that in Keats' "tradition", 'truth' never signifies correctness of intellectual statements about things, or truth as its meaning is now influenced by science. It denotes the wisdom by which men live, especially 'the lore of good and evil' (p.40). (Garrison, 2010, p. 83)

Imagining truth's journey to understanding, as "the wisdom by which men live, especially 'the lore of good and evil'" (p. 83), could be problematic here. However Garrison deconstructs and then reconstructs a conceptualisation of truth's scope, which acknowledges and then resolves possible problematic aspects of this interpretation. Garrison says,

By truth, Keats and Dewey were, I suggest, thinking within the Greek tradition of *alētheia*, which we can translate only roughly as "truth". By *alētheia* the ancient Greeks meant the disclosure of something, or the unconcealment of some being. The closest thing we moderns have to the idea of unconcealment is the word "revelation." Both [Keats and Dewey] thought beauty was the functional form or structure that transformed some needful, doubtful state of disequilibrium into harmonious equilibrium by revealing (*alētheia*) the possible in the actual. The truth of art, of poetry in Diotima's sense, is that it can disclose the beauty of the

extraordinary possibilities concealed beneath the cloak of the actual, the ordinary, and the everyday. (2010, pp. 83-84)

Alethia in this thesis becomes a revealing of possibility, unconcealing a seemingly ordinary teaching experience, and showing it to be more. This thesis unfolds and then enfolds numerous filaments of disclosure and possibility, spinning them into a thread that runs through it and can be traced back through Garrison, Keats and Dewey to a community of Ancient Greeks who sought truth as possibility and understanding, rather than a truth which is right. In my writing, other filaments are spun from expressions of truth and combine art, beauty, poetry and wisdom to further enrich the idea of *alethia* as disclosure and possibility, including re-imagining. In my living of this thesis *alethia* becomes a central anchor point, and is not just an interpretation of what truth can be, it is also an object imagined and set forth in the form of an alethiometer. My dialogue of how I interpret truth dressed as understanding, unconcealing, artful imagining and making, does not end here, it is continued later as I navigate my interpreting of children's conversations of web projects.

Palmer (1998) writes that the process of truth-knowing and truth-telling when in the community of truth, "is a complex eternal dance of intimacy and distance, of speaking and listening, of knowing and not knowing, that makes collaborators and co-conspirators of the knowers and the known" (p. 106).

In this work the children in the web projects enter into a community of truth with me, the web projects, and the web project characters and beings, and in doing so set out to "fathom the mystery of self in order to fathom the mystery of the world, to become – as a colleague said of McClintock – 'someone who understands where the mysteries lie rather than someone who mystifies'" (Palmer, 1998, p. 106). Sometimes I call the

community of truth found in experiences of web projects a community of understanding.

Turkle (2005) writes of a space which has much in common with Parker's description of a community of truth—a community of understanding. She talks of the anxiety we feel as we step into a moment of passage, and our way of relating to a possible boundary that lies between known and unknown, reality and imagined. She talks of Victor Turner, an anthropologist who speaks of a liminal moment, a moment of passage (Turkle, 2005, p. 15). Think of it as that moment of heightened alertness, uneasy awkwardness, and rising anxiety which heralds a transitional experience, a shift in understanding and meaning, the moment before we step off the cusp of known dimensions of meaning, and into new, unfamiliar ones.

During my research I have come to uneasily embrace liminal moments as a gift and I have had to just stand in mystery in a manner which Keats (2009) describes as “‘negative capability’, that is when man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason” (p. 492). This work is filled with these moments, they present the possibility of imaginative shaping and re-shaping, shifting and re-shifting when in a space of thinking and meaning making. The children and I often experience negative capability in a dulled or silent moment, and because of this silence, the talking that follows appears louder.

Me, Quest Narrative Writer, Ethnographic Listener

This thesis is more than a quest narrative, it is also a form of ethnographic inquiry. My research does not happen without conversation, and because of this I not only engineer conversation about my topic of interest, I also have to listen. I see myself as listening ethnographically, and when writing adopting a quest narrative guise.

Turkle (2008), in *The Inner History of Devices*, speaks of learning to listen attentively, and describes memoir as “a kind of ethnography in the first person” (p. 3) and refers to the ethnographer Clifford Geertz who “memorably described the ethnographer as practiced in the art of conversation” (p. 3). Turkle writes,

Geertz’s notion that conversation is at the heart of the ethnographic encounter frames the field of anthropology as interpretive to its core, close to the reflection of memoir and the informed guesswork of the clinical life: “Cultural analysis is (or should be) guessing at meanings, assessing the guesses, and drawing explanatory conclusions from the better guesses,…”
Indeed...the work begins with conversation: a conversation with self, a conversation with an other. (2008, p. 4)

These words sit easily within the context of the life-world I create in my research and my interpretation of it. Conversation requires not just talking, but also listening and the pack of cards I create and use to provide boundaries for my conversation-dialogues allows artistic speaking to occur and deep listening to happen.

In *The Second Self—Computers and the Human Spirit*, Turkle (2005) describes the style of her research as ethnographic inquiry, “I lived in worlds new to me, tried to understand what they were about, and tried to write about my understandings so that the worlds I studied could come alive for others” (p. 303).

I adopt these words as a way to live this research. My collection of information is as teacher, participant, educational designer, researcher, learner and web project coordinator—making this study ethnographic.

Living inside this research, I experience a web project “micro-world” (Papert, 1993), which has many familiar as well as unfamiliar aspects. A micro-world is described by

Papert as the world a child creates by instructing, and manipulating code within a computer program, I expand this meaning to mean a small world a child creates within a task and has varying degrees of control over. In *The Second Self, computers and the human spirit*, Turkle (2005) talks of anthropologists using the deliberate immersion of oneself into an unfamiliar culture as a way of illuminating and bringing into sharp view aspects of their own culture – *dépaysement*, which translates as de-countrifying. “What matters is the immersion of oneself in something foreign so that when one returns to the world which was familiar and comfortable, it is seen as unfamiliar, and is viewed from a new perspective, with fresh eyes” (p. 3). I invest the word *dépaysement* with a nuance that is subtly different, and still in keeping with the spirit described by Turkle.

The word *dépaysement* is of French origin, deriving from the word “*dépaysé*, which in turn stems from *dépaysé*—to remove (a person) from his element, this is in turn from the Old French *despaysier* to exile” (Cuyos, 2014). I sit on to the edge of Turkle’s words, and seek out my *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (2007).

I read.

I think.

I interpret *dépaysément* to mean a sense of disorientation that occurs when experiencing a different culture or new experience by being “removed from one’s habitual surroundings” (p. 648), leading to seeing things differently. As interpreter, I intentionally set out to re-see things in different ways, and from different angles. My experience of re-seeing (*dépaysément*) is brought about from heightened sensory alertness. I notice similarities and differences between a web project micro-world, and a world outwith. Sitting alongside my experience of *dépaysément* is a sensation of being engulfed by web projects pulling me into their world, and precipitating feelings of anticipation and

excitement. I find myself down in them, part of them, experiencing web projects like Barbara McClintock experienced chromosomes and cells in her research.

Keller (1983) writes of McClintock, Nobel Prize winning scientist and her journey of unfolding and sharing truth. McClintock won her Nobel Prize because of the genius of her insight and unique interpretative methodology. Keller tells me via her attentive ethnographic listening that,

She [McClintock] had brought about a change in herself that enabled her to see more clearly, “reorienting” herself in such a way that she could immediately “integrate” what she saw.

That experience taught her an important lesson...“I found that the more I worked the bigger and bigger (they – the chromosomes she was studying) got, and when I was really working with them I wasn’t outside, I was down there. I was part of the system. I was right down there with them, and everything got big. I was even able to see the internal parts of the chromosomes – actually everything was there. It surprised me because I actually felt as if I was right down there and these were my friends.” (p. 117)

McClintock’s experience, and the way it is spoken so we can make meaning from it, is a lyrical illustration of application of both hermeneutic and phenomenological processes. In the context of this narrative, it illustrates the power and limitation of linguistics, as well as the history of tradition, which frames interpretation and methodologies of inquiry. It also shows an ethnographic experience transitioning from attentive listening to narrative speaking.

I pause

Keller goes on to write the following, which may mirror my own experience of hermeneutic and phenomenological experience of this ethnographic work,

In telling this story McClintock sat poised on the edge of her chair eager to explain her experience, to make herself understood. She was talking about the deepest most personal dimension of her experience as a scientist. A little later she spoke of the “real affection” one gets for the pieces that “go together”: As you look at these things, they become part of you. And you forget yourself. The main thing about it is you forget yourself.” ... “I’m not there!” The self-conscious “I” simply disappears. Throughout history, artists and poets, lovers and mystics, have known and written about the “knowing” that comes from loss of self – from the state of subjective fusion with the object of knowledge. (Keller, 1983, pp. 117-118)

As hermeneutic-phenomenological-ethnographic-knight in this quest, I come to realise that this text is not just narrative quest, it is also a form of memoir as this thesis is written in first person and it “show[s] us social forces lived out in personal experience” (Turkle, 2008, p. 3), it shows a passionate disposition for seeking understanding.

There are more looking glasses in this work than digital ones. Each phenomenon reflects and acts as a portal to living in web projects and meaning making of them. By immersing myself in an experience of children’s web project culture and stepping through into a web project micro-world I experience *dépassement* for myself. I step back through to my everyday life-world, and notice my world, and the world of web projects with eyes that see differently, ears that listen differently. These thoughts remind me of Jane Campion and her film *Bright Star*, about the life of John Keats. In an interview

Campion talks of Keats and his creating something, of bringing it from an idea to something real,

There are some things that are real, that you can see, that you can observe, like the moon, and grass and things. But for ideas to become real, they have to be played on your senses. They have to come through you. And that act brings them into the world.

(Campion, 2009)

My quest narrative is a telling of a similar experience, a bringing of something through the senses to be something real. From thought and idea (a world within), through each conversational thread, be it a child's words or mine, every act I describe in my tale is a sensory experience made real through poetic interpretation and as such is brought outwith by artful conversation transformed by ethnographic listening into narrative quest and quest narrative.

More Questing Language to Frame our Journey Forwards

Howard (2008) describes quests as having four theoretical components – spaces, objects, actors and challenges. This thesis confirms itself as a kind of quest because of the presence of quest characteristics as described by Howard. He talks of gaming quests as having four aspects - spaces, objects, actors, and challenges. I adopt these four aspects as part of my language and interpreting of the children's web project experience. These four aspects provide a way of organising ideas, observations and thinking.

Spaces

Space, is defined by the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (2007) as a continuous unlimited area, or expanse which may or may not contain objects (p. 387). Space in this quest includes tangible experiences of space, virtual experiences of space and the space that

we inhabit within our minds. Tangible spaces include those that can be physically experienced such as classrooms, learning circles and art areas. Virtual spaces include spaces which are intangible, yet inhabitable and include digital forum boards, spaces constructed through and with conversation in the cyber world. At times I think of virtual spaces as cyber spaces.

In this narrative quest a space within and a space outwith become prominent. A space within is a space of imagination located within the self. Space in this thesis also refers to teaching spaces and the world we inhabit and these spaces of lived experience are referred to as a world outwith.

Objects

In narrative quests written as chronicle, song, epic poem and tale of deeds from ancient times, the dark ages and middle ages, objects are often items collected along the way during a quest. At times a particular object or relic of desire is also the focus of an entire quest such as the Holy Grail in the Arthurian Legends. Questing objects are often imbued with magical properties and powers in the form of knowledge or wisdom and enable the questors to move forward in their journey. Key objects are identifiable at the outset of my narrative quest. They are playing cards, alethimeters, objects that are reflective in nature such as mirrors, looking glasses and there are portals.

The objects in this quest can also include the beings the children make in the web projects and even the web projects themselves. Each object is unique and contains the magical ability to transcend the spaces in this thesis and sit betwixt and between worlds and also across and through them. An example of this is bunyips who in their physical creation sit firmly within the lived world, and yet they sit across and through a cyber life-world, and they also sit across and through a world within, by being animated and

personified in a world of imagination that sits within a child's self. At other times bunyips appear ephemeral, difficult to pin down, sitting betwixt and between the worlds observed in this work.

Actors

Actors in this narrative quest are characters and beings. These terms are used interchangeably. The characters and beings can be loosely grouped into the living and the imagined. The living actors include the children, the teachers and me - the humans. The imagined actors are the beings, characters from works of fiction that the web projects are based on and who inhabit the web projects.

The web project characters are Flat Stanley, monsters and bunyips. Flat Stanley is a character of literature created by Jeff Browne. *The Flat Stanley* series of books, tells the story of Stanley who is flattened and undertakes a series of adventures made possible because of his flat physical presence. The monsters are created from children's imaginations and vary in shape, size, colour and characteristics. Bunyips are the focus of *The Bunyips Project* and they are an imagining of a being brought into existence as an artistic anamorphic representation of what a bunyip may look like. The bunyip has a rich narrative in Australian culture and I will explore this later. The imagined characters are imbued with magic and have an ability to exist across, betwixt and between, and through the different spaces in this narrative. It is possible to say that these characters are transcendental in this thesis and make their presence known in a variety of ways.

Challenges

The final component of quests, as identified by Howard, is a challenge or series of challenges. And in this quest challenges abound. The challenges are layered and include those of a philosophical nature, a practical nature, and those that arise in the making of

this narrative quest. Challenges are also present in the interactions and relationships with the children in my inquiry. And challenges abound for me about how to write my narrative.

Have I understood what the children are saying?

Are my words and pictures telling what I want them to tell and speak?

Do the cards and the alethiometer work?

This thesis is clearly a kind of quest—it has all the elements.

Who I Speak with in Conversation-Dialogue

This research involves a group of 40 Grade 4/5 children and 15 Prep children from Macquarie Plains District School. Other children I have included are online and come from classrooms across Tasmania, Australia, The United States of America, The United Kingdom, France and South America. The online children have a more distant voice, quieter, however their importance is not diminished because of this. They speak through the 55 children I talked with, and through the web-based forum boards housed on www.edublogs.org www.flatstanleyproject.com www.monstersproject.com and through e-mail.

The names of the schools and the individual children are changed to ensure research ethics are honoured and upheld. This thesis speaks, reflects and interprets lived experience and as such allows me to enter individual children's life-worlds as they journey through a web project as part of their school-based learning experience during an Australian Spring and Summer.

I study three web projects (*The Flat Stanley Project*, *The MindsEye Monster Exchange Project* and *The Bunyips Project*) and two age groups (Grade 4/5 children and Prep

children) who participate in them. Each conversation I enter into is distinguished by the uniqueness of the web project that provides a context for the children's experience and the uniqueness of the actors—the children and the literary and imagined characters. Each narrative and web project has kinship to the other narratives and web projects because they share numerous commonalities between the actors, spaces, objects and challenges within them.

Each conversation unfolds within the same broad educational culture, social and political environment of Australia and Tasmania. It is necessary to provide these details, to ensure that something of the constraints and innate traditions that influence the teachers and children can be inferred and understood.

The purpose of raising these points is to create awareness, not to analyse and critique the practices of learning traditions and methodology of the educational experience these children live. Raising awareness of the silent aspects of this thesis is morally necessary to ensure the presentation of an honourable narrative that acknowledges pressure from the invisible forces which dance around the edges and in the spaces of my research.

This thesis is not concerned with the endorsement or restraint of theories, strategies or practices, or the presentation of new ones at the expense of others. Rather it is concerned with re-enchanting the web projects of old in new ways that might capture and engage children in classrooms of the future where new renditions of web projects might invite their attention.

Defining a Web Project

I define a web project by several ideas, I think of it primarily as a kind of “micro-world” for learning (Papert, 1993). The three web projects in this thesis have a common central

focus based in a literary or mythical sphere. They are a human construct and are a learning sequence, which is deliberate and intentional in their design and their use of technology as a communication medium. They are an activity that can transcend the world outwith, the cyber world, and a world of imagination situated within the self (a world within).

They are a learning sequence, which can be collaborative and co-operative in nature as they have varying degrees of mutual dependence and mutual responsibility. These web projects can be likened to a quest experience, as the goal is to discover something—what something may look like, or what an experience in another place might be like. In common with quests, web projects have spaces, objects, actors and challenges (Howard, 2008, p. xv).

Web projects embrace possibility and create a micro-world in which children can explore, and make meaning of their lived experience. In this research web projects show themselves to have characteristics, which place them at an intersection of work, game and play experiences.

Web projects began to appear in numbers on the Internet in around 1995. The label 'a web project' was ascribed to a particular type of web-based learning activity. The name web project is the joining of two words, web and project. The word web describes the medium utilised for communication (the World Wide Web) and describes the space utilised (tools and opportunities made available with the World Wide Web). The word project alludes to where this type of educational experience sits in pedagogical thought, teaching strategies and approaches to learning.

The word project is borrowed from Project Based Learning (PBL), which emerged as an influential model for curriculum design in the late 1990s and early 2000s. PBL

requires learners to work on a project where the project work is central rather than peripheral, students are accountable to themselves and their peers and are given considerable autonomy, it is real work in response to provocative questions which lead students to in-depth explorations with frequent opportunities for feedback (Thomas, Mergendoller, & Michaelson, 1999, p. 1).

Web projects regularly have all, or some of these components woven through them in various forms and with a mix of labels.

I think of web projects as an opportunity to connect with other learners through web-based tools in a relationship, which centres on the construction of knowledge and understanding together, or to share experience in a quest for creating products together. The name web project covers a plethora of activity types. These web-based activities include tags and labels like online project, collaborative web project, cooperative web project, online event, web quests and online web projects.

I will not be dealing with all web projects or all those loosely categorised and labelled as types of web projects, my inquiry is built around the three named web projects I have named particularly. I chose them because of the way they create opportunities for relationships between children and technology.

The three projects provide perspectives and contexts presented as metaphorical quest landscapes. They are appropriate for teachers to use with children between the ages of six and eleven years old. The focus of this inquiry is primary generalist classrooms, although the projects can be used in a variety of ways in the curriculum. I deliberately do not explore other web projects, as I believe that would make the scope of my questions “What is a web project?” and “What is a web project for?”, vast and difficult to manage in a meaningful way.

Following now is a short history of each of the web projects in my inquiry.

The MindsEye Monster Exchange Project

The MindsEye Monster Exchange Project (I refer to it as The Monsters Project) began in 1995 when Brian Maguire, a teacher of fourth Grade 4 children at Gilbertsville-Mount Upton Central School District, USA was trying to recapture his classes' enthusiasm and attention as Winter moved to Spring. One of the children was doodling monster pictures in a notebook instead of being on task. A spark of inspiration lit.

I made a posting in a CompuServe Education forum requesting a partner class that would participate in an email monster description exchange. The next morning, a parent, John Thompson from Scotch Plains, New Jersey, replied and said he would love to have his kids participate in this activity, and he was determined to contact and help his child's teacher participate. He also mentioned that he had learned how to write Web pages recently on the World Wide Web and posting pictures and descriptions online would be amazing as well. (Bafile, 2003 on www.educationworld.com/a_curr/curr168.shtml)

Simply put *The Monsters Project* classes paired up, imagined and drew their own monsters and wrote descriptions ready to exchange. This particular foray into the burgeoning world of digital learning had begun. Descriptions of monsters were exchanged, and the monsters were drawn from the descriptions and were scanned and e-mailed to John Thompson. He created the first monster gallery for sharing the monsters. The children had been involved in communicating with their peers, writing for a purpose and were assessed on the quality of their writing by the exchange of a product made from their description. Comparisons of monsters provided further

opportunities for writing and communication. Participating children were able to see how their descriptive writing could be interpreted, and how detail and accuracy in their writing influenced the accuracy of their partners' drawing.

When I stumbled across *The Monsters Project* I felt exhilarated for several reasons, essentially I viewed it as a learning sequence, which was artful, rich in opportunity and authentic in its purpose and intent. The project gained momentum and grew quickly.

Words which immediately spring to mind when recalling my initial exhilaration include – Wonderful! Inspiring! Simple!

The Monsters Project involves drawing, writing, reading and comprehension between a network of people linked by the internet. In this project a description of a drawing, and then a drawing created from a description are exchanged between children within a social network and then they are shared through an electronic network.

The Monsters Project recalls traditional barrier games, however in this instance the barrier is a geographical one not a barrier made of card. *The Monsters Project* can be described as a barrier game, which uses distance as its barrier not a wall of card or wood. It is potentially a language activity, a talking and listening activity, a writing, reading and comprehension activity enabled by resources provided through and with the Internet. *The Monsters Project* relies on consistent and sound communication through and with digital tools and digital social networks.

Barrier games are most often used with younger children, children who are at risk or have disabilities, or who may have auditory processing difficulties. They are used to improve communication and provide a context and an opportunity for understanding and communication skills to develop.

The Flat Stanley Project

This project is based on a character brought to life in a wonderful storybook called *Flat Stanley* written by Jeff Brown and published in 1968. The story is about a young boy, Stanley Lambchop who is flattened by a notice board. He is so flat that he can be posted and delivered by mail to his friend Thomas for the holidays. Thomas lives in California. Many other adventures ensue for Stanley. It is the idea of someone being posted in the mail that provides the context and focus of *The Flat Stanley Project*.

When I participate in this project with children I usually commence with a reading of *Flat Stanley* in either its picture book or novel form. I then outline the project for the children and we begin by making a Flat Stanley or a flat version of themselves. Students are encouraged to document and journal what their Flat Stanley person does for several days, often a week. The journal may include activities, visits to places and events in the community or a narrative of everyday life over a week. The Flat Stanley and accompanying journal are then mailed to other people who have asked to host the character for a visit on the proviso the journal is added to. Both the journal and Flat Stanley eventually return to the original owner. Often classes of children and their flat versions are paired with classes from different continents, states, provinces or countries so whole flat classes are exchanged. It involves pairing the students in the classes and exchanging Flat Stanleys or Flat people.

Individual children, and classes acting as an individual are matched up through the Flat Stanley Website (www.flatstanley.com). The exchanged flat people experience life with their host, who records the adventure and then relates it back to the owner of the Flat Stanley or flat person. During *The Flat Stanley Project* in this research, we also explored, and began to keep digital blogs.

This project when examined closely could perhaps be described as a variant of a travel buddy web project. Mutual dependence is a key element to the success of this project in the guise of relating where, when and what the flat person has done when being hosted. *The Flat Stanley Project* strongly relies on literacy and so from a subject perspective it can be said to be a literacy-based web project.

The Bunyips Project

My narrative of this project will unfold in a noticeably intimate manner in comparison to the narratives of the other two projects. This is because of my deep involvement in the development and stewardship of *The Bunyips Project*. As I write and re-read this section I feel that I cannot at times separate myself from the project as it weaves itself through me, and I weave myself through it.

The Bunyips Project started as a different monster project and began in the last quarter of 1999. The project was devised and initially developed by myself, and Jacquie Bourne, to promote collaborative learning and to provide an authentic context for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) integration into and through class programs. At present it is in hibernation.

The name of the project was changed from *The Monster Project* to *The Bunyips Project* in August 2001 to avoid confusion with the other monster project. The name 'Bunyips' was chosen because it reflected the origin of the project, giving it a clear Australian identity.

The Bunyips Project centres on the creation of a bunyip, originally in three-dimensional form, but now most often in two-dimensional form. Bunyips are a familiar being in Australian folklore and can be described as monsters. They are found in Aboriginal Dreaming Stories. Their actual form is open to interpretation, their mystique added to

by sightings and experiences recorded by early European Settlers. Indigenous Dreaming Stories and colonial historical documents inspire the Bunyips in this particular imagining of a web project. I wish at this point to acknowledge the Indigenous Elders of this land and the contribution that Indigenous Dreaming Stories make to our Australian Culture and our identity. I embrace this aspect of my country's culture as a gift and respectfully enfold it into the being of this thesis.

The Bunyip in this project is created through interactions between a digital social community, usually made up of two or three groups of children that are separated geographically. The groups of children can be small groups, whole classes or individuals. In the beginning this project was made up of four or five groups of children.

The main information and communication technology medium used in *The Bunyips Project* is a web forum, or blog. This project was initially hosted on the Discover Website, which was managed and run by Chris Laycock of the Tasmanian Department of Education. The exchange of instructions, questions and ideas, and the hands-on creation of the Bunyip are possible keys to the success of this project.

The Bunyips Project requires the creation of a Bunyip through cooperative learning. The Bunyip is split into two or three parts. Each part is assigned to a group of children situated in a geographic location different to the other children. Each group designs and makes the part they are assigned and they post their instructions to the other groups in their Bunyip group. The other groups access the instructions by visiting the Bunyips forum or blog, and they clarify instructions for building their Bunyip's invisible parts made by the other groups. Each Bunyip group finds out what Bunyips look like by making their own invented Bunyip part, and following the instructions from the other

Bunyip group/s in their Bunyip. *The Bunyips Project* is a type of barrier game with a layer of mutual dependence built into it.

The Bunyips Project traces its pedigree to constructivist teaching approaches and interpretations of pedagogy. In a web project sense, this project is unique because it is purposefully designed and delivered as a learning experience with mutual interdependence and the conditions for cooperative and collaborative learning as described by David Johnson and Roger Johnson (1999, pp. 67-73). This particular web project will not work if people do not do what they say they will. This is *The Bunyips Project's* greatest strength, and also its greatest weakness.

I am equipped and ready to step into the next stage of this quest, to step through into the doing of this research. In the previous pages I describe my intentions, my hopes, my methods and methodology, and set forth the landscapes this narrative-inquiry travels through. I name the quest objects I know, and hint of those that may come. My circle of writer friends (Conle, 2000, p. 210) is gathered around me, I gather more as we quest forward. And so my research begins, I journey into a landscape framed by a singular challenge—How does one create web project conversation-dialogue with children?

Chapter 3 — *Biography of a Pack of Cards*

The biographer is now faced with a difficulty which it is better perhaps to confess than to gloss over. Up to this point in telling the story of Orlando's life, documents, both private and historical, have made it possible to fulfil the first duty of a biographer, which is to plod, without looking left or right, in the indelible footprints of truth; unenticed by flowers; regardless of shade; on and on methodically till we fall plump into the grave and write *finis* on the tombstone above our heads. But now we come to an episode which lies right across our path, so that there is no ignoring it...Our simple duty is to state the facts as far as they are known, and so let the reader make of them what he may. (Woolf, 1928/1993, p 47)

Orlando is one of my “writer friends” (Conle, 2000, p. 210) through this quest stage. And as we are to have *Orlando* then Virginia must join us, and on occasion the presence of Vita Sackville-West as well, as she is woven through the text of *Orlando*.

Orlando is a fantastical, fictitious biography, which I find quite mesmerising and was referred to by Nigel Nicolson (1973), Vita's son, as “the longest love letter in literary history” (Loc- 3020).). This chapter is not a love letter it is a biographical elucidation of my card making, and of the deep relationship I form with the cards that I imagine into being. The cards come to be a multidimensional protagonist in work, game and play—their incarnation begins tentatively, in a space of “negative capability” (Keats, 2009, p. 492), and eventually strengthens to stand in this quest as a strong and complex character.

Prologue to a Biography

In her collection of essays published under the title *The Death of the Moth*. Woolf (1942/1970) writes an essay exploring biography as a style of literature. In *The Art of*

Biography she describes biography as a form of prose which “imposes conditions, and those conditions are that it must be based upon fact. And by fact in biography we mean facts that can be verified by other people besides the artist” (p. 192). In my imagining of what a possible biography could be to explain the story of a pack of cards, I take liberties with a well-established form of prose. I view this biography as my re-imagining of biography’s conditions to fit my own purpose. By writing in the guise of biographer I re-tell a narrative that is both fact and imagining. I hear a whisper at this juncture of my biographical prologue of mirrors, and again welcome Woolf’s elegant and wise words to bolster my increasingly tentative words describing my imagining of this quest stage. Alice also asserts her presence and is glimpsed beyond, and through the aforementioned mirrors.

Woolf (1942/1970) writes, “Biography will enlarge its scope by hanging up looking glasses at odd corners. And yet from all this diversity it will bring out, not a riot of confusion, but a richer unity” (p. 195).

I use biography as an act of hanging mirrors at odd angles to enrich the whole of this narrative quest. By moving beyond a genre’s norm, I believe it is possible to say that we are again stepping through a looking glass and exploring possibility beyond the traditions and boundaries we often subscribe to out of habit.

The protagonist in this quest stage is a set of objects – cards – a pack of cards. I choose the word biography intentionally, as the pack of cards I am about to describe and the history, which is enfolded into them, is evidence that biography is narrative, which can be verified. This history of a pack of bespoke cards, written as biography, is an attempt to describe a problem and the arrived at solution, which embraces the idea of harmony, conscious intent and functionality. But for me, more importantly, it is

possibly an example of “creative fact” (p. 197) brought forth as a set of objects - cards, or as an object – a pack of cards. As a pack, I imagine my cards as a whole, and yet I must also acknowledge that each card is within its self a whole, and a part of a rich, complex suit within a whole.

As the biographer of my cards I am telling true facts, by sifting the little from the big, and shaping the whole. I aspire to writing of this quest character, whose name may emerge, known for now as my-pack-of-cards, in a way which honours a challenge put forth by Woolf (1942/1970) to write “much more than another fact to add to our collection” to write “the creative fact; the fertile fact; the fact that suggests and engenders” (p. 197).

So here unfolds a biography of a pack of cards, and in one sense they are as Alice says “nothing but a pack of cards” (Carroll, 1865/1994, p. 145). And yet they are so much more than a pack of cards, they are an imagining and bringing forth of a conversational framework to enable dialogue with children. They are a way to explore experience and perception, and to clarify meaning within and through dialogue. In this biography, chronology is loosely adhered to. I think gleaning impressions based in experience is key to the evolution of these cards, as is a need to ensure conversation, which contributes to the essence of this inquiry.

I originally started to write chronologically. I can see that chronology can contribute and order accurate measures to this story’s truth and I can value it as an organiser or orientation point of biography. Yet at the centre is an unfolding of meaning in a manner that is in harmony with this quest journey, and the orientation point is a moral imperative to honour children and inquire into dimensions of children’s web project

experiences. Often this biography strays from chronology and moves back and forth across time, diachronically, through impression and lived experience.

Small Conversations, Big Ideas

Turkle (2008) writes, “intimate ethnography takes patience, it makes room for people to discover what is really on their minds; it creates space for self-reflection” (p. 4).

I pause. I realise biography is intimately related to memoir-ethnography.

I plan for and instigate dialogue with children about their experiences, impressions, understandings and imaginings during their participation in the web projects in an intimate way. I think of this as speaking-memoir and showing-memoir.

As I plan for the conversations, I circle back to my research quest’s *telos*—seeking understanding. I think of my experience of liminal moments—a quickened heart rate, a rush of adrenaline, a buzz—each physical response conceivably signals action precipitated by a moral signal. Sokolowski writes of the word veracity, and this could be the word I seek to speak of the impulse that drives my research and determination to get the heart of the matter in my web project conversations. Veracity here is “the impulse toward truth, and the virtue of truthfulness” (Sokolowski, 2008, p. 21). The act of entering into web-project-speaking with children can be seen as my commitment to seeking, and acting upon an “impulse toward truth.” Veracity has resonance here, in the doing, the conversations I seek. Sokolowski clarifies veracity as,

... the undifferentiated inclination: not just the desire for the truth of natural science, nor the penchant for moral truth or technical discovery, nor the proclivity toward mathematics or history, but the tendency toward truth as such in any form theoretic or practical. (2008, p. 21)

In my conversations I want to unravel hidden perplexities in a seemingly simple set of premises. A question with veracity at its heart distils itself, and propels me forward.

How will I guide dialogue with the children in a manner that makes their thinking visible to me and captures an impulse towards truth?

The conversations I collect in this thesis are framed by, and spun from purposefully chosen threads drawn from a set of inquiry foci derived from this particular question.

After several forays and attempts to enter into dialogue with children built around my inquiry question, and which used an oral questioning structure I find myself in despair. Too many words, no words, and confusion become my reality. I find that I am continually clarifying what I mean, and the essence of my purpose seems lost, confused and overwhelmed by the white noise of children's general conversation, 'vaguening-out' and disengagement. The children do not want to talk about what I am trying to get them to talk about. I lose my impulse for truth in my conversations and words present themselves as unwieldy, confusing babble.

I find I am wallowing in frustration.

I pause and reflect.

How on earth am I going to get the conversational veracity I require?

I return to Alice and her adventures in Wonderland and the looking glass house. I re-enter a reverie with my "writer friends" (Conle, 2000, p. 210).

I am still.

I pause.

I find that I am sitting in a space of "negative capability" (Keats, 2009, p. 492).

Inspiration for a solution comes while playing UNO© with my children—an image of Alice and her pack of cards, in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Carroll, 1865/1994), and recurring words float in my thinking.

“You’re nothing but a pack of cards!”

At this the whole pack rose up into the air ... (p. 145)

I look at the image that Sir John Tenniel created to go with these words (Figure 8) in Carroll’s book.



Figure 8. You're nothing but a pack of cards. S. J. Tenniel, (1872) Through the Looking Glass.

Liberating the voices of the children is central in my thinking at this moment. Malaguzzi and his *di cento* is a door ajar beckoning me to step through. It is as though

Maxine Greene is waiting just beyond the door Malaguzzi has opened. I recognise the gift Greene is holding out to me.

Greene's (1995) valuing of imagination as a moral imperative and her passion and desire to "transform lived worlds" (p. 59) are points I cannot ignore. I grab them with both hands and hold onto them. Maxine reveals herself as an affirming muse and valued guide in calling me into veracity. Three ideas call me into action.

To understand how children themselves reach out for meanings, go beyond conventional limits (once doors are ajar), seek coherence and explanations is to be better able to provoke and release rather than to impose and control.

The young can be empowered to view themselves as conscious, reflective namers and speakers if their particular standpoints are acknowledged, if interpretive dialogues are encouraged.

... that as part of our pedagogy, we enable them (children) to have a large number of languages to hand and not verbal and mathematical languages alone. Some children may find articulation through imagery; others, through body movement; still others, through musical sound. (Greene, 1995, p. 57)

A possible solution to assist me in my speaking to children grows, and the positive energy of its force demands my attention. Playful dialogue, or dialogue framed by elements of play, opens up as a key to breaking through the barrier I feel exists as I enter into focused conversation-dialogue with children about web projects. The solution reveals itself. It is simple and I am excited by its potential.

A pack of cards.

A deck of bespoke cards designed for children.

Cards in suits purposefully designed for children to speak with. I imagine Papert whispering to me, “Give the children new objects to speak of web projects, they will probably think differently, and in new ways. Live your predisposition to constructionist pedagogy, bring it from an idea that sits within you, make it visible in your living.”

I embrace the idea of props as legitimate, liberating and necessary as I enter into a conversational inquiry process with children. I think of my-pack-of-cards as an evocative object. The appropriateness of a prop which is familiar and playful for the children becomes a crucial pivot to “hang my looking glasses at odd corners” (Woolf, 1942/1970, p. 195), whilst gathering rich *di cento*-based material for this inquiry. I feel like I am living as the veracity of this inquiry requires me to.

Prop is perhaps not the word I need here. I am in essence seeking tools to scaffold in a manner echoing essences of Constructivist and Constructionist Thinking. I seek to support children in their speaking, making connections in accessible ways in which I may be prominent at first, gradually relinquishing my presence and voice as the children’s grows. The pack of card’s purpose is to act as a clarifying object, defining boundaries that scope the dialogue and shine spotlights on the foci I want to hone in on.

The idea of designing a pack of cards is daunting. I imagine and think of the characteristics these cards need to embody. I write, “the conversation cards are a way to support dialogue, to describe an experience or observation. They can act as a reflection or they can act as a seed for thought, or they can act as provocateur” (Joscelyne-Loane, 2009-2015b, p. 107)

During this reverie Gatsby appears in my thinking and shows himself impatiently, and if one considers my use of the term veracity then I have to acknowledge the presence of F. Scott FitzGerald. Words appear in my mind from *The Great Gatsby* (2000), “I wanted to be within and without...” (Loc.296). I hope the cards will act as an enabler, allowing me as inquirer to be both participant and observer during dialogue with children—an ambitious hope which places my impulse towards truth at the moral heart of this thesis through acts of honouring children’s voices, and gives them a presence as loud, and as visible, as my own adult presence.

Play, Playfulness and Playing as Dimensions and Modes, Within and Outwith

... she knew not only what the world looked like, but had already chosen her kingdom. She had agreed that if she might rule over that territory, she would covet no other ... she never trespassed beyond her boundaries. (Woolf., 1925/2003, p. 136)

Play, playfulness and playing emerge now as key ideas in this research. ‘Play’ is a word that is bound and restricted by attempts to define, quantify and classify it. Of course our very use of a word often attributes purpose to the word, and there are many reasons to quantify and describe what a word means.

In this section I imagine and conjure play as a character. And when a mirror is held at various angles (Woolf, 1942/1970, p. 195) it reveals different aspects of a complex being which like so much in this thesis is both part and whole. This thread of description, of meaning making and of unfolding, jumps delightfully into something akin to jumping into an inviting swimming pond only to experience possible shocks of the unexpected regarding depth, temperature and what lies beneath, leading to an

experience that shows itself that what appears to *be* is perhaps not *so*, once one has moved from a space of outwith to a space within.

Play as a Possible Mode of Inquiry: Playful dialogue

My initial impression of Woolf was one of serious melancholy and I avoided her essays and much of her work for many years out of fear her melancholy would seep into my being. My first experience of reading her essays is when I came across a beautiful hardback edition of *The London Scene: Six Essays on London Life* (1975). I fell in love with her artistic sensibility and her linguistic rhythm, not melancholic at all. I am held in the thrall of one whose grasp of language and gift for observation and description I will always envy and aspire to. Here is someone bringing what lies within, outwith or put another way, is pulling me as an outlander to their inner life-world.

My first encounter with Woolf was *Orlando* (1928/1993), and my understanding of *Orlando* as a novel was initially coloured by my 16-year-old self. I read it quickly, delighted in its fairy tale like qualities. I remember being filled with wonder and perplexity. I recall sensing, but not understanding the themes within the novel. I fell in love with the idea of an imagined biography. I learned that it was possible to imagine one's own, or another's biography. I think I imagined myself into *Orlando*, and as Orlando, and was envious of his and her life and experiences.

It is not until I re-read *Orlando* in my late thirties that I sense the playfulness of the biographic novel, and am able to enjoy, relish and re-live the unfolding narrative as a playful unearthing of a genre to explore traditions of experience, and the rules or traditions of a specific writing structure.

Woolf (1928/1993) and her *Orlando* give me courage to grip playfulness and play as modes of inquiry within the boundaries of “my chosen kingdom” (1925/2003, p.136), this thesis. I embrace it as a way to explore, try out and practice different renderings of possibility. My kingdom to play within and be playful with is the space of this inquiry—the space of this quest and the conversations I have with the children.

Play as a mode of inquiry is not a new idea, but whichever way it unfolds and bursts forth I think of it as if it were new. I am now seeing play from a different perspective—mirrored from a different angle. A sense of play, or play as a mode of inquiry, reveals my-pack-of-cards as a means to enter a dialogical framework with the children as they begin to speak their experiences of web projects.

The rendering of the cards reminds me again that “intimate ethnography takes patience” (Turkle, 2008, p. 4). And preparing for my conversations is key to understanding what the children speak. Conversation-dialogue shows itself to have the following properties, there are no doubt more, I settle on these for now.

- Conversational boundaries—purposeful conversation anchored by particular foci.
- Props to frame dialogue in the form of a pack of cards.
- Use of metaphor.
- Comparison with what is known to determine characteristics, which are different, or the same, and to provide a language with which to talk.
- A sense of fun characterised by laughter, smiles and “What if?” and “Imagine if?” questions.

- A set of norms – valuing, listening, respect, questioning, presence, wondering, imagining.
- Veracity, the impulse for truth and the desire to possess it.
- Play as a dimension of inquiry.

My-pack-of-cards is built around five dimensions I wish to centre the dialogue upon and use to explore children’s experiences of web projects (Figure 10). The dimensions are proximity, activity, visualisation, interaction and approach.

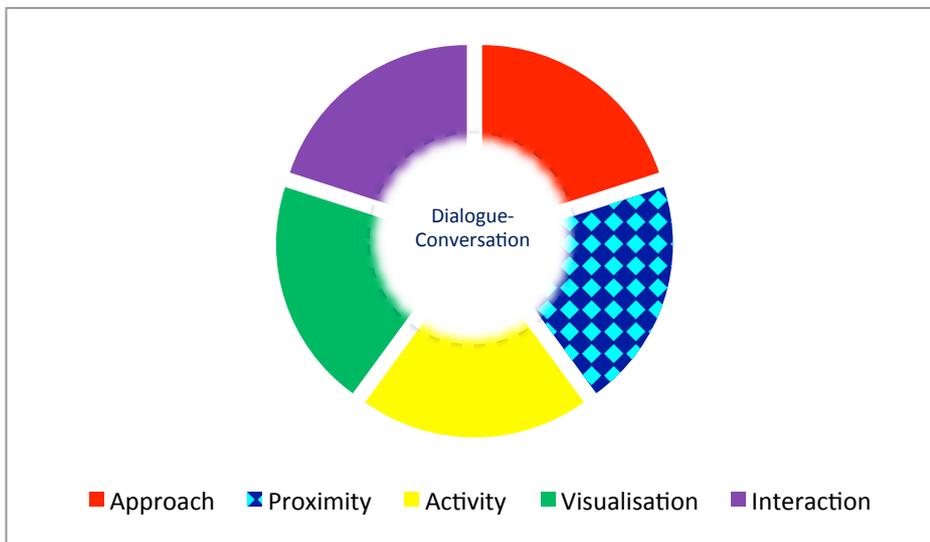


Figure 9. The five dimensions of web project dialogue in this research

I come into thinking of these cards as small cards full of big ideas, for small hands to think and talk with.

The size of each laminated card is 37mm x 39mm. The pack of cards includes subsets or suits of cards, which are themed green, violet, yellow, red and navy with turquoise. The colours assigned to each dimension come to symbolise the threads I wish to explore in the web project landscape – proximity, activity, visualisation, interaction and approach.

My attention shifts as the cards come into existence. Moving from a preoccupation with how to bring conversation about web projects into being, to listening deeply to the speaking web project experiences.

The symbolism and purpose of each suit in my-pack-of-cards needs to be described and expanded upon, as each reflects a different inquiry thread – a different possible aspect of web projects – a different lived experience. I recall Papert’s (1991) constructionist pedagogy, learning by building knowledge structures, through learning-by-making (Papert & Harel, 1991), and gravitate to Turkle’s description of it. She writes,

Seymour Papert was one of Piaget’s students and saw the relationship of object to theory in more activist terms...Papert moved to a constructionist position: Children make their minds through actual building. In Papert’s model we can expect that if we give children new materials, they will build different things and be able to think new thoughts. Piaget’s constructivism takes the object world as something of a given; constructionism puts the child on the prowl for new objects, new ideas. (2011, pp. 15-16).

I imagine my-pack-of-cards to be an object that children might come upon when prowling for new things to think and play with and in doing so, they may be able to think new thoughts, build new connections and learn, interacting with them actively to pull what lies concealed within, outwith.

The Green Cards: Visualisation

“Look deep, deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.” (Einstein & Loewy, 1991)

I am curious about the way in which children see the world, the way they give meaning to experience, and how they interpret the way the world works. I have a deep and

profound love of nature and natural science. I live on a farm and much of my existence is determined by the seasonal rhythms and cycles, which are inescapable in farm life. Within my agrarian landscape, both physical and spiritual, I puzzle over how to get started with my conversations about web projects. I want to engage in dialogue that opens landscapes to journey through, and are dynamic and full of motion. I sip a cup of tea and stumble upon Muriel Stuart's poem, *The seed shop* (1922).

The Seed Shop

*Here in a quiet and dusty room they lie,
Faded as crumbled stone or shifting sand,
Forlorn as ashes, shrivelled, scentless, dry -
Meadows and gardens running through my hand.*

*In this brown husk a dale of hawthorn dreams;
A cedar in this narrow cell is thrust
That will drink deeply of a century's streams;
These lilies shall make summer on my dust.*

*Here in their safe and simple house of death,
Sealed in their shells, a million roses leap;
Here I can blow a garden with my breath,
And in my hand a forest lies asleep.*

The key idea for me in Stuart's poem is that of potentiality. An idea captured poignantly in the following phrases -

*A cedar in this narrow cell is thrust
That will drink deeply of a century's streams;*

Stuart's words demand that I pause, and look within, to a place where reason and perception mix to create a sense of alchemy, that deep, inexplicable level of reflection and thought which scholarly creativity requires.

The quandary I face and solve through and with this poem is: How do I structure and enter into dialogue in an easeful, meaningful and provocative way, which prompts visualisation and deep thought?

A simple phrase, a seed of an idea forms in my mind, a naturalist's visualisation. I nurture and contemplate this seed of infinite possibility.

But before this quest unfurls further a need exists to explain what I mean by a naturalist's visualisation. 'Visualisation' is a word, which echoes with the concrete and mystical experiences of humankind down through the ages. Visualisation is described by *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (2007) as the action or process of visualising and as a mental image formed by visualising (p. 3543). The Latin root of the word is *visus*, the word itself deriving from the Latin *visualis*. Etymologically, visualisation is a member of a large family of English words all derived from the Latin *vidēre*, which simply means 'see' (Ayto, 1990, pp. 560-561). In this thesis visualisation means to bring forth and see a thing, an idea, impression or observation through words or images in a physical way. By adding a naturalist's perspective, their nuance is inscribed through, and into the meaning and one cannot help but be oriented towards the natural world. 'Naturalist' is ascribed three meanings in the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (2007). The essence of each contributes to the meaning of the word, naturalist. A naturalist is described as: A person who studies natural as opposed to supernatural or spiritual, things...

An expert in or student of natural science; a natural philosopher... concerned with observation rather than experiment.

A person who aims a close adherence to and faithful representation of nature or reality in art, literature etc. (p. 1895)

So I imagine ‘a naturalist’s visualisation’ is rooted in the natural world and nods its head to nature. My use of this term acknowledges myself as one who studies and observes nature. Thoughts of C.S. Lewis push themselves in here. Peter J. Schackel (2002) shares in my reverie by offering the following observation of Lewis which I cannot skim over, “imagination connects things that were previously unconnected, not through a logical or intellectual process but through association, intuition or inspiration” (p. 4). I see my-pack-of-cards, as a new way of seeing an idea that is made from my imaginative connecting of things that were previously unconnected.

The green cards are imagined whilst I am in the midst of an agrarian obsession, a period were I seemed to don glasses fitted with a naturalist’s lens, a green tinted lens. So inevitably what emerges is a naturalist’s visualisation. I am absorbed in Vita Sackville-West’s poems *The Land* and *The Garden*, and I am enthralled by Keller’s biography of Barbara McClintock. I spend innumerable hours living in the pages of Anna Pavord’s *Naming of Names* and Charles Elliot’s *Potting Shed Papers & The Transplanted Gardener*. I garden and think, communing with nature, and on a summer’s morning, waking to a bright start, I urgently make my way inside from my garden, to draw a flower (Figure 10) and then two naturalistic diagrams (Figure 11 and Figure 12).

I feel an affinity with the plants of the Umbellifer family in particular their morphology captures me in their thrall. Be it an Eryngium, Queen Anne’s Lace, Parsley or Fennel plant, even a carrot gone to seed. The dainty structure and elegance of the umbels, appeals. Umbellifers are now part of the Apinaceae family, and have a striking and easily recognisable physical structure. Umbrella plants are how I regularly think of them. Barbara Perry Lawton (2007) describes them in the following way,

The single most characteristic structure of the Apinaceae is the inflorescence, usually a compound umbel with an umbrella-like appearance. A compound umbel is one that bears smaller umbels, sometimes called umbellules...The compound umbels of the Apinaceae are constructed much like umbrellas, with all the pedicels of the flowers in each cluster radiating from a single spot at the end of a plant stem. In turn, the stems of the flower clusters all radiate inward to a single spot at the end of a main branch of the plant – sort of an umbrella of umbrellas. (p. 82)

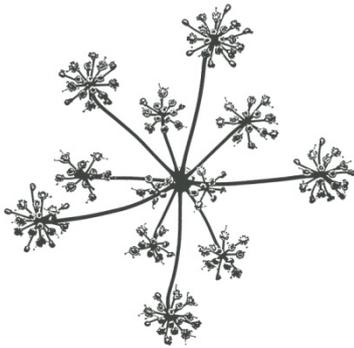


Figure 10. Fennel Flower

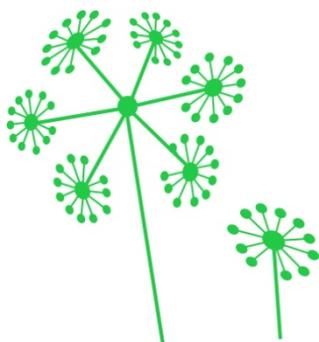


Figure 11. Umbellifer

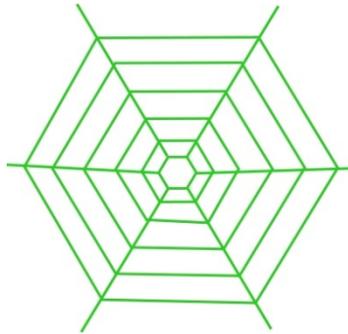


Figure 12. Web

In the following days I re-sketch and re-think. I quickly add a representation to symbolise a circle of people, things or ideas (Figure 13) to my growing collection. Then comes a diagrammatical representation of a communication exchange between two people or things (Figure 14), and I settle on a filled circle (Figure 15) to signify an independent attribute, be it a person, idea or thing.

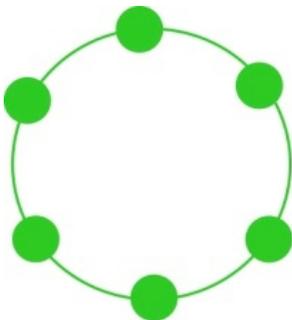


Figure 13. Circle

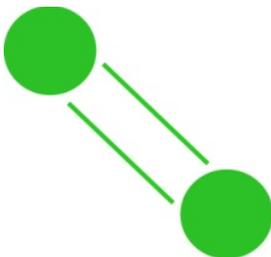


Figure 14. Exchange

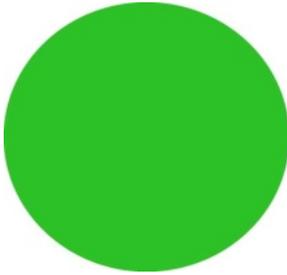


Figure 15. Independent

Several years before, as my grandfather was fading from this life, I was listening to ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) Radio National during a long hot drive into the nursing home from my farming home. *The Science Show* was on and the host, Robin Williams introduced me to Duncan Watts and the idea of networks as a phenomenon. I accumulated ideas and read about the New Science of Networks with an unquenchable thirst and found that networks were sitting in my thinking with increasing predominance. As I read, I jotted and noted, and initially sketched an idea for a network icon on a sticky note in my knitting pattern book. It remained insignificant and half remembered amongst a growing collection of material until an evening when a similar idea metamorphosed into a significant moment for this thesis.

What if working together is viewed as more than working in a group?

What would adding a card into my collection that represented networks do?

How might conversation that includes networks bring different understandings to group work and web projects in a classroom environment?

With these questions interplaying in my thinking, I create a card to represent the idea of networks (Figure 16).

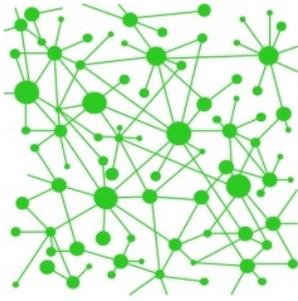


Figure 16. Network

With the aid of ADOBE Illustrator I conjure the first set of cards from the scraps of paper, sticky notes and sketches I have accumulated. The resulting images are presented here as Figures 11 to16.

The graphics on the cards are rendered in green making visible the link they have to nature and the card's journey from subject, to concept, to object. The words which best describe the process I move through during the making of the cards are those of Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1999) in *A Simpler Way*,

The unceasing motions of the world move us deeper into entangled networks of relationships. These entanglements feel disturbingly messy. Yet messiness is simply another way of describing freedom, surprise, and acausal nature of life's processes. Deep inside these webs, we find no easy trails between cause and effect. We can't work with these webs by striving for parsimony, neatness, or predictable efficiencies. Life leads us away from our confident determinism into systems where we are called to experiment and play rather than to predict. (p. 97)

The cards show pictures or elements that can be put together, used independently or put aside as the children talk of their experience and visualisation of how web projects

work. The green cards enable children to imagine and re-imagine by showing as a way of speaking.

When the children use the green cards they look at them intently. They asked for clarification about what the images mean. The conversations about how web projects work, unfurl as the children use the cards to talk with. The children's words are considered, the conversation is imaginative. A quiet sense of relief settles on me, and I revel in the conversational community that arises from the anchor the cards provide. The children cup the cards in their hands, turn them around, and squint at them.



The children place them on the floor, arrange and re-arrange them. They talk as they choose and unchoose cards they think they might use in their drawings. Snippets of considered and re-considered thought are voiced and caught by the audio recording program (Audacity) on my computer.

Euan participates in *The Flat Stanley Project*, he shuffles and swishes the cards about on the floor and pulls two cards towards him, the card with a web on it and the card with the exchange symbol on it.



Web



Exchange

Euan: "Connected to communications, computers and e-mail, and they're all connected through Flat Stanley. Which is also connected to the person who made the web project."

Another child, Zeb is making his thinking visible with the cards and the accompanying speaking his thinking.

Zeb: "Basically the web goes everywhere so part of everything. Umbellifer. Our classroom and then it leads out to us in our little groups, and they contain more than one person. Flat Stanley and Bunyips are the same."

The cards Zeb chooses are as follows.



Umbellifer



Web

A small group of children, Walt, Hettie, Harry and Kate use the cards to work through their thinking. There is a great deal of picking up and placing, shuffling, turning over and grouping as their conversation progresses within a space framed by the suit of green cards. The vitality and dynamism of the conversation captures the oscillation and rhythms of a dialogue anchored, and yet imaginative.

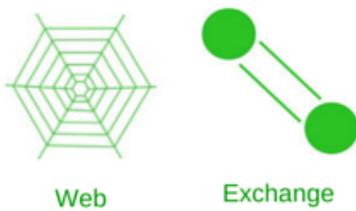
Walt picks up the exchange card, and curls his hand around it.

Walt: “an exchange because you’re exchanging Flat Stanleys with other classes.”



Kate singles out the web card and the exchange card and places them together on the floor.

Kate: “Those two, because it has to do with the internet as well. An exchange web.”



Hannah picks up the network card and places it in front of her on the floor, she pauses and places it next to Kate’s cards.

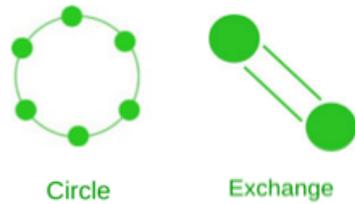
Hannah: “A network as well because you’re using that to connect with the other classes.”



Walt joins back in.

Walt: *"It could even be a circle as well because there are lots of different classes around the globe."*

He picks up the circle card and places it with his exchange card.



Will places his cards next to Kate's and Hettie's cards and brings them into a line of green cards.

Hettie: *"like pass the parcel."*

Kate pauses and, smiles.

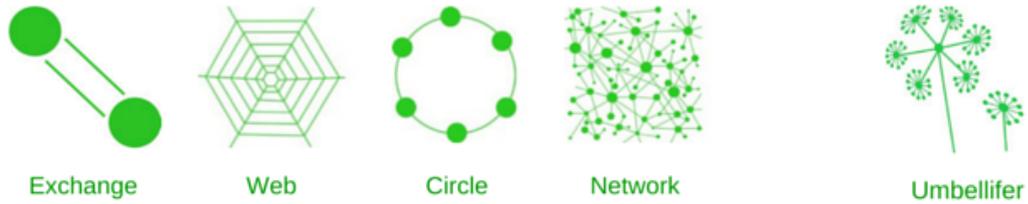
Kate: *"going to different people so not independent."*

Kate moves the independent card to the side. She picks up the umbellifer card.

Hettie: *"Yes, I guess like that, that picture would work."*



Kate smiles and moves the umbellifer card to the others adding to the collection lined up in front of them.



Walt looks hard at the cards, and then glances at Kate.

Kate: "The web is the centre bit."

She pauses then continues, whilst touching and pulling the umbellifer card forward.

Kate: "Umbellifer, it has us in the centre and it comes back to us."

Will: "Our class is the centre and then we're working with other classes around the globe and we don't know who they're working with."

The conversation continues to ebb and flow. The cards are moved, placed and re-placed.

Walt moves the umbellifer card a little away from the other cards.

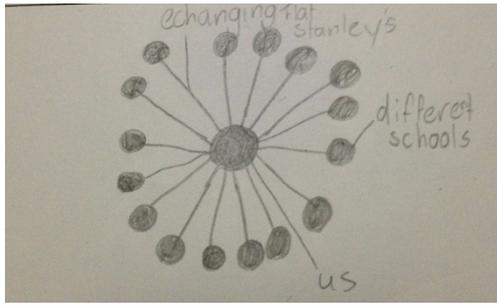
Walt: "Now I come to think about it the centre is us and classes we're working with around it, they don't know who or how many we're working with, so..."

Hettie: "I think an exchange because you just exchange Flat Stanleys with all the different schools around the world. If you mix two together you'd have an umbellifer and an exchange only one and just an exchange."

Kate: "An exchange then?"

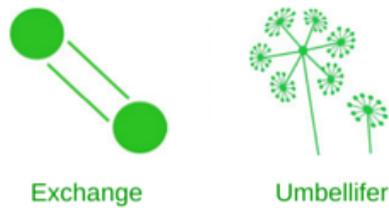
Walt: "But we're working with more than one. Oh...actually then...um...Well I'd say an umbellifer and the little line between is the exchange."

Kate draws her imagining below.

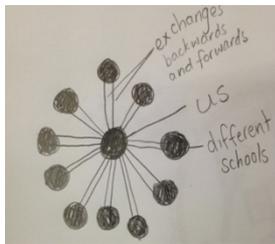


Kate: "But not showing it coming back. Here I'll show you."

Kate pulls the exchange and umbellifer cards together.



She takes up her pencil and draws the following.

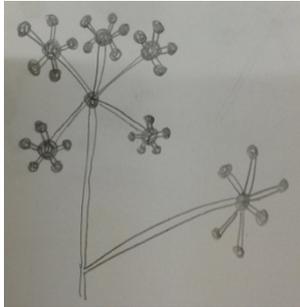


Walt: "Mine is a cross between an exchange and an umbellifer."

The conversation continues to explore, re-imagine and make visible the thinking they have within. Through the cards and conversation, the imagined and thought is brought outwith. Another spurt of activity, shuffling, placing and animated conversation ensues. Then Harry chimes in for the first time after watching and listening up until now.

Harry: "Wiggly lines are it (web project object) being sent back..."

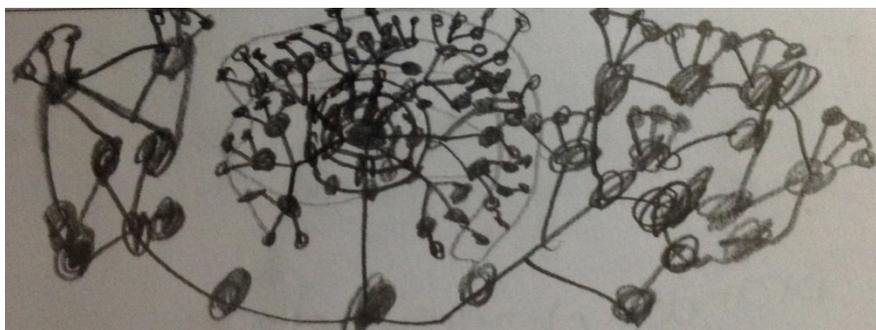
They're a cross between an exchange and an umbellifer because how I've drawn that is the umbellifer and the exchange and they link, join to another umbellifer (pause) like this."



Walt becomes very animated, he emanates energy as he busily moves three cards together.

Walt: "Exchange, umbellifer and network now."

The children settle upon these three cards, and set to re-imagining how they may be combined to explain their thinking.



During the lively conversation that follows, Ben joins in and draws, and the others guide him. The drawing is a combination of umbrellifers, networks and exchanges.

Another child a younger child, James, listens as I say to a group of children “Imagine and draw a diagram of how a Bunyip project works and use the cards to help you draw what you think.” Imagining how a Bunyip web project works, James places a colourful Bunyip joined to a circle exchange. His drawn Bunyip is not just a conceptual diagram comprising of symbolic shapes, it is more—it is a drawing of an anthropomorphic being, and makes visible James’ close relationship with his Bunyip.



Another eager child, Stella, holds the cards and looks intently at each card. She asks for clarification for what each picture means. She and her friends set to drawing. The conversation that ensues knits spoken words and showing, together as a conversation, in a kind of graphic speaking. The drawings the children make take their imagery from the green suit of cards, confirming the cards’ power to bring ideas from within, outwith, making them visible.

The pictures brought outwith are magical imaginings of how to describe the nature of a web project's workings. The drawn images combine one, two or three of the cards and a number of the drawings have an image of the being or character that is central in their web project. In this instance the children see computers and elements of the cyber world as important to the web projects as well.

The drawn Bunyips in these explanations of how web projects work, are friendly, their faces kind, and I realise that the drawings are reflections of the children's humanisation of the Bunyips, they are acts of personification – the giving of life and humanity to the mythical Bunyips in *The Bunyips Project*.



These drawings differ from the drawings of the older children as they are not just diagrammatic, they have identifiable Bunyips in their composition, and the Bunyips are connected to individual imaginings of how web projects networks, exchanges, umbellifers and the like, work.

The children's drawings suggest an intimate relationship with the imaginary beings their web projects are built around, a relationship not unlike one with their friends. There is a hint of a world beyond the one they know, there are whispers of

relationships, which are diverse, flexible and global. With the cards the children's imaginings of how web projects work are supported and coaxed outwith from within their minds. It dawns on me that the cards are acting as portals allowing me to travel into the invisible, imagined realms of the children. Without the cards these ideas, reactions, experiences and imaginings remain invisible, they are concealed.

My initial anxieties surrounding the creation, making of, and using of my-pack-of-cards and in particular this suit of green cards recede. I pause and feel satisfied. My efforts to open up conversation are a success. There is speaking of web projects, and lots of it.

The cards enable the children to communicate their diverse, imaginative experience of web projects. I pause and smile, as I whisper a quiet word of thanks to Alice as I look in wonder at the potential that sits before me in this small pile of cards. The cards are beautiful and surprising in their imagining and rendering. They are an original invention within this thesis. I thought the creation of *The Bunyips Project* was the focus of my web project work, however as I write of my experience of creating the green cards and what they have enabled, the original idea in this thesis reveals itself, and confirms itself to be the cards and their bringing forth into being out of my experience of working with the children as they talk of their experience of the web projects. I feel confident to imagine and make cards for each of the other dimensions I want to investigate.

The Violet Cards - Interaction

The violet cards support and prompt investigatory dialogue around children's perceptions of interaction within their web project experience.

Interaction has many guises and names, and each name creates a sense of modality, or strength of meaning. The violet cards seek to describe and explore interaction as

ways of thinking. The use of the colour violet is not whimsical, violet is a particular shade, a marriage of blue and red, with more blue than red. Violet is a colour in its own right in rainbows, and is situated as the last colour in an arch made of fragmented light and water droplets and can be thought of as “the end of the known and the beginning of the unknown (Finlay, 356)” (in Ronnberg & Martin, 2010, p. 654). These words perhaps impress upon and reflect the complexity and ambiguity of the idea of interaction in web projects and by extrapolation, in the broader landscape of teaching and learning.

Interaction is a complex relationship and nature feels ephemeral and is forever dynamic and unfolding. Interaction is a tension between the known – that which is visible; and the unknown – that which is not visible. A description of thinking could be couched in these terms – the known (visible thinking, thinking which is revealed and brought outwith) and the unknown (thinking which is not revealed) and is kept within. Thinking that is visible is revealed through what we can see and hear. In classrooms learning is made visible quintessentially by what people do, say, make and write (Griffin, 2008). In web projects thinking is revealed through these modes of being, however there is also thinking which is not revealed and is harder to know, it may be inferred. We guess at it from clues, a characteristic of inference can be ambiguity—sometimes our inferences are a true interpretation of clues, sometimes not.

Interaction is central to teaching and learning in the guise of relationships and sharing. Doczi (1981) writes;

Both teaching and learning are essentially experiences of sharing. Good teachers have the magic capacity to share themselves, their devotion to their subject with their students.

“The greatness of teachers is not measured in how much they

know, but by how much they share,” said Reverend Jesse Jackson...(p. 29)

Interaction as sharing is central to web projects. The labels given to web projects allude to the type of interaction, and perhaps give a possible sense of control and order over the type of experiences children move through during a web project. The scope of possible exploration regarding interaction within web projects is complex. There is a multitude that could be explored:

- Teacher with teacher
- Co-ordinator with teacher
- Co-ordinator with students
- Students with students
- Teacher with students
- Children with project
- Children with aspects of project eg, Bunyip, Flat Stanley, monsters etc.
- Children with technology

I cannot hope to explore all of these relationship interactions in this thesis, so I concentrate on my relationship with the children, the children’s relationship with the character or mythological being in their project, and the children’s experience of the project. The violet cards support conversation that explores how the children experience the nature of interaction with their co-participants within a web project in the same geographical location.

My hope for these cards is that they enable children to talk about their thinking in terms of interaction and will reveal whether they have been working collaboratively or in a parallel manner, or perhaps in another way. My intuition senses that children move through modes of interaction and switched modes in response to project requirements or due to personal responses to peers and teachers; or a combination of both.

The images I make for the cards include cloud shapes representing thinking, a circle or part circle representing a thing being made, in the case of the web projects in this thesis either a Bunyip, Flat Stanley or a monster. The people glyphs or symbols represent the children. Each glyph is recognisable from popular use in signage. They are from the Webding font. The glyphs have been manipulated in ADOBE Illustrator to create the graphics for each card. When the symbols are put together in the manner in which they are here, a meaning emerges which speaks of experiences lived in web projects in a representational manner which is understood and/or recognised by children. The glyphs become even more recognisable when wrapped in conversation and dialogue related to the intentionality of the images within the context of this work. The cards act as enablers of speaking as showing not just of telling.

The violet cards are made of four symbolic representations. They are thinking on your own, making your own thing (Figure 17), thinking on your own, working on a part of a thing you're making together (Figure 18), thinking on your own, working on a thing together (Figure 19), thinking together and making your own thing (Figure 20).

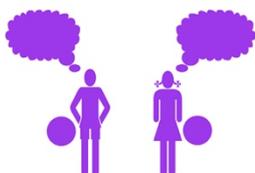


Figure 17. Thinking on your own, making your own thing

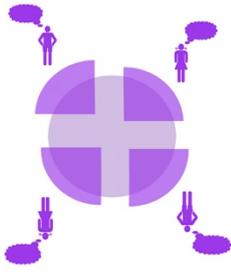


Figure 18. Thinking on your own, working on a part of a thing you're making together

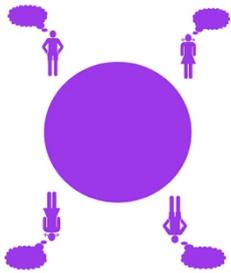


Figure 19. Thinking on your own, working on a thing together

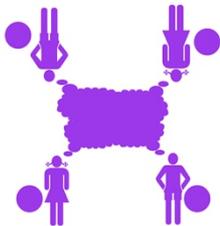


Figure 20. Thinking together and making your own thing

The children like the colour of the cards and as with the green cards they lay them out, re-arrange them in lines, piles and collections. The small hands shuffle them and turn them over, sliding them around. The children move the cards and talk, and in doing this they bring their thinking from within to outwith. They make their thinking visible.



I hover near the group, just within reach to clarify questions, I leave the audio recorder running. I watch and listen, entranced by the deep thinking the cards make visible. Being part of this conversation has brought me into a space of enchantment. Snippets of the conversation find their way here, illustrating how the children use this set of cards to think with and through, bringing that which is within, outwith to visibility. Listen.

Kate: "You know Flat Stanley ... not thinking on your own making your own thing because we're thinking together as a group."

Kate moves the card and places it to the side.



Wes: "kind of thinking on our own and working on a thing together, but some things you do on your own like colour them in and laminate them and we

take them on adventures by ourselves. Classes around the world not just us.”

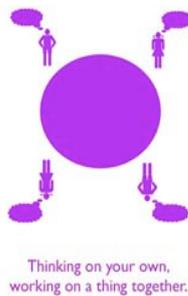
Kate: “It would be the same as us ... oh ... um no”

Hettie: “Thinking on your own and making a part of a thing together.”

Hettie slides the corresponding card to this thought and places it firmly in front of her.



Euan: “I think actually different its thinking on your own but working on a thing together – Flat Stanley. Because we’re all making Flat Stanleys which are connected and we’re then making our own stories. I think the middle dot is all the Flat Stanleys.”



Wes: “Actually now I think, well, it could be that one.”

Wes points to thinking on your own, working on a part of a thing together.



The conversations flow, they are serious and peppered with smiles and laughter. The conversations are respectful and capture thinking that reveals an experience of an idea, which until now was hard to describe and talk about. The conversations speak a story that links the cards to the web projects, and to each child's experience of their web project in terms of relationship thought of as collaboration and cooperation. I spoke earlier of veracity, the human inclination to attain the truth of things (Sokolowski, 2008 p. 20), I believe the cards are assisting me to look deeply into the web project experiences of the children and see web project truths. An essence of this thesis shows itself to be matching language to meaning and experience, and that is shown to be a purpose of the violet cards.

The Yellow Cards - Activity

The yellow cards explore the nature of web projects as an activity. They are a response to a niggling, recurring point of perplexity arising from the question—What sort of activity is a web project? I am intrigued by the ambiguity and frustration this question engenders in teachers and children in my inquiry. I realise that this simple question requires a way to talk about the activity aspect of web project experiences that is easy. I actively hang mirrors and search for parameters to limit this conversational thread—there is potential for it to become messy, unwieldy and to lack clarity. The word

‘activity’ is derived from the Late Latin *activas* (Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 31) and the meaning, which applies to web projects, is “a particular occupation or pursuit”.

One teacher participant (MH) captures the changeable nature of web projects in terms of their activity type, when she talks of web projects as “a thing, which could be work, play, both, none or something else” (Joscelyne-Loane, 2009-2015a).

First I settle on simple words and phrases for each card—work, play, game, two of them, none of them, something else. I decide that the colour of the cards is golden yellow.

Yellow is a colour that is drenched in symbolism and is purposefully used here in this set of cards for this suit. The bright gold yellow the cards are rendered in can be seen to reflect the charm and magic of work, game and play. Vincent van Gogh’s yellow gold sunflowers are famous for their vibrant yellows and as cited in *The book of symbols* (Ronnberg & Martin, 2010), “Yellow is ‘a colour capable of charming God’ (Theroux, 146). So wrote Vincent van Gogh from his yellow house in sun-drenched Arles” (p. 644), yellow is also written of in *The book of Symbols*, as a transitional stage.

The children tell me “work is not opposite to play, but they are very different, they are cousins, as are games, in an activity family” (Joscelyne-Loane, 2009-2015b, p. 80). The purpose of the yellow cards is to delve deeper into this idea and to wait for what might be revealed. This suit of cards also brings into focus an innate desire we all have as we journey through the world—a desire to label, to categorise and group according to likeness or difference.

The cards represent as simplistically as possible the complexity of this web project dimension. The symbols used within this suit of cards are from four fonts found in the

computer world. The fonts are from Webdings (🗨️ 🎮 🧑), Wingdings (📝), Mini Pics Red Rock (🏹) and Mini Pics Art Jam (🎨).

As the children use the yellow cards I listen to what the children are saying, and notice the pauses and silent spaces as they move the cards, shuffle them, line them up and group them.

There are six golden cards in this suit of the pack. They are sunny and full of energy like children engrossed in activity. The first yellow card I create is the one representing game (Figure 21) and it has a softball and a dice on it. The yellow softball represents a genre of game that is played with teams, rules and balls, and is usually outside. The yellow dice represents a genre of game that is less physically energetic and involves rules, boards or other equipment. When using the yellow cards within dialogue, the children like the symbols on this card and attribute similar meaning to the one I give to this yellow card. The graphic is understood.



Figure 21. Game

The second card I create in this card group is the work card (Figure 22). The glyphs represent different aspects of work from the children's point of view. The yellow thought cloud represents thinking, the yellow page glyph represents reading, written work and worksheets, and the yellow pencil represents writing and drawing.



Figure 22. Work

The third yellow card represents none (Figure 23). This card is a response to children who feel that a web project is not work, game or play or a combination of any mix. I choose a yellow zero to represent this because when I use a blank card with the word ‘none’ on it the children do not understand what I am representing. They are puzzled. The yellow zero seems to minimise puzzlement.



Figure 23. None

The next card to arrive in the pack is play (Figure 24). I combine different yellow glyphs representing self and artefacts or images that children associate with play, be they a boy or a girl. I deliberately choose to omit representations of cars and dolls, as I did not want this card to inadvertently become the centre of a conversation about gender and stereotypes. The glyphs on this card speak more with voices of play supported by technology, and creative, imaginary play and as play possibly defined but not limited by age.



Figure 24. Play

The remaining cards come easily now as they combine elements of the ones already made. One of these remaining cards centres on the idea that a web project is a combination of two elements, work and play, or work and game, or game and work (Figure 25).



Figure 25. A mix of two? Which two?

The final card is made up to show work, game and play together (Figure 26), providing the opportunity for the children to consider their experience of a web project as a combination of all three activity types.



Figure 26. *Work, game & play*

The five yellow cards are a favourite with the children. Their little hands pick them out of the entire pack and shuffle them in a flurry of yellow-tinted activity. They talk with them and show their present thinking regarding the type of activity their web project is.

In my mind these yellow cards show beyond doubt that quantifying the type of activity a web project is, is difficult because the experience of the activity changes depending on the children's sense of autonomy and proximity to the web project they are participating in. It also becomes clear that the activity type assigned to a web project by the children at any time depends on the stage of the web project and the activity they are undertaking within the web project. I decide to trial the yellow cards with one of the children. Holly lays the cards out and talks to me in a serious manner about transitioning between the activity types in her web project.

Holly talks and shows her thinking with the cards,

Holly: "Sometimes when work is set as work it magically, in my mind can

become play. interesting, liking it and you enjoy it and it turns into play."

She moves the work card and the play card towards her. They are closer to her.



She pauses.

She speaks again, tentatively, then more confidently.

Holly: “Web projects are good because in them you’re allowed to go backwards and forwards between them. And they’re a fun way to do work, you learn lots in them.”

She motions with her hand over the cards, moving her hand back and forth as she speaks. She picks up the card identifying that web projects are a mix of two types of activity.



I sit in wonder. The conversation speaks and shows so much more than I had imagined in terms of deep thinking. I sit in quiet wonder, and look forward to more yellow conversations.

The Red Cards – Approach Style

The red cards focus on how individuals approach their tasks—their approach style. They come from a fascination I have with Turkle and Papert’s (1991) thinking, observations and descriptions of how students worked with computers and

computerised toys in the 1980s. The red cards are a re-imagining of Turkle's (2005), "styles of mastery" (p. 101) arising from her computer programming research amongst children, and they build on her earlier work with Papert (Turkle & Papert, 1991) regarding soft and hard approaches to computer programming tasks. Turkle describes these styles as a way of living and being within a task, including the desire to complete a task and which is brought forth and expressed through soft and hard approaches to a task. In Turkle's (2005) own words,

Hard mastery is the imposition of will over the machine through the implementation of a plan...Soft mastery is more interactive...Hard Mastery is the mastery of the planner, the engineer, soft mastery is the mastery of the artist: try this, wait for a response, try something else, let the overall shape emerge from the interaction with the medium. It is more like a conversation than a monologue. (p. 101)

Turkle (2005) continues on to describe her thinking as she enlarges upon this idea. She refers to anthropologist Levi-Strauss and the idea of *bricolage* is brought to the fore of this thesis again.

Hard and soft mastery recalls anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss's discussion of the scientist and the bricoleur. Levi-Strauss used the term *bricolage*, tinkering, to make a distinction between Western science and the science of pre-literate societies. The former is a science of the abstract, the latter the science of the concrete. Like the bricoleur, the soft master works with a set of concrete elements. While the hard master thinks in terms of global abstractions, the soft master works on a problem by arranging and rearranging the elements, working through new combinations.

Although the bricoleur works with a closed set of materials, the results of combining elements can lead to surprising results. (pp. 101-102)

The red cards, and in actuality each set of cards in the pack, are the result of me working as *bricoleur*. Reading Turkle's work opens up a world of possibility and imagining which had not previously been present in my thinking. After creating the red cards I then re-visit each set of cards to tinker with them in the guise of *bricoleur*. *Bricolage* feels natural and is, my preferred way of working, and after reading Turkle's work I feel a joy rising within me from a sense of liberation and affirmation that the way I work is valid. I cling onto Turkle and Papert's (1991) words, " Bricolage is a way to organise work. It is not a stage in a progression to superior form" (p. 173).

The red cards are my interpretation and translation, a tentative re-imagining of Turkle's observations and connections of thought regarding styles of mastery. The cards reflect my purpose and desire to explore how children approach the web projects including the tasks and expectations within each in terms of styles of mastery. The images that comprise the cards are visualisations that represent four possible types of approach from a hard to a soft way of working. The pictures on the cards show gradients of modality. The imagery on the cards tries to represent an abstract idea or set of ideas in an accessible way and the question they address is: Can children identify and talk about how they approach (in terms of style mastery) their web project experience?

The cards are made up of solid spots, numbers and arrows and a squiggly arrow. The cards enable children to self reflect. They support thinking around the questions:

"How do you work?"

and

“How did you work?”

The colour red is chosen for these cards as red is associated with energy and is the colour of life (Ronnberg & Martin, 2010, p. 638). These cards are about approach, and they are also about how children use their energy. The four ideas the cards represent are an imagining of what Turkle’s hard approach to mastery and soft approach to mastery may look like as graphic symbols to show thinking. I visualise each card in this set as related to the other cards. In my mind they sit on an imagined continuum moving from harder to softer.

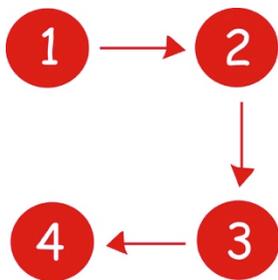


Figure 27. Following instructions in order

Figure 27 is a card representing a following of instructions or steps from beginning to end in the correct order and is an imagining of a hard style mastery approach (Turkle & Papert, 1991). It tries to represent an objective approach to a task in a traditional epistemological sense. The graphic on this card shows “the essence of science in objectivity and the essence of objectivity in a distanced relationship with the object of study” (p. 175). This card shows a style mastery approach in which children do not deviate from doing the prescribed order to complete a task, progressing through a task in the instructed sequence of steps.

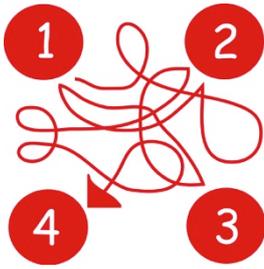


Figure 28. Following instructions but not always in order

Figure 28 represents a reasonably hard mastery style approach, a softer style mastery approach to the previous card. Before I had created this group of cards many children spoke of following instructions, but not always in order. This card represents their experience of following instructions and speaks of not always working in the prescribed order when participating in an activity, particularly in this instance, in a web project. It attempts to represent a relationship to an object or task that is closer and softer than the experience or approach represented by Figure 27.



Figure 29. Knowing what you have to end up with and just letting it unfold

Figure 29 represents a *bricoleur* style mastery approach. This card speaks of a style mastery possibility that can be summed up as knowing what you have to end up with and just letting it unfold. And I know what I have to end up with and I'll get there my way. The children speak of both ways of working before I make this set of cards. I also imagine this card to encapsulate working backwards in a manner not dissimilar to that

advocated for teachers by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe (2005) in their *Understanding by Design Framework* (UbD) (p. 17). UbD is a teacher-planning framework. For my inquiry here I latch onto the following words, “We are advocating a reverse of common practice, then. We ask designers to start with a much more careful statement of the desired results — the priority learning — and to derive the curriculum from the performances called for or implied in the goals” (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005, p. 17). Backwards design then, speaks of desired results and working backwards to ensure these are achieved, a style mastery approach, which may be thought of as a form of *bricolage* teaching.

I pause.

I am pulled up short.

Perhaps my-pack-of-cards could provide teachers with ways to reflect upon, and inform their mastery style approach to teaching?

That is work for another time (what a delectable idea and possibility).

Back to my red cards. The first style mastery approach spoken of as I make this card (Figure 29) is inscribed and tinted with a tinkering essence. The children speak of “... trying things with the stuff we have, and then swapping it around while we do our job... I make what I do, fit the job” (Joscelyne-Loane, 2009 -2015b). The working approach of these children involves, working with an open set of ‘stuff’. They work believing that they have an endless supply of stuff in their classroom to use and tinker with.

The second pattern the children speak of is a variation of this, and echoes with living as *bricoleur*. The children arrange and rearrange a closed set of stuff, and situate their doing firmly within the boundaries of the task at hand. At times stuff refers to the project’s requirements, and at other times stuff refers to how tasks are organised,

including the actual set of instructions. The children's style mastery approach depicted in this card speaks, "I know what I need to end up with, I'm not really sure of what it will be like or how I will get there, it may also end up a bit different." The children appear to constantly work in a space of "negative capability" (Keats, 2009, p. 492). They let things unfold, they try lots of things, they arrange, rearrange, change the order of instructions and usually have an end point in mind – they tinker and create, they imagine their way through a web project experience in their own way.

The last group of children I make a red card for are the children who work in a style with no set end point, they literally just wait and see what happens and what others are doing around them.



Figure 30. Just see what happens

Figure 30 is a card I resist making. I doubt its value. I should have known better as one of the children thinks what I am uncomfortably pondering. Harry whispers to me with a knowing smile (which I think grows from a twinge of anxiety rooted in the sharing of something he's not sure he should be admitting to). The words that come are pre-empted with a nervous giggle. "Sometimes I have no idea what I have to do! I wait and see what others do and sometimes I do follow instructions. Sometimes I listen really well and sometimes I don't" (Joscelyne-Loane, 2009-2015b, p. 38)

This particular red card (Figure 30) makes visible and validates a style mastery approach that I think of as an observer-and-follower way of working. I feel privileged

that this boy feels comfortable enough to talk about his approach. I believe it speaks of trust that has grown out of attentive listening.

I recognise that this approach is one I often use (although I do not often admit to it), and many of the children use it at various times during their web project experience. Honouring and validating Harry's voice and his speaking enact my authenticity as researcher, and philosopher. In a study with a different intent regarding children's speaking this may not have been important, but in this one it is. From the outset part of this quest is to honour children's voices as their own, and not impose my voice over theirs, or make my voice louder than theirs. This card is a tactile act of this. So here, nestled amongst the other red cards, which speak of purpose, and a sense of what to do, is one, which says, "I'm going to look around, and let's just see what happens."

The conversations that the children speak, and that are framed by the red cards are not long, or brimming with the curiosity and wonder of some of the other conversational threads in my-pack-of-cards. My intuition is that this conversation is easier to speak because the children know and are familiar with the ideas I am exploring and probing. Their responses are definite, as is their body language. This does not mean that the children do not change their mind. As the children speak with these cards there are many nods, not so many waving arms and hands as words lose their way, and little looking to the ceiling for guidance and words to explain a thought or idea that proves elusive. The cards represent in simple terms styles of mastery that are hard, less hard (harder), less soft (softer) and soft.

Hugh picks up the cards and arranges them.

He flicks the edges of the cards with his finger.

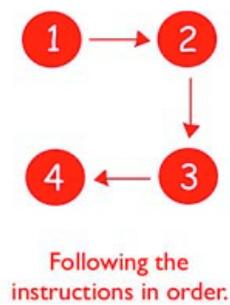
He lines them up on the floor.

He touches the cards.



He picks out two cards and speaks, waving one card.

The card he waves as he speaks is the following the instructions in order card



Hugh: "In the Bunyips (Web Project) if we're waiting to follow a groups instructions, we can't make it. We don't have a clue what it (the bunyip) looks like. And it could end up nothing like it...If we don't follow the instructions it would be embarrassing when we send the photos to the other schools because ours would all be mucked up."

"You can't not follow the instructions it would just muck up if you don't. "

Again, a quiet smile settles on my face.

The red cards enable the children to speak of their mastery style approach—their approach to working within web projects.

The Navy with Turquoise Cards - Proximity

The navy and turquoise cards again derive from observations written about by Turkle (2005), this time from *The Second Self – Computers and the Human Spirit*. I lose myself in Turkle’s work in a way not dissimilar to the way I seem to disappear into the works of my other “writer friends” (Conle, 2000, p. 210), Lewis, Carroll, Le Guin, Woolf and my other quest-friends. As I read Turkle’s words I let the meaning held within her words wash over me. This set of cards comes about from my experience of *dépaysement*. I enter the children’s web project world through their conversations, and when I came back to my life-world I see a way forward to talk about how into the web project experience children feel they are.

I came up with the idea that I could gauge levels of children’s engagement. These cards are the result of a bit of magic, an alchemy of imagining in a manner not dissimilar to that described by Peter Schakel (2002) in *Imagination and the Arts in C.S. Lewis: Journeying to Narnia and Other Worlds*, “Imagination, for Lewis, can be defined as the mental, but not intellectual, faculty that puts things into meaningful relationships to form unified wholes” (p. 4). Schakel speaks, and I paraphrase, that for visual artists, imagination may involve arranging line, colour, shapes and masses in ways which are fresh and related. For writers it is connecting words, pictures and experience to tell a tale through description, character portraits painted with tones of vocabulary, narrations of events, an expressing of emotions and experiences in ways which are shaded with emotion, meaning and appeal (p. 5).

This turquoise and navy set of cards is closely related to the red set of cards because of their shared provenance, these sets of cards can trace a direct link back to that ground breaking essay written by Papert and Turkle called *Epistemological Pluralism and the Reevaluation of the Concrete* (1991). These cards build on the idea of soft and hard approaches which Turkle and Papert observed in how children and older students approach their thinking and learning, and which the red cards are one possible interpretation.

Turkle and Papert (1991) observed and articulated their subject's experiences as relational experiences and by doing so valued this approach to mastery in a computer context, and I think in tasks of many kinds. They value a relationship with the concrete (1991) and in doing so, open up possibility and question the epistemological traditions and assumptions that went before them. This suit of cards can be seen as an attempt to visually represent an individual's relationship with an object, and possibly a subject, a focus and possibly, an experience (object-subject-focus-experience).

These cards also attempt to capture some of the ideas and experiences Keller writes about as she proposes a different stance to an objective, distant approach to science. The stance she describes and paints a picture of is embodied in the methodology and approach used in research by McClintock. Keller (1983) observes and lovingly describes the manner in which McClintock experienced her work,

Over and over again, she tells us one must have the time to look, the patience to 'hear what the material has to say to you,' the openness to 'let it come to you.' Above all, one must have 'a feeling for the organism'. (p. 198)

I recognise something in these words and feel a synergy of shared experience in my relation with objects in this research (web projects) and with the relationship I observe

with children. I also feel curiosity for the idea that is growing in my mind and how this idea could assist me to explain the thrall web projects hold for some children and the lack of interest they hold for others I keep thinking, “Above all, one must have a feeling for the Bunyip, Flat Stanley or monster.” Rather than exploring engagement (which in my mind is woven with ambiguity and which in conversation I have found difficult to develop a shared understanding and meaning about), perhaps a relational measure describing the sense of proximity children feel towards their web project or web project character, could, and would open conversation and thinking. Keller (1983) writes of McClintock’s sense of proximity,

I found that the more I worked with them the bigger and bigger [they] got, and when I was really working with them I wasn’t outside, I was down there. I was part of the system. I was right down there with them, and everything got big. I even was able to see the internal parts of the chromosomes – actually everything was there. It surprised me because I actually felt as if I were right down there and these were my friends. (p. 117)

I find myself changing the words in this passage to those related to web projects. I think the following, speaking within,

I found that the more I worked with the Bunyips, Flat Stanley and monsters the bigger and bigger [they] got, and when I was really working with them I wasn’t outside, I was down there (with them). I was part of their world living with them. I was right down there with them, and everything got big, I was living with them. I was able to relate to these characters as beings. It surprised me because I actually felt as if I were right down there and these were my friends.

I wonder. I smile.

I pause.

Do the children in this study have similar experiences?

Do they anthropomorphise the Bunyips, Flat Stanley and monsters if they feel close to them?

Is their experience of proximity within a web project a measure of how much they liked it?

These cards speak of my sense of knowing that my-pack-of-cards is good. Keller (1983) writes about how McClintock related to her work, lived her work and spoke her work. I share the experience she writes of when she writes of McClintock,

“I’m not there!” The self conscious “I” simply disappears. Throughout history, artists and poets, lovers and mystics, have known and written about the “knowing” that comes from loss of self – from a state of subjective fusion with the object of knowledge... Einstein once wrote: “The state of feeling which makes one capable of such achievements is akin to that of a religious worshipper or of one who is in love.” Scientists often pride themselves on their capacities to distance subject from object, but much of their richest lore comes from a joining of one to the other, from a turning of object to subject”. (p. 118)

As I refine these cards and tinker with them I create a set of prompts which explore how close the children, or even adults felt to the Bunyips, monsters or Flat Stanley as a subject, a thing or being within the web projects. Again, like the red cards, these cards describe degrees of relational proximity. The colours have been purposefully chosen and meaning is inscribed into the cards through the colours used. These cards take time to develop and make, they require the most thought.

I don't set out to make these cards navy blue and turquoise. In my living as a *bricoleur* these colours are part of my instinctive set of closed materials, and the combination feels right. Much later after using them in conversation with the children I ponder possible meanings and symbolism of the colours.

Both colours - navy blue and turquoise are in essence blue. Originally I call the turquoise colour aqua, but the colour when printed onto the cards is not aqua, but a stronger colour. It is not as watery and transparent as aqua, it is a brighter mix of blue and green. It is intense - so aqua became turquoise. Both colours are favourites of mine and are a recurring theme in my home, clothing, belongings and art supplies. I am drawn to these shades and tones of blue. The lore of blue, including the colours turquoise and navy, is linked but each hue of blue has its own meaning and lore attached to it.

Blue is the rarest colour in nature and is linked to eternity and beyond, and to spiritual and mental experience as opposed to emotional and physical experience, it was also in times past, a colour that was expensive and hard to produce (Ronnberg & Martin, 2010, p. 650). In terms of language and the naming of blue, Ellen Meloy (2002), in her Pulitzer Prize Finalist book *The Anthropology of Turquoise Reflections on Desert, Sea, Stone and Sky* writes,

When a name for a color is absent from a language, it is usually blue. When a name for a color is indefinite, it is usually green. Ancient Hebrew, Welsh, Vietnamese, and, until recently, Japanese, lack a word for blue. To name the colour blue the Assyrians turned to uknu, the noun for lapis lazuli, into an adjective. The Icelandic for blue and black is the same, one word fits sea, lava, and raven. Goethe's blue is the color of "enchanted

nothingness”...Once named, blue pushes green into a less definite version. Green confusion is manifest in turquoise, the is-it-blue-or-is-it-green color. Despite the complexities of color names even in the same language, we somehow make sense of another person’s references. We know color as perceptual ‘truth’ that we imply and share without its direct experience... (pp. 11-12)

I use the colour turquoise, unconsciously and also intentionally, enfolding Goethe’s enchanting nothingness into the meaning I give this suit in my-pack-of-cards. The enchanting nothingness I see is an enthralling space that in light of Keller’s (1983) descriptions of McClintock, is a space of enchanted possibility—a space of relational proximity. I see a space where an object, experience or focus can become a subject depending on ones sense of proximity to it. I show this with a turquoise circle representating the thing (object-subject-focus-experience) that the self is in relationship (proximity) with (Figure 31).

Eiseman (2006) writes in *Colour: Messages and Meanings, A Pantone© Colour Resource* and I paraphrase, that turquoise is steeped in lore and in many cultures it occupies a unique and special position in the world of colour. The colour’s name is derived from the gem which wears its colour, *Turquoise* which comes from the French phrase for Turkish Stone (p. 39). Meloy (2002) writes that the gem Turquoise “did not likely come from Turkey, its namesake, but took the name of the land it crossed on the old trade routes from Persia to Europe” (p. 115).

Symbolically, turquoise is linked to the ideas of faith and truth (Eiseman, 2006, p. 38). In this thesis turquoise represents an idea of truth, a space where I explore and quest for truth with the children in terms of how they engage in web projects as object, subject, focus and experience using a proximal relationship paradigm.

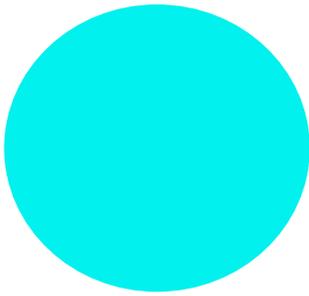


Figure 31. An object, subject, focus or experience of a proximal relationship

Navy blue is derived from an indigo hue and is, a hue of blue tinted with the dark, rich intensity of black. It takes its name from the Naval Uniforms worn by Officers in the British Navy since 1745 (Alexander L. J., 2014). Meanings ascribed to shades of deep blue include, “credible, reliable, classic, thought provoking, introspective, aids concentration, and clarify thoughts; ‘Blue very profoundly develops a sense of calm, Vasily Kandinsky, artist’” (Eiseman, 2006, p. 35).

I use navy blue to colour the glyphs that represent self as female, and self as male. I feel a synergy between the navy blue colour and the glyphs and that rendering them together binds them to represent meaning which is “thought provoking, introspective, aids concentration and assists in clarifying thoughts” (Eiseman, 2006, p. 35).

The glyphs that represent self began as stick figures, they then transitioned to Lego© figures before I finally settled on symbols in the Webdings font (this font is found on most computers). These symbols are familiar from signage we encounter in our lives. The glyphs are not the adult versions of male and female representations. They are the child versions and the children welcome the way they are represented and they identify

with the symbols on the cards ( ).

There is one other symbol or glyph found on this suit of cards and that is a pair of eyes (👁️ 👁️). This glyph represents watching. I combine it with the filled in circle (●) glyph to represent watching an activity, and to represent being outside of an activity in terms of proximity (Figure 38). I considered using a binocular glyph and a glasses glyph to represent watching, however the use of a pair of eyes feels right. The children respond to the eyes glyph in the manner I hope for.

There are six turquoise and navy cards, and like the red cards, they interpret what a continuum of proximity may look like in pictorial form. The first card is a graphic representation of living it, it is real and part of me. It shows the male and female child glyphs with a turquoise circle placed inside the children (Figure 32). Aesthetically this card feels easy to make, it feels poetic and artistic in its rendering. The filled turquoise circle representing an object, subject or thing that proximity is attached to sits within self. The children understand this card much more than I thought they would. The first three cards in this set show varying degrees of closeness to a thing.

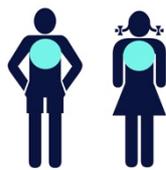


Figure 32. Living it, it is real and part of me

The next card (Figure 33) is a representation of being inside it, real, it shows an idea of what a sense of being inside a thing may look like. It shows the images of self within a circle representing an object, subject or focus of proximity.

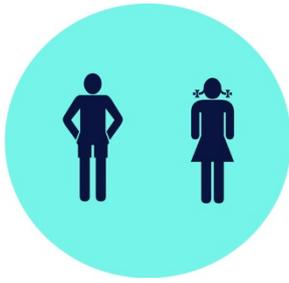


Figure 33. Inside it, real

The third card (Figure 34) in this series shows the self glyphs sitting on the edge of the turquoise representation of an object we feel in proximity with. This card shows my imagining of what inside and outside of it, depending what I'm doing, may look like. The children like this card, many small hands pick it up and hold it close as they shuffle, organise and group the cards when I use them.

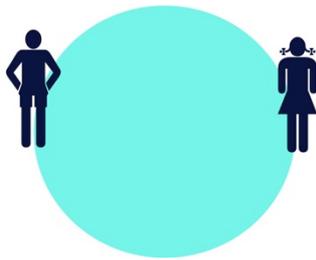


Figure 34. Inside and outside of it, depending what I'm doing

The last three cards in this series show a graduation in proximity of distance from an object, subject or focus. The fourth card (Figure 35) is a rendering of being next to a thing. It shows the turquoise circle with the symbols for self next to the sphere, the male glyph on one side and the female glyph on the other side.

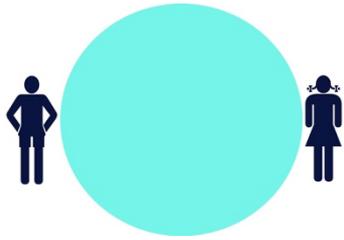


Figure 35. Next to it

Card five (Figure 36) and six (Figure 37) show the symbols for self moving away from the circle representing an object, focus and subject. Both cards show the self symbol outside of the turquoise graphic for object, subject, experience and focus.

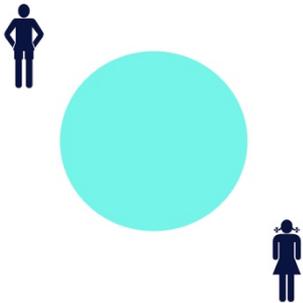


Figure 36. Outside it, not part of it

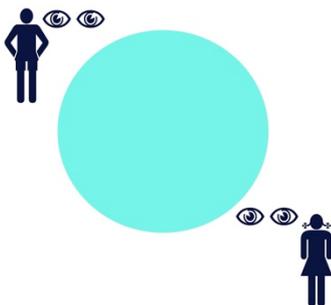


Figure 37. Outside it, not part of it. watching it

These cards intrigue the children. They shuffle them, and speak amongst themselves at length using these cards to make their lived, inner experience visible. With these cards the children invite us into their inner life-world as outlanders. Monica picks up the pile

of navy and turquoise cards and shuffles through them. She singles out and sets down two cards in front of her and begins to speak. She speaks of her experience of *The Bunyips Project*.



Monica: "I think its in and out depending on what I'm doing. It depends on what I'm doing. It depends on when I'm making bits or not. When I'm in it I'm kinda living it but not really. (bunyip) kinda a he or a she, not an it or a they.(When) I'm living the bunyip it is like an imaginary friend."

Hugh: "Yeah".

Jon: "You might see him out of the corner of your eye. You imagine he's walking beside you and if you look back he's back on the wall, you weren't fast enough. When you're into it, real."

This navy and turquoise suit of cards is a quest object akin to treasure. These cards open up a trove I had thought inaccessible. By finding a means to travel within the children's thinking as an outlander, I act as witness and interpreter, and bring the invisible into the open. I am pulled into the children's experience of an evocative object (in this case *The Bunyips Project*), and hear spoken words that entwine thought and feeling into enchanting exchanges.

And so, a Pack of Cards lies before Me.

And so, a pack of cards lies before me (Figure 38), a quest object, unique to this quest narrative. The cards show themselves to hold magic within their being—I see that they enable that which is within to be brought outwith into the tangible world we may all see, a world outwith. These cards allow me to be pulled into the children’s inner life-world (a world within) as outlander and I bare witness to experiences which are deeply personal and individual, where there is no right or wrong, just difference of sensation and expression.

My heart quickens and I experience a thrill brought on by a surge of adrenaline. It signals that I am overcoming a quest challenge, and because of this I am now able to see my way forward into the next stage of my quest journey. As I sit and gaze at my pack of cards I smile.

I think of *Orlando*, and imagine Woolf feeling a similar coursing of adrenaline as she made her imagined possibility come into being. In this case her story *Orlando*, in my case my-pack-of-cards.



Figure 38. *My-pack-of-cards*

Orlando is a character created by Woolf (1928/1993) as an agent to imagine and write a new type of biography with. Woolf plays with boundaries and text structure, making Orlando character object and subject, narrative, and inquiry – and there is also poetic reverie, which can be heard and visualised through the rhythm of language and imagery woven in the work. My card biography unfolds within this inquiry in a manner that is poetic, and in which the cards are character, narrative, and object and subject. As with *Orlando*, I show my thinking with images, in this instance as a living and making with a centi-culture of language. I see my card making as unfolding poetry in the ancient Greek sense of *poiesis*, that is “a calling of something into existence” (Garrison, 2010, p. xv). The cards have been called into existence to explore and quest within the life-world of web projects. They are a way to inquire and a way to enable story sharing along lines I wish to follow in my inquiry quest. Dewey (2005) writes,

Keats speaks poetically of the way in which artistic expression is reached when he tells of the “innumerable compositions and decompositions which take place between the intellect and its thousands of materials before it arrives at that trembling, delicate and snail-horn perception of beauty.”

Each of us assimilates into himself something of the values and meanings of past experiences. But we do so in differing degrees and at differing levels of selfhood. Some things sink deep, others stay on the surface and are easily displaced ...What is expressed will be neither the past events that have exercised their shaping influence nor yet the literal existing occasion. It will be, in the degree of spontaneity, an intimate union of the features of present existence with the values that past experience have in

personality. Immediacy and individuality, the traits that mark concrete existence, come from the present occasion; meaning, substance, content, from what is embedded in the self from the past. (pp. 73-74)

My-pack-of-cards and their story is an example of what Dewey talks of – a re-interpretation and re-imagining of past influenced by an immediacy and individuality of purpose in the present. My creation of just a pack of cards is intentional and purposeful. The subject and object (the cards) is one of re-imagining, in my guise as *bricoleur*. So this pack of cards reveals to me within this quest narrative that it is not just another pack of cards. Rather, it is a pack of cards that holds a potential magic and power to re-enchant possibility.

I like the cards. They are colourful, they are graphic, they show what I am trying to get at in my conversations about web projects. The card designs feel complete and I metaphorically take a step back and gaze on these quest objects ready for the challenge of the conversations (Figure 39). I imagine them printed on beautiful paper, but choose to print them on white A4 paper, cut them out and laminate them. This makes them practical and durable. The cards are ready for small hands to speak through—they enable showing, and speaking, they will potentially pull me into the children's thinking.

The existence of my-pack-of-cards brings me to a liminal moment, a threshold. The cards show themselves to be a quest object that will progress my research. As in traditional quest tales, I (as knight) am only able to progress in my quest by accessing the knowledge and power held within a quest object won by overcoming a challenge. My-pack-of-cards are a quest object of this ilk, they have been hard won by overcoming a challenge. They hold within them knowledge and power.

My heart quickens.

My-pack-of-cards (Figure 39) lies before me and I am empowered with the means to undertake conversation-dialogue with the children about web projects.

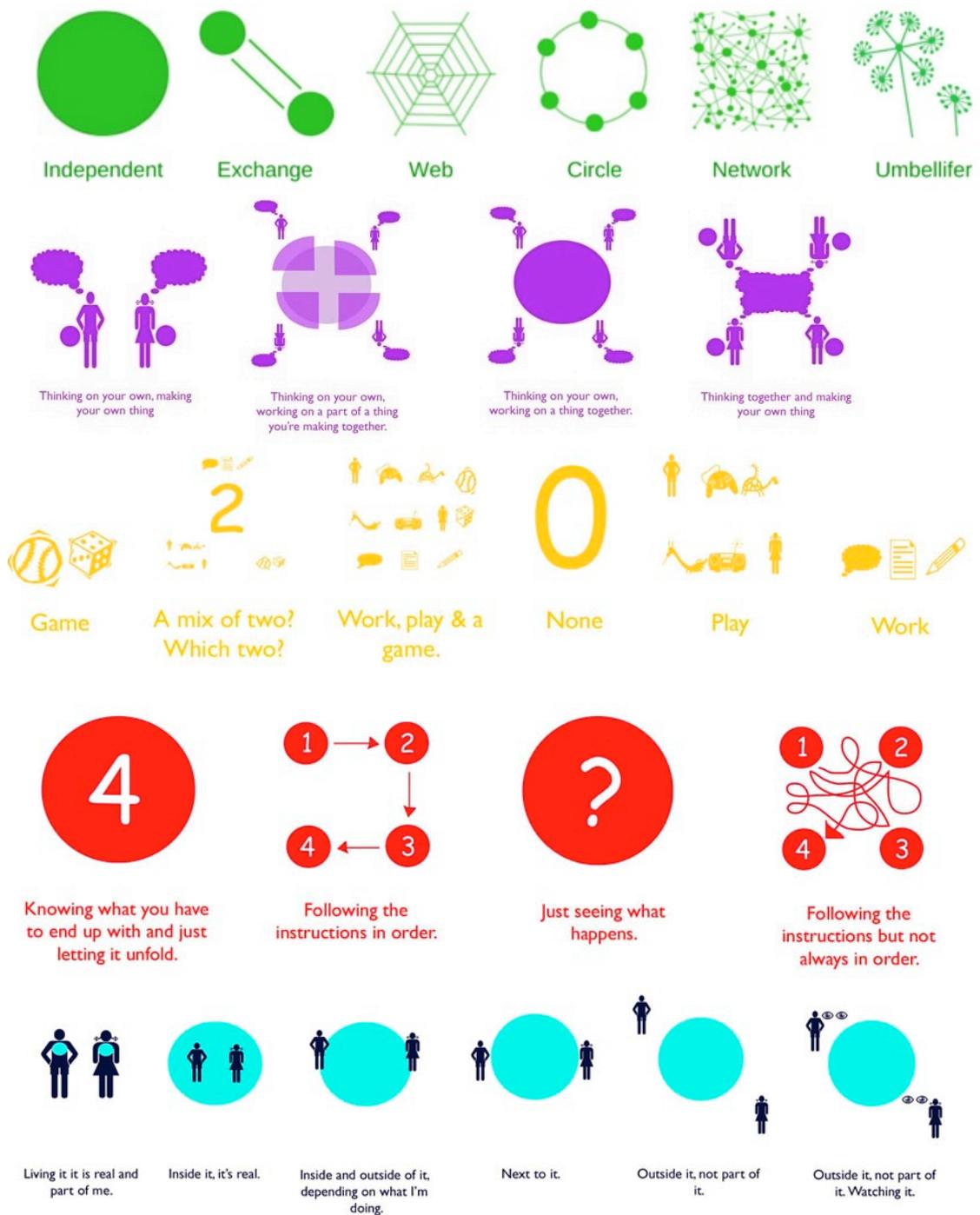


Figure 39. The pack of cards graphics, organised by suit

Chapter 4 — Comparing, Contrasting and Arriving Betwixt and Between

“Sometimes I wondered if I was seeing the same things through my eyes that the rest of the world was seeing through theirs. Maybe there was a glitch in my brain.”

(Meyer, 2010, pg. 9)

As I delve into writing about this quest stage I cringe.

“Why?” you may ask.

I always vowed and declared I would not read the *Twilight Series* (Meyer, 2005 – 2008), they are popular fiction that is too popular, and they can’t possibly be as good as my library of magical literary favourites.

So why relent and read them?

If I offer an opinion on them without reading them I am a hypocrite. My moral compass sternly points me right, I speak within,

Having an opinion about something you have no experience of is less than honourable.

I respond to this thought by begrudgingly downloading the *Twilight Series* onto my Kindle. After all if the books are on my Kindle no one will know I am reading them.

I read the prologue.

I am engrossed.

Bewitched, and enchanted.

I read all three books in five days.

I realise that the *Twilight* (2010) narrative, of questing fantasy vampires and love, speaks to me on many levels. Regarding my web project narrative, these books describe

a sense of fascination, and oscillation between spaces and worlds, a sensation that I feel familiar with as I work with my fantastical beings (Bunyips and monsters), literary characters (Flat Stanley), and the children. I feel a kinship with Bella and the experiences she lives—as she grapples with moral complexity, possibility, points to navigate by when things are difficult or perplexing—living betwixt and between, across and through life-worlds—re-imagining how to move beyond the real world into a world which can be invisible to others

As I read this series of books my thinking keeps moving between the inquiry I am living (the making of the cards and my exploration of each web project and the threads of inquiry I am following) and the object-subject-focus-experience that increasingly appears to be, of, and between worlds and dimensions. I recall Keller (1983) writing of McClintock's experience of losing herself in her subject so she disappears. I share it again,

As you look at these things, they become part of you. And you forget yourself. The main thing about it is you forget yourself." ...
"I'm not there!" The self-conscious "I" simply disappears. Throughout history, artists and poets, lovers and mystics, have known and written about the "knowing" that comes from loss of self – from the state of subjective fusion with the object of knowledge. (pp. 117-118)

Henceforth, at times I think of and write of web projects, the quest objects I make, and the web project beings (Bunyips, monsters and Flat Stanley) as an object-subject-focus-experience within the life-world that is my inquiry. I come into seeing that I forget myself and enter a state of subjective fusion where I cannot decide which guise my inquiry takes. It is all of these.

Again, I intentionally choose to live as *bricoleur* – creating and tinkering with a set of ideas. As *bricoleur* my horizon of thought is expanded by the success of my-pack-of-cards. I settle upon and determine that another conversational prop is necessary to support the conversations I have with the web project children. The children have been talking of each web project in relation to their games, playing and work. Snippets of conversation between three of the children affirms the direction I feel myself pulled towards.

Maddy: “When you’re doing Flat Stanley without instructions and your wild imagination you imagining, when you’re building your own thing a game. Wild imagination. And you build whatever you want, and you can have a wild imagination about whatever you want with Flat Stanley and what he’s been doing in the other countries. play because you don’t have a set of instructions on what he-is done the sort of thing he’s done.”

Jack: “Ummmmm. I think a game when you make up a Bunyip. You can build anything you want anyway you like— playing. When you follow instructions and concentrate hard hard, and I can’t imagine as much —it is hard work. But once you’ve built it and you can imagine freely again it is playing. a project because split into bits.”

Hamish: “Flat Stanley is moving around the world that is like a board.”

After listening to these snippets repeatedly, I ask the children to compare and contrast each web project to particular work, game and play activities as a way to clarify children’s thinking as they try to talk about what a web project is.

At first I try to use conversation that is spoken orally. These unfold as jumbles of convoluted describing, full of opaqueness—our horizons for exploration and meaning

making are narrow or non-existent. The children become frustrated very quickly they appear to be unable to hold the complexity of the evolving conversation in their heads. This is evidenced by shaking heads, eyes staring at the ceiling, comments such as “I dunno”, “Ummmm” and “But what do you mean?”

I have experienced this before. On that occasion I settled upon the idea of a pack of cards, and set about making them. I use the mirror of my card making experience to inform the creation of this prop – whatever it form takes. Complexity and perplexity again give way to wondering, and an idea emerges which is pivotal for my inquiry quest. My thinking is,

I am living in oscillation in that which occupies me.

I am comparing, contrasting and spinning what I hear, see, feel and witness in a space that sits betwixt and between that which is brought outwith, and that which is within. In this moment I am introduced to attractors by my mentor and friend Dr. Roya Pugh. She shares with me how she uses them in her work to illustrate meaning through metaphor, and suggests that I read *The Web of Life, a New Understanding of Living Systems* by Fritjof Capra (1996).

I wonder what these highly scientific, mathematical ideas will offer, as they terrify me. They appear to be from a realm of understanding I grapple with at the best of times—formulas, alphanumeric equations, symbols and disciplined thinking systems, which I often find, to be, at best incomprehensible, and at worst completely alien. Fortunately I do what I habitually do when I acquire a new book. I flick to the pictures. This small action calms me and a door slowly opens to reveal a way forward. I look at images of attractors and then read about them. I find myself reading Pugh’s (2000) work and seeing my own quest through a different lens, again possibility opens up before me. The

images are beautiful, the possibilities exhilarating. The attractors I view and read about are examples of rhythm and harmony. They speak of, and honour my affinity with nature and they mirror a way of seeing and being which has familiar elements, and even though they appear orderly, their creation is, in my mind organised chaos.

The attractors are patterns of being, and I read the following from an aesthetic and artistic stance and find myself enthralled. I see one attractor becoming a possible metaphor, a way of illustrating my philosophical peregrinations in this thesis,

...the Lorenz attractor is three-dimensional...To trace it out, the point in phase space moves in an apparently random manner with a few oscillations of increasing amplitude around one point, followed by a few oscillations around a second point, then suddenly moving back again to oscillate around the first point, and so on. (Capra, 1996, p. 135)

The following image (Figure 40) is from Capra's work and shows visually what is described above.

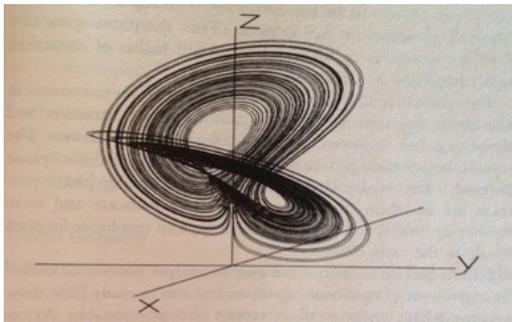


Figure 40. The Lorenz attractor (1996, p.135)

Edward Lorenz was a meteorologist who designed a mathematical model of weather conditions that was comprised of three coupled non-linear equations (Figure 40). He

was trying to work out if one could determine long-range weather forecasts with accuracy. He discovered that even with the same starting point, two trajectories would develop in completely different ways, making accurate long-term weather forecasts impossible (Capra, 1996, pp. 134 - 135). His three-dimensional model became known as a “strange attractor” (Capra, 1996, p. 130).

Gadamer (1975/2006) talks of horizons in his work *Truth and Method*.

The horizon is the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point. Applying this to the thinking mind, we speak of narrowness of horizon, of the possible expansion of horizon, of the opening of new horizons, and so forth. Since Nietzsche and Husserl, the word has been used in philosophy to characterise the way in which thought is tied to its finite determinacy, and the way one’s range of vision is gradually expanded...“to have a horizon” means not being limited to what is nearby but being able to see beyond it. (Gadamer, 1975/2006, p. 301)

I imagine the Lorenz attractor explaining the limitations and overlapping of the concepts or horizons I am working with - work, game and play in my yellow conversations.

I pause.

I see the attractor as me oscillating through and between the ontology, methodology and epistemology in the living and making of this thesis.

I oscillate and I swing through horizons. The Lorenz attractor shows a potential narrowness, and expansion held within the pages of this text-object as I compose words, using writing as research methodology.

The taut limitations and possibilities unfolding through the creation of props, and the shifts and re-orientations as props are used to expand, refine and delve deeper into my pool of inquiry, mirror the motion of a Lorenz attractor. In my mind I substitute the word ‘object’ with the word ‘prop’. The attractor reverberates with energy just as my quest narrative pulsates with energy. I imagine and re-imagine solutions to the challenges within the scope of my inquiry. I recall Richardson’s (1998) description of writing as a method of inquiry in Denzin and Lincoln’s (1998) earliest edition of their *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*,

Writing is also a way of “knowing” – a method of discovery and analysis. By writing in different ways, we discover new aspects of our topic and our relationship to it. Form and content are inseparable. (p. 345)

To the idea of form and content being inseparable, I add that object, subject, focus and experience are inseparable. The attractor can be seen as a new object in my collection of objects, and as such precipitates new thinking. The attractor, metaphorically, may act as a mirror, lens and crystal, creating new refractions of perception, different angles to explain my phenomenological journey. It is a metaphor for explaining how I have arrived at making my-pack-of-cards, as well as this new set of cards for comparing web projects to activities that sit within a work, game, play conversation. I hope the “horizon” (Gadamer, 1975/2006) of my dialogue with children will again expand just as it did when I brought my-pack-of-cards into conversation with them.

Greene (1995), referring to Mary Warnok says, “We must use our imagination she writes, to apply concepts to things. “This is the way we render the world familiar and

therefore manageable” (p. 35). I am doing this, I am trying to apply a concept to a thing and make my conversation-dialogue with children manageable. I wonder whimsically.

I swing through my thinking.

I am a Lorenz attractor.

I move through the phenomenological, epistemological and hermeneutic narrative possibilities this crystalline image shows.

My thoughts are “mirrors hanging at different angles” (Woolf , 1942/1970, p. 195), a shaft of clarity penetrates my reverie.

I do know what I am trying to achieve in my acts of card making.

Resonance is here, and tints this moment with previous thoughts expressed with Carroll, a desire to be seen by the children in my inquiry as not adult. I want to become, and be a “friend to children’s minds.” Greene (1995) writes,

...another way to imagine imagining: it is becoming a friend to someone else’s mind, with the wonderful power to return to that person a sense of wholeness. Often, imagination can bring severed parts together, can integrate into the right order, can create new wholes. (p. 38)

I see that my-pack-of-cards and this new prop I am conjuring have a purpose. They are friends to the children’s minds, and with both I am opening up an horizon that gives the children’s voices the means to be heard and interpreted. Greene writes,

To understand how children themselves reach out for meanings, go beyond conventional limits (once doors are ajar), seek coherence and explanations is to be better able to provoke and release rather than to impose and control...The young can be

empowered to view themselves as conscious, reflective namers and speakers if their particular standpoints are acknowledged, if interpretive dialogues are encouraged. (1995, p. 57)

The new conversation-object is a series of large cards to scaffold conversation-dialogue with. This set of cards is different to the earlier pack of cards. These new cards are created to explore activity types within my yellow conversations by way of comparing and contrasting. The question I use with the cards is,

What is the same, and what is different between (named web project) and (named activity type/s)?

The dialogue-scaffolding-cards include cards for each of the following: writing and drawing, sport games, card games, chasings games, computer games, NXT Lego© and Lego©, dress ups, Monopoly©, Chess and marbles.

Included in this collection of cards is a card to represent each project so that the children remember which project they are contrasting and comparing the activity-cards to. They act as metaphorical anchor points.

Visual representations of this second set of dialogue-scaffolding-cards are rendered below. The first three cards show each of the web projects, *The Flat Stanley Project*, *The Bunyips Project* and *The Monsters Project* (Figures 41 – 43).

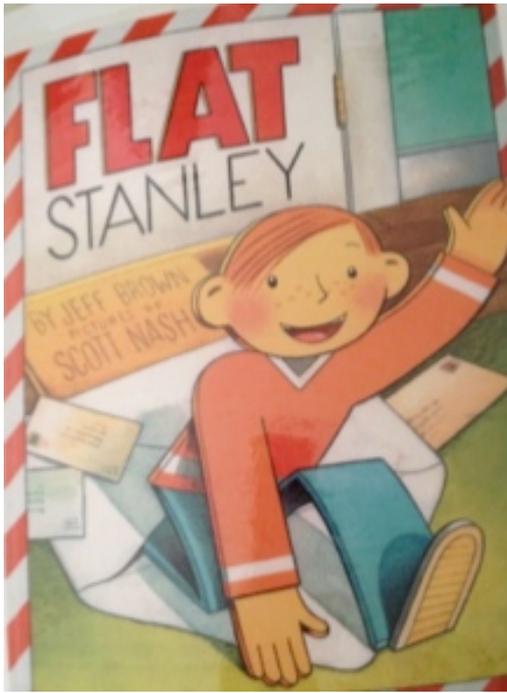


Figure 41. Flat Stanley Card

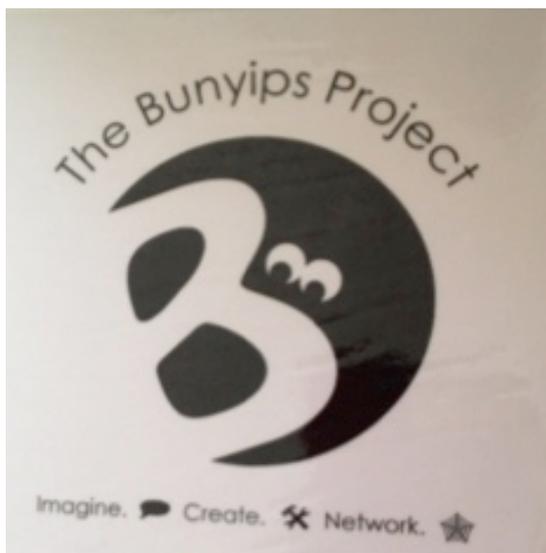


Figure 42. The Bunyips Project Card



Figure 43. The Monsters Project Card

The remaining cards are the activity-type-cards and represent styles of activity that the children feel fall into the spheres of work, game and play, and in some instances, move across, and through them (Figures 44 – 53).

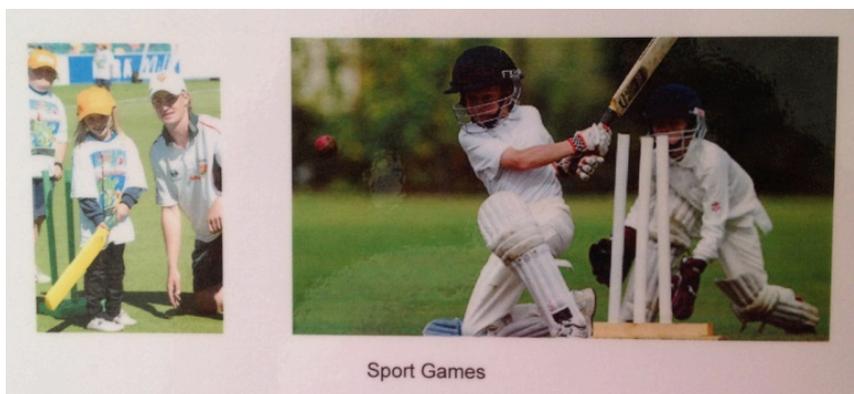


Figure 44. Sport Games Card

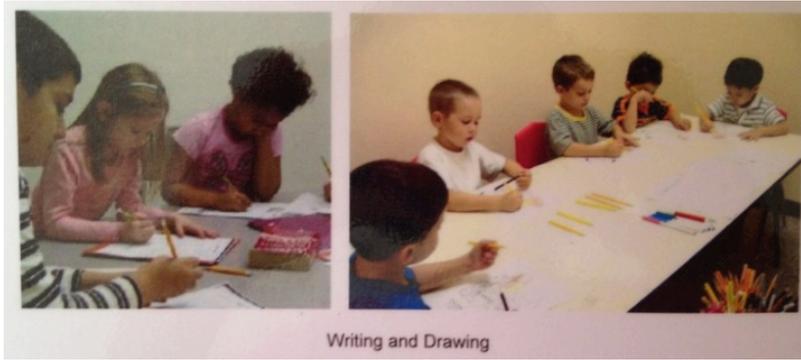


Figure 45. Writing and Drawing Card



Figure 46. Cards (Card games) Card

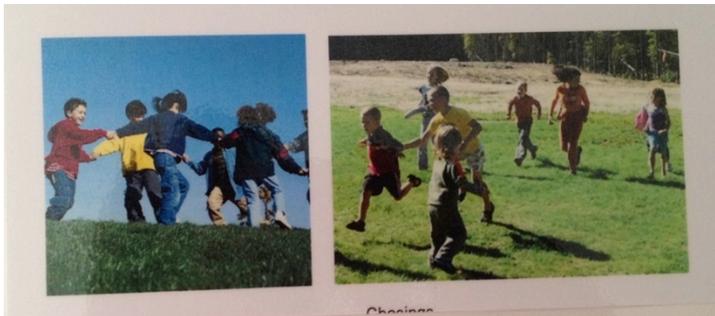


Figure 47. Chasings (Chasing games) Card

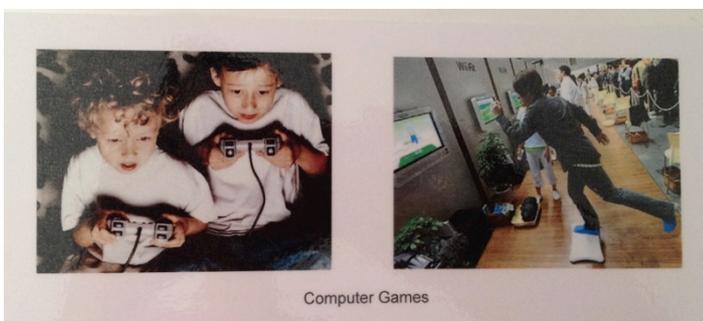


Figure 48. Computer Games Card



Figure 49. NXT Lego© and Lego© Card



Figure 50. Dress ups Card

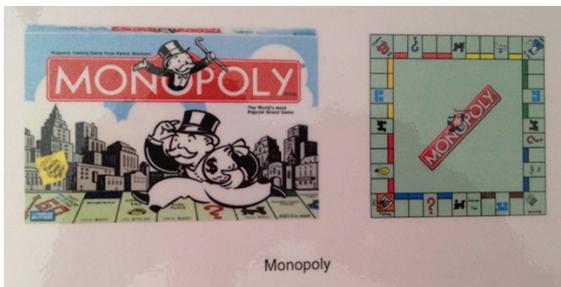


Figure 51. Monopoly© Card

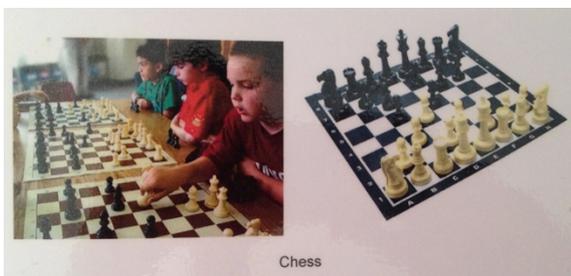


Figure 52. Chess Card

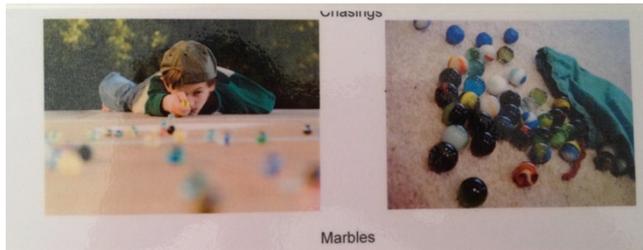


Figure 53. Marbles (Marble games) Card

The children actively worked with me in the making of this set of conversation-dialogue cards. These cards began from the ideas of one child, Harry,

Harry: "Flat Stanley is moving around the world which is like a board. The world is the board you play Flat Stanley on.."

The activity-type-cards provide an opportunity to describe web projects by comparing and contrasting, enabling clarification of thinking when children speak of their web project experience in terms of a work, game and play perspective. Comparing and contrasting is an act of inquiry, another act of "hanging mirrors at odd corners" (Woolf, 1942/1970, p. 195) to enlarge a horizon of possibility.

I embark on our web project conversations again with this new object – the activity-type-cards.

The children's body language is immediately different. Eyes stay focused on the activity-type-cards. Hands pick them up and move them together and apart as words are spoken. Voices are animated and energetic. By expanding the horizon of conversation, refining it, the idea bound inside children's thinking is brought outwith. The ideas and thinking are accessible and intelligible to the children and to me (inquirer-participant). In this act of re-orientation and re-imagining there is alchemy and magic, an affirmation of the importance of oscillating in a space of negative capability (Keats, 2009, p. 492), and

of stepping through a “liminal moment” (Turkle, 2005, p. 15) into a space where “horizons” (Gadamer, 1975/2006, p. 301) encounter spaces betwixt and between worlds within, and outwith.

I pause.

Papert (1991) speaks in my mind of constructionism again.

The activity-type-cards are a new object to play, think, and talk with, and may lead to new thinking.

I recognise this happening in the speaking of the children, and in my speaking.

I wonder, what new thinking will my growing collection of evocative objects lead to?

Chapter 5 — Through Mirrors & Beyond Wardrobes



Figure 54. Lucy at the lamp post in Narnia (Walt Disney Pictures & Walden Media, 2005)

“Well, sir, if things are real, they’re there all the time.”

“Are they?” said the professor; and Peter did not know what to say.

“But there was no time,” said Susan. “Lucy had no time to have gone anywhere, even if there was such a place. She came

running after us the very moment we were out of the room. It was less than a minute, and she pretended to have been away for hours.”

“That is the very thing that makes her story so likely to be true,” said the Professor. “If there really is a door in this house that leads to some other world (and I should warn you that this is a very strange house, and even I know very little about it) – if, I say, she had got into another world, I should not be at all surprised...”

“But do you really mean, sir,” said Peter, “that there could be other worlds – all over the place, just round the corner – like that?”

“Nothing is more probable,” said the Professor, taking off his spectacles and beginning to polish them, while he muttered to himself, “I wonder what they do teach them at these schools.”

(Lewis, 1950/2002, pp. 48-49)

In C.S. Lewis’ (1950/2002) *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Lucy the youngest member of the Pevensie family moves beyond a familiar world and finds herself in a world populated by the imagined. A landscape of snowy silence, blanketing the familiar and throwing into focus the unusual and fantastical, sharply contrasted with the familiar and normal (Figure 54). Lucy accesses Narnia through a wardrobe, and experiences *dépaysement*, a sense of disorientation and acute alertness brought about by things being very different from her day-to-day living.

“And may I ask, O daughter of Eve,” said Mr Tumnus, “How you have come to Narnia?”

“Narnia? What’s that?” said Lucy.

“This is the land of Narnia,” said the Faun, “Where we are now... and you – you have come from the wild woods of the west?”

“I – I got in through the wardrobe in the spare room,” said Lucy.

“Ah!” said Mr. Tumnus in a rather melancholy voice, “if only I had worked harder at geography when I was a little Faun, I should no doubt know all about those strange countries. It is too late now.”

“But they aren’t countries at all,” said Lucy, almost laughing. “only just back there – at least – I’ not sure. summer there.” (pp. 16-17)

Just like Lucy I now step through a wardrobe of a different sort and enter a world that is experienced both within and outwith, and is made accessible by the pack of cards and card scaffolds. I arrive in a new land and inhabit a landscape, a space, an environment be it within (internal) or outwith (external) that is now framed by the web projects and the children’s experience of them.

I listen intently, scribe, sift and sort through the words that are spoken and knit them into this narrative. I record, guard and listen intently to words spoken verbally and stories told with graphic languages. I am custodian of drawings and works—interpreting, translating and narrating experiences as quest narrator.

As I listen, I bare witness to a web project world that is full of colour and life, bursting with enthusiasm and endowed with a sense of *joie de vivre*. I become aware of, and better understand what holds the children in a thrall of fascination, their minds and imaginations engaged in *The Bunyips Project*, *The Monsters Project* and *The Flat Stanley Project*.

The children participate in the web projects with buzzing, energetic activity accompanied by a steady hum of conversation and laughter. There are times during the energetic motion of making, that speech is stilled, and there is silence punctuating the

conversation. I wonder if this is good or bad and then I remember Turkle again, she says (when talking of ethnographers),

They need to tolerate ambivalence rather than intervene to make things seem more “coherent” or easy to accept. They need to facilitate conversation, yet maintain the boundary between listener and informant. They need to know which hesitations in conversation indicate deep feeling that should be pursued and they need to know when to stop. (2008, p. 8)

She reminds me that silence is just as important as noise in conversation.

Otto Friedrich Bollnow (1982) in his reflection on silence and the role silence plays in reflective conversation elucidates that silence deepens truth that has been revealed in the preceding conversation by magnifying the significance of the message and the truth revealed with and through the conversation. ‘Not speaking’ or *er schwieg* in German can be interpreted in its active, finite form as an activity, no less important than speaking or conversation. In English silence is often interpreted as a lack of activity, which suggests disengagement or neutrality of thought, rather than as an activity and natural occurrence. Conversation-dialogue is the material and the context of this inquiry, and I agree with Bollnow that the phenomenon of silence magnifies the meaning of unfolding truths within the flow of dialogue. Bollnow (1982) reflects,

...it (conversation) often evolves out of the most unpromising beginnings, even without any prior intention, and gradually gains in profundity. Things are articulated in conversation that had previously been obscure to those concerned, and by being given expression they gain clarity and definition. Conversation is a creative process to the extent that (comparable in this respect to

poetry) something shapeless that is crying out to be given shape is given shape in conversation. (p. 3)

Entering into conversation with young learners is delightful and enchanting, also, at times perplexing. Silence is ever-present with young inquirers signalling they have moved within themselves, or hinting at a pause in thought, perhaps indicating a search for a particular word, drawn form or three-dimensional creation that speaks of meaning. Perhaps silence signals a magnification and therefore gives significance to a previous idea thought of and shared. Or maybe silence signals a question of deep importance to a child.

Bunyips — Object, Subject, Character, Focus and Experience

The rising of the sun had made everything look so different – all the colours and shadows were changed – that for a moment they didn't see the important thing. Then they did. The Stone Table was broken into two pieces by a great crack that ran down it from end to end; and there was no Aslan...There, shining in the sunrise, larger than they had seen him before, shaking his mane (for it had apparently grown again) stood Aslan himself..

“But what does it all mean?” asked Susan when they were somewhat calmer.

“It means,” said Aslan, “that though the Witch knew Deep Magic, there is a magic deeper still which she did not know. Her knowledge goes back only to the dawn of time. But if she could have looked a little further back, into the stillness and the darkness before Time dawned, she would have read a different incantation”. (Lewis, 1950/2002, pp. 146-148)

Just as this story has spaces, objects, actors, and challenges so do my focus web projects, particularly *The Bunyips Project*. I imagine the Bunyips to be a different incantation of learning, magic from before the dawn of time that makes everything look different—colours and shadows are changed. *The Bunyips Project* breathes life into a being that comes from The Dreaming of Aboriginal people.

Quests regularly involve mythological beings. The Bunyip is a significant character, and at times is the object and challenge within web project learning. *The Bunyips Project* emerges from uniquely Australian traditions and contexts in several senses. Australia is the home of The School of the Air, a pioneer in distance education, a forerunner to digital distance education. Our land is characterised by broad strokes of space, and is characterised by vast expanses, measured by time-travelled distance. Tasmania a corner of Australia's vast bulk, is framed by distance of a different kind, of isolation, not as expanse measured by time, but as inaccessibility as wilderness. Small communities exist in regional landscapes which are often not far apart as the crow flies, but are distant from each other due to a geographic wilderness—majestic forests, diverse landscapes from alpine to scrub plains including vistas created by the varied temperaments of rivers and sea.

Web projects are an experience that brings classrooms closer by connecting through the World Wide Web. Classes experience a proximal relationship that is closer than their geographical proximity allows. The anchor point of each web project experience is a web site—a classroom web space when reached displays a banner.(see Figure 55. *Web Banner for The Bunyips Project*).



What do Bunyip's look like?

Imagine. 

Create. 

Network. 

Figure 55. Web Banner - *The Bunyips Project* (Joscelyne-Loane, 2003-2015c)

What do Bunyip's Look Like?

The man was busy with a notebook and pencil, and did not look at the bunyip.

“Sh,” he said, “I’m busy.”

The bunyip waited a long time, and then he said, very slowly and clearly,

“Can you please tell me what bunyips look like?”

“Yes,” said the man, without looking up.

“Bunyips don’t look like anything.”

“Like nothing?” said the bunyip.

“Like nothing at all,” said the man.

“Are you sure?” said the bunyip.

“Quite sure?” said the man, and looked straight through him.

“Bunyips simply don’t exist.”

(Wagner, 1973, p. 16)

Carroll (1872/1994) writes in his poetry of a distance between childhood and adulthood and the effect that the passing of time has on one’s perception of the world. The man in *The Bunyip of Berkeley’s Creek* (Wagner, 1973) denies the existence of Bunyips and does

not see what is there in front of him. Whenever I read this book to young children their response is delight, they scoff and whisper their disapproval of the man, and also nod in sage agreement that adults often miss the important and magical things that are right in front of them. They chatter about the Bunyip's feelings and if he really does look like his image in the book. The Bunyip is rendered in their mind as real, and I sense that as adults we have to look hard for Bunyips because their presence fades as childhood recedes and the distance between childhood and adulthood lengthens.

The question "Can you please tell me what Bunyips look like?" is the central question in *The Bunyips Project*, and I imagine it as a metaphorical wardrobe through which the children are able to step from a familiar world into a different experience of the world. The question is both the beginning and the end point for all Bunyip web project experiences, whilst also providing a portal through to the other side of a wardrobe, to a world of magic, possibility and creativity.

Introducing Gwynni and Vlad – Speaking, of two Bunyips.

The children in this section tell a story of their Bunyips, christened by the project coordinators as Vlad and Gwynni. As the quest for the Bunyip's forms unfold, the children's interactions with the Bunyips as members of their community grows in intimacy and familiarity, and a great deal is said. The children do travel through a wardrobe, into a world where Bunyips are alive, and to my delight they take me with them. This happening reminds me of Lucy's delight in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (Lewis, 1950/2002), when she realises that Edmund has visited Narnia as well,

"Oh Edmund!" she cried. "So you've got in too! Isn't it wonderful, and now..."

“All right,” said Edmund, “I see you were right and it is a magic wardrobe after all. I’ll say I’m sorry if you like. But where on earth have you been all this time? I’ve been looking for you everywhere.”

“If I’d known you had got in I’d have waited for you,” said Lucy, who was too happy and excited to notice how snappishly Edmund spoke ... (p. 41)

Just like Lucy, the children in my inquiry—Tully, Jilly, Ben, Lizzie, James, Stella, Louis and Cam take me with them through a wardrobe into their world of web projects. Remember, these names are pseudonyms, honouring my commitment to the children’s parents.

I begin my conversation-dialogues with the children after they have built and completed their Bunyip in the web projects – they know what their Bunyips look like. They happily describe verbally and with images (graphic languages) the appearance of their Bunyips (Gwynni or Vlad)—how they look, how they behave and what they do. The children imbue their Bunyips with personality and take them into their day-to-day undertakings at school. This is not a tenuous observation, it reveals the children’s intimate living of these web projects. Gwynni and Vlad are members of their respective classroom communities.

The children use the pack of cards specifically created for this research. The cards enable a five ply dialogical yarn, which I developed and shared earlier. As I listen to the children’s conversations, my mind spins the threads of work, game and play, along with the idea of proximity, itself a strong yarn to muse upon. Knitting yarn into the texture of my understanding strengthens belief and enmeshes several ideas into one fabric of meaning. Here, I use the idea of proximity as Turkle (2011) describes it, and I relate it to

learner fascination with a task. I am able to see children's intrigue and fixation expressed as a proximal relationship as an opportunity for learning. I add an additional layer to my understanding with the use of the activity classifications work, game and play and I explore engagement in a new way. I see this as a kind of magic, as being an active thinker-learner, creator-learner and imaginer-learner, giving rise to learning as living an experience—a possible imagining of *phronesis* (practical living) (Lawn, 2006, p. 114).

Both Gwynni and Vlad (Figures 57 & 58) are two-part vertical Bunyips, meaning that they are presented vertically like a biped, as opposed to horizontally, like a quadruped. The children involved in each Bunyip project were in geographically separate locations in Tasmania. The voices you hear in the following conversations are all children in Prep-One grades at Midlands District School.

Casting Spells with Enchanting Words

Everyone knew him because, though you see people of his sort only in Narnia, you see pictures of them and hear them talked about even in our world – the world on this side of the wardrobe door. But when you really see them in Narnia it is rather different. Some of the pictures of Father Christmas in our world make him look only funny and jolly. But now that the children actually stood looking at him they didn't find him quite like that. He was so big, and so glad, and so real, that they became quite still. They felt very glad, but also solemn.

“I've come at last,” said he. She has kept me out for a long time, but I have got in at last. Aslan is on the move. The Witch's magic is weakening.”

And Lucy felt running through her that deep shiver of
gladness, which you only get if you are being solemn and still.

(Lewis, 1950/2002, p. 99)

My Bunyip-questing children enter into conversation with me as two separate groups. One group created and solved the mystery of Gwynni's appearance (Figures 56 & 57) and the other that of Vlad's appearance (Figures 58 & 59). The conversation-dialogues I share hold me in a state of thrall—the children's words are casting spells with enchanting conversation-dialogues. I am pulled in. Themes emerge from the children independently of each other, the colour themed conversation cards are a fixture for the children to hang their words on. Each of the first series of conversations is named with a coded title—each has a number and holds the names of the Bunyips, Vlad and Gwynni. Each is scribed from the audio recording scripts in my scrapbook (Joscelyne-Loane, 2009-2015b).

Picture the children in a circle on the floor. Some sitting, some lying on their tummies, now listen quietly as conversation-dialogues unfold. I pose questions.

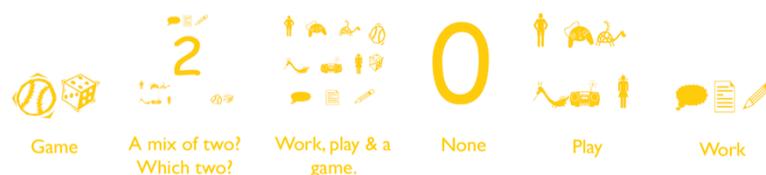
What is The Bunyip Project?

Is it work, game, play, two of them, all of them, none of them?

What is your thinking?

Conversation 1 Vlad and Gwynni

A yellow conversation, including the scaffolding activity type cards.



Tully: "Monopoly© is a game but on the wall Vlad is paper, but at night he comes alive."

Jilly: "Vlad comes alive and plays."

Me: "Is our Bunyip Project a game?"

Jilly: "Sports games are a competition but Vlad isn't."

A pause.

Jilly: "If we designed him on a computer it'd be a computer game, just a bit of a computer game."

Tilly: "He's not because he's not on a computer."

Ben: "Bunyips is not like Chess you play chess with two people, bunyips you play with the whole class."



Figure 56. Gwynni (Bunyip) Grade P-1 Midlands District School



Figure 57. *Gwynni (Bunyip) The other participating school*



Figure 58. *Vlad (Bunyip) Grade P-1 Midlands District School*



Figure 59. *Vlad (Bunyip) The other participating school.*

A little later a different group of children are similarly arranged on the floor, conversing in a similar manner. Excitement, chirping voices, words and phrases ebb and flow, ideas move back and forth, shaped and reshaped. I pose the same questions,

What is The Bunyip Project?

Is it work, game, play, two of them, all of them, none of them?

What is your thinking?

Conversation 2 Vlad and Gwynni

A yellow conversation, including the scaffolding activity type cards.



Lizzy: "Bunyips eat chocolates, and ours is a girl. Her name is Gwynni."

Stella: "They become real, they pop up, their hair looks real."

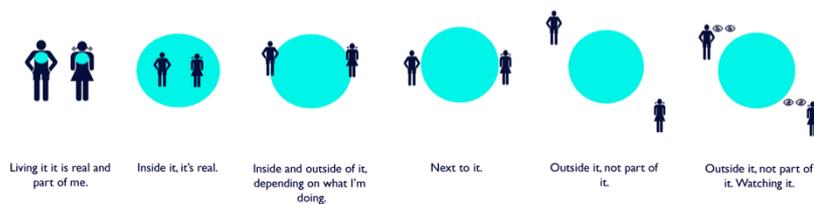
Lizzy & James: "Bunyips come alive at night, in the day they go on the wall.

They have parties."

Lizzy: "There's no game in bunyips, they're work and play. You imagine them, and you build them. They come to life for you and that's playing. When they're alive playing. When they're not alive and we're working on them they're just still. They are not alive during the day."

Me: "Look at the blue cards. When you're working, how close is the Bunyip?"

When you're 'playing' how close is the Bunyip?"



Stella & Louis: "In and out."

Lizzy: "The Bunyip is here helping me, he's living with me."

Stella: "Sometimes when I'm living it, the Bunyip talks to me."

These small thinkers affirm that imaginary and real are interlaced into their experience of living web projects.

I listen deeply.

I make a connection in my web project thinking.

These two conversations join whispers of proximity and engagement together. Conversation-dialogue using the blue cards engenders a subtle change in how the children talk of their Bunyips. They talk about when the Bunyip is alive. They use

personal pronouns (he and she, rather than it) to enliven him and her. The Bunyips are alive for some of the children and they move from a state of neutral existence to a living personalised state of existence. As the children shift their language from personal to neutral they withhold or grant life to the Bunyips.

I listen.

These two groups of children enchant their learning space through and with their use of language, specifically nouns and pronouns, and in so doing they expand their learning community to include the Bunyips. The children bring the Bunyips into living and in doing this they add complexity to their web project narratives, increasing meaning making within this learning experience.

The little girls' anthropomorphisation of their Bunyips transforms their Bunyip into a being (or person) of their imagining which they can identify with, play with and talk with. The girls' relationship with their Bunyips makes visible the children's ability to transcend their virtual world, their world within and outwith during their web project experience.

Spinning possibility by way of enchanted beings.

“They say Aslan is on the move – perhaps already landed.”

And now a very curious thing happened. None of the children knew who Aslan was any more than you do; but the moment the Beaver had spoken these words everyone felt quite different. Perhaps it has sometimes happened to you in a dream that someone says something which you don't understand but in the dream it feels as if it had some enormous meaning – either a

terrifying one which turns the whole dream into a nightmare or else a lovely meaning too lovely to put into words, which makes the dream so beautiful you remember it all your life and are always wishing you could get into that dream again. (Lewis, 1950/2002, p. 65)

I listen to the children's conversations and the words of the Beaver resonate. I have entered an enchanted space where something is occurring that has enormous meaning. My yellow conversations take on a life of their own and are pulling me towards deeper understandings of play. My relationship with play is complex and re-trained professionally, and joyfully vibrant in my living at home. I actively advocate for play, and the arts and crafts in learning environments. I interpret play as an eclectic, purposeful mix of activity that enfolds teaching into a deliberately constructed environment and sequence that provokes imagining, trying out of ideas and wondering. The yellow conversations have enormous meaning in my mind, and at this point are pulling me towards a re-valuing of play in all its forms and shades.

Janet Moyles (2007) in her introduction to *The Excellence of Play*, reminds me that,

Children have a natural inclination to play, alongside a natural instinct to learn and to be curious and inventive, which are characteristics of the human race in general. In a way, these are what makes children, children! Perhaps this is one of our adult problems, especially in fast developing societies – we don't appear to have time for childhood and its incumbent challenges and demands. (p. 3)

By entwining elements of the *Reggio Emilia Approach* (p. 47) as described by Malaguzzi and his colleagues in *The Hundred Languages of Children. The Reggio Emilia*

Approach - Advanced Reflections (Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1998), as I explain in Chapter 1 into the design of *The Bunyips Project* I set out with my then colleagues to counteract Moyles' identified risk, "we don't appear to have time for childhood and its incumbent challenges and demands" (p. 3). The three web projects do make time for childhood. They promote, and ask for imagining, curiosity, wondering and inventive making with a question.

What do Bunyip's look like?

This is a rather innocent and whimsical question, even a childish one. This question is a quest challenge, to travel beyond learning as work into a space sprinkled with learning occasions as work, game and play that is being spun into reality by way of the enchanted beings within this particular Bunyips Project.

We're sitting on the floor and the Bunyips are standing near us as friendly sentinels on the wall, members of the children's class. The children place the yellow cards into a line in front of them. hard to track who is saying what, so I concentrate on recording, doing the best I can. The scaffold cards are picked up and put down by the children. Busy words flow.

I pose the same questions.

What is The Bunyip Project?

Is it work, game, play, two of them, all of them, none of them?

What is your thinking?

Conversation 3 Vlad and Gwynni

A yellow conversation, including the scaffolding activity type cards.



The following stream of words is spoken in a manner of intense enthusiasm with children speaking over one another. As a result I am unable to work out who is saying what until the pace of the conversation slows and I am able to identify Stella's words. I am then able to name each speaker.

Bunyips ... work.

Playing and work.

Game and work.

all three.

Game, different types of game.

Bunyips is not a game. Not a game.

none of them, something else.

Work and play.

Play.

None.

Work and Play.

Stella: "Not just work, because fun. play as well."

James: "work when I'm interested in it and I think important, and really

interesting. When I play Lego© I'm working and the same with

Bunyips."

Louis: "Work and play. Kinda playing and working with it.

Not a game, not really like a game, you glue on, you're building, making."

Stella: "Work and play all mixed together."

Lizzy: "There is no game, Bunyips is play and work."

A bell.

Recess.

A different gathering on the floor and talking begins. The children shuffle and arrange the cards. I pose the same questions.

What is The Bunyip Project?

Is it work, game, play, two of them, all of them, none of them?

What is your thinking?

Conversation 4 Vlad and Gwynni

A yellow conversation, including the scaffolding activity type cards.



Jilly: "two of them – play and work."

Jilly pulls the mix of two card towards her and she picks up the play and work cards, she waves them back and forth.

Jilly: "work when with the class, and playing when you're by yourself and no one is working with you and you're the boss, also when you make the Bunyip. work when writing. play when you use your imagination, when you think your Bunyip is alive."

Jilly's face is animated, alive. Her eyes sparkle as she talks and she holds the play card as she tells of her living Bunyip.

Me: "Is your Bunyip alive?"

Jilly: "I think so. When we've gone home and the teachers have all gone home it comes and goes off the wall and plays in the playground. He likes to play, while he's outside - he likes to go to Fiji and into time, and to the snow and build snowmen and go skating."

Me: "When he comes alive are the Bunyips work, game or play or a mix?"

Jilly: "playing."

Benny: "Bunyips is work and sometimes a game. work when we're working on the Bunyip and we try to work our best. a game when 'fun work' and the jobs you like to do, like designing and making the arm. a game ummmmm... you use your imagination in both."

Jilly: "Playing is when you have to imagine your Bunyip up. Vlad is something to imagine about."

Tilly: "Vlad is a real thing."

A pause.

Silence.

Me: "If you couldn't use the word 'doing' to describe how you do the project which word would you use?"

Tilly: "Playing Bunyips."

Benny: "Playing with Bunyips."

Jilly: "Playing or participating or maybe even a new word. Are we allowed to make up new words? If you could mix up work and a game and make 'waming', or mix up 'work and imagining' or 'play and imagining'."

James: "But doing is the right word because you're doing both or a mix up of things."

Jilly: "You're only allowed at school to play in certain places and at certain times, or during free choosing, and bunyips isn't always playing..."

As I listen, I imagine a kaleidoscopic lens of activity and come to understand that language is a limitation within these conversations as the children try to put their thinking into words. I remember Wittgenstein (1961/2001), "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world" (p. 68), and I feel fingers of frustration grabbing at my thinking.

I sense that the linear continuum I have been using to explain children's thinking regarding work, game and play in terms of their relationship to each other, is problematic (Figure 60). I cannot put my finger on why this is so. I keep using it for now, even though I feel it to be a problematic representation at this moment in time.

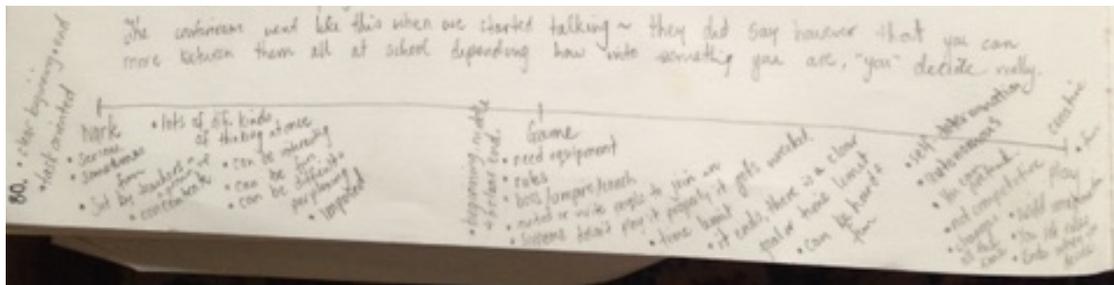


Figure 60. My thinking of the relationship of a work, game, play as a continuum

I am frustrated and relegate, for now, this particular unease to Ueland's (2013) notion of "moodling" (p. 32) I understand, and crave a need to feel comfortable with my decision to let my work, game and play continuum sit for now. Again I try to embrace the ambiguity of letting it be for now challenging, as I feel an innate desire to classify and organise and have to work hard not to revert to my older patterns of

inquiry. I work to sit in a space of “negative capability” (Keats, 2009, p. 492) with Keats at my shoulder.

Through re-living these conversations with my Bunyip questors I come into seeing, as the children have, that the growing collection of conversation-dialogues have perplexing elements, and are not simple or easy. There is deep thinking here, puzzling thinking that I am having trouble pinning down. I realise that the subjects and objects under discussion (the Bunyips, Gwynni and Vlad) are difficult to quantify using the activity labels provided.

I think.

I wonder.

Am I anxious because these three web projects risk being devalued in the eyes of teachers and children?

Are the web projects suspended, pendulum-like, swinging through dimensions of activity?

Is the value of web projects determined by a value placed on an activity type category such as work (valuable and meaningful), play (some value, difficult to quantify)?

I have an inkling, an imagining of possibility.

If these web projects are locked into one activity type or dimension, then it becomes easy to ascribe them with a static, measurable value, and by inference a definite label—work, game or play.

If these projects are to be categorised as work activities, a possible implication may be that the children and teachers give them a value that is high and important. If these

projects are categorised as game activities they may possibly sit at an intersection of high and low value. And a play category may be given lesser value, as the value of often play diminishes as we mature.

I deliberately act to shift my thinking, and in doing so possibility opens. I imagine *The Bunyip Project* as an object and subject, not in the form of an activity to be completed, but as a space to inhabit. I step through a portal like the magical wardrobe in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and find myself stepping into a space of possibility and activity, a new landscape to think within. I find myself seeing *The Bunyip Project* as an experience being shared by the children. I see this web project as an experiential room or experiential space, which is lived multi dimensionally.

A trend, threading itself into my thinking as I listen to these Bunyip conversation-dialogues appears to be a collective desire amongst the children to categorise *The Bunyip Project* as either work or play. James thinks deeply and reminds me of a child much older than he really is. He talks of his Bunyip project experience differently to the other children. He speaks, and I hear that work for him within the Bunyip conversation-dialogues is an “important, interesting” kind of play.

James: “work when I’m interested in it and I think important, and really interesting. When I play Lego© I’m working and the same with Bunyips.”

At a later date I explore James’ relationship with Lego© and his thoughts on Bunyips in relation to Lego©. We are sitting on a couch.

Me: “When you do Lego© is it game, play, work or a mix?”

James: “A mix.”

Me: “Can you explain it to me?”

James: "Well, Lego© is challenging when things don't work, when you're trying to make something up. When you follow the instructions and you're making something out of the box easier than when you make something up. Always a mix of work, game and play it depends on the stage you're in. Harder when you have to follow instructions because you don't always get what you have to do so work. When serious, work. Lego© is work when you're determined to make something and when you follow the instructions...it gives you ideas for when you make stuff up. a game when you play with the made things."

A pause.

Silence.

James: "You imagine in it when you get to make your own stuff up as a thing or a game. The more imagining you can get in your head the more it becomes fun and you don't have to follow the rules – playing then."

Me: "What about the Bunyips?"

James: "The Bunyips is actually play now I've thought about it with Lego©. He was play because you have to use your imagination to make him, and once he's made he's a monster, he's like a person, he's alive in my head and I get to make up how he acts, he's an invisible friend."

A pause.

Silence.

Hesitant words.

James: "Oooohhhh hold on, when we got the instructions it was more like work just like when you build Lego© out of the box. "

Time moves, confident words are spoken.

James: "We had to be serious and concentrate to make him. It was hard and more like solving a Lego© problem. Bunyips is a game when you imagine him alive and you're playing with your friends and he sort of joins in and becomes part of a game, he's invisible. Now I think about it more Bunyips is a mix, always a mix like Lego©, they're the same sort of thing."

James' words have resonance with the direction my own thinking is moving in. His words reveal a complexity of experience, and that he struggles to quantify it with one particular activity label. James' words paint an experience characterised by internal shifts in sensation, of motion within himself and his Lego© life-world regarding his constructed understanding of work, game and play as labels of things you do. I sense work, game and play for James are not separate dimensions of experience, but are an enmeshed sensory and emotional experience. And as such, each sensation as work, game and play is precipitated through sensory stimulus, reaction, autonomy and immersion into a thing that has caught his interest and imagination.

I am still.

If I sit within this thought I can view work, game and play as dimensions of sensory experience and I then imagine and shift work, game and play from an activities realm measured with economical units of language into an aesthetic, artistic realm, and in doing so, stamp work, game and play with a more malleable meaning. I find myself inhabiting *The Bunyip Project* as artist and aesthete, not just teacher and learner. I come to see that I am living with and through my senses during this project and a kaleidoscope of opportunity opens up regarding how I speak about all three web projects. I am

stimulated and come to understand what *poesis* is, and I suspect the children do as well (although they would not use the term, *poesis*). During *The Bunyip Project* a sense of work, game and play is spun from sensation, each threaded with emotional, social, kinaesthetic and cognitive filaments combining in a sense of intimacy, expressed as a proximal relationship that is full of motion. The word ‘engagement’ pops into my mind. Perhaps this is a way to describe engagement during learning.

I play with possibilities and test ideas, words and phrases:

Bunyips, an example of teaching and learning which enchants by layering sensations of work, game and play within a transitional space.

Children transition between dimensions of work, game and play, as senses process stimulation, and react in physical, cognitive, kinaesthetic and emotional dimensions within and without as they do this.

There is possibility and re-imagining here.

My mind immediately spins another filament in my growing web of interconnected possibilities and disclosures.

If work, game and play can be seen as sensations then my problematic continuum can be re-imagined, and I can, and will imagine a new representation using graphic language.

“Moodling” (Ueland, 2013, p. 32) is called for again.

Graphic Language, Enchanted Speaking

“Why I do believe we’ve got into Lucy’s wood after all.”

And now there was no mistaking it and all four children stood blinking in the daylight of a winter day. Behind them were

coats hanging on pegs, in front of them were snow-covered trees.

Peter turned at once to Lucy.

“I apologize for not believing you,” he said, “I’m sorry. Will you shake hands?”

“Of course,” said Lucy, and did.

“And now,” said Susan, “what do we do next?”

“Do?” said Peter, “why, go and explore the woods of course.”

(Lewis, 1950/2002, pp. 53-54)

Trying to represent an experience in graphic form is difficult at the best of times, it becomes even more challenging when it is not one’s preferred mode of communication. I am spoken to quite bluntly by one of the children. I replay the audio recording over and over trying to work out whose voice it is and I cannot work it out. I think it may be Stella.

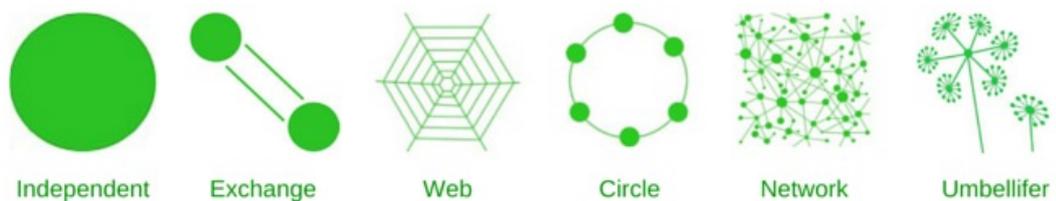
Stella: “weird, dumb and boring to write or speak about what something is like, and well, we should draw it.”

Most of the representations, which take form and appear from the pencils the children wield, are a mix of drawing and diagram, they are not conceptual diagrams in an accepted adult understanding of the word. The drawings are true to my idea of *Di Cento* – a centi-culture of spoken language. This wonderful speaking with graphic language shows thought rich in imagination, even though the children’s reactions at the beginning of the task are somewhat subdued.

The children reach for the small black box that houses the conversation cards. They pick out and line up the green cards. Small hands arrange and re-arrange the cards, and whilst doing this young voices debate, pick out, shuffle and stare at the cards. The children chatter and draw. They share their representations and frustrations as they

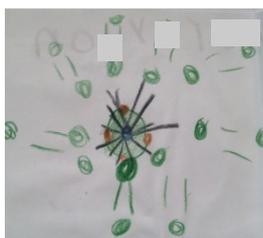
create their graphic explanation of how web projects work. Picture the children on a carpeted floor with clipboards, a tub of coloured and grey lead pencils and two Bunyips gazing down on them from pin boards within the classroom. A growing community of understanding is shown by the ebb and flow in conversation, pauses, vocal tone, acts of doing, and arranging and re-arranging of cards.

Remember the green cards, they are a set of elements imagined from structural segments regularly found in natural science, and can stand alone or be combined. The cards as explained earlier, derive their forms from nature and enable speaking using graphic language in a manner that is harmonious (Wales, Juniper, & Skelly, 2010).



So how do the children speak of their Bunyips experience using the green cards?

They speak colourfully, mixing pictures and symbolic elements together to speak their imagining of their web project's structure. The pictures that follow are delightful, an example of my-pack-of-cards enabling speaking, of making thinking visible.



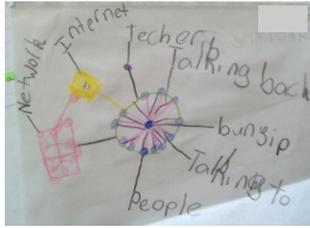
Benny's graphic



Lizzie's graphic



Louis' graphic



Jilly's graphic



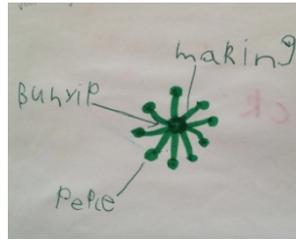
James' graphic



Tilly's graphic



Stella's graphic



Cam's graphic

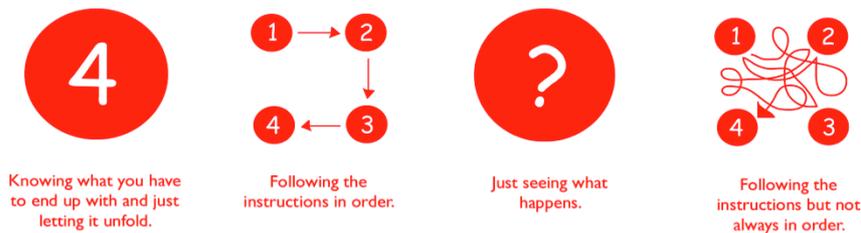
In half of the drawings the presence of a Bunyip is prominent, either as a central symbol or as a pictorial representation of a Bunyip. The way the Bunyips are depicted within these drawings makes visible the proximal relationship the children have with their web project Bunyip. Each Bunyip is either large in the drawing in relation to the other elements or is at the heart of the drawing. Four of the Bunyip drawings are similar to the pictures the children have made of family, friends and book characters—they are bright, colourful, detailed and have been drawn with love and care, there is no evidence of rushing. In Lizzie, Louis and James' drawings the Bunyip is an image recognisable as the Bunyip each was involved in making. In Cam, Jilly and Benny's graphics a Bunyip is represented conceptually usually as a spot or dot at the centre of the graphic. Stella represents her Bunyip on a computer screen and Tilly explains that the large yellow spot is the Bunyip in her picture.

Graphic structural segments found on the green cards are present in the children's representational imaginings of how their Bunyip projects work. The children speak with their images and talk of umbellifer, network, circle and exchange. The cards have made

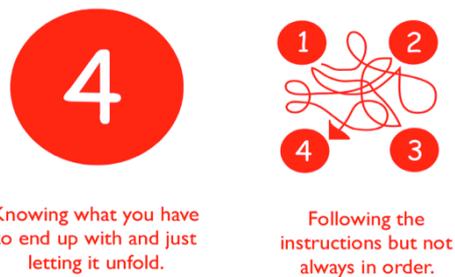
visible a complexity of thought and relationship, I had earlier hoped for, and doubted possible. The cards bring the children's thinking outwith, making it visible. Magic is happening.

Softer, Rather than Harder

The red conversation with these children is very short and to the point, there is no lingering or drawing. The children reach for the cards and line them up. The activity cards are sitting near the box of cards available for use if needed to help the children speak of their experience.



I haven't recorded the names of who said what in this group, as I am too focused on listening and watching which cards are pulled out of the box to speak with. They are placed in front of the children and one child touches two of them as they speak, another picks the same two up and puts them back down, as they speak



The voice recorder plays,

Conversation 5 Vlad and Gwynni

A red conversation, including the scaffolding activity type cards.

Voice 1: "We knew what we had to make."

Voice 2: "We didn't always follow the instructions in order."

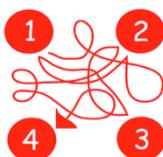
Voice 3: "Mostly followed the instructions, but not in order."

Voice 4: "Didn't matter we didn't do it in order."

I gather together another group of children and we talk with a brevity similar to the previous group. The children pull two cards out from the line of red cards they have made. They are the same two cards that the previous group settled upon.



Knowing what you have to end up with and just letting it unfold.



Following the instructions but not always in order.

Conversation 6 Vlad and Gwynni

A red conversation, including the scaffolding activity type cards.

Jilly: "Always follow instructions, otherwise you might get it wrong, it won't be right."

Benny: "You can't get him all wrong, just bits sometimes."

Jilly: "When we built from instructions we followed them in order."

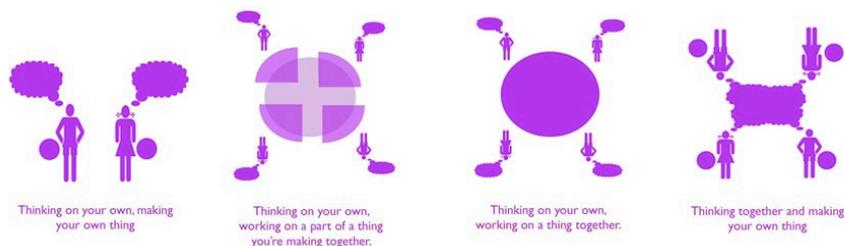
Benny: "Imagined ourselves, our parts...we went in steps, steps, steps."

The children speak assuredly of how they follow instructions during this web project. They follow the instructions, but not always in order, although in order sometimes. The approach these young children adopt is neither hard nor soft. Their approach is softer rather than harder. I see them working flexibly within their Bunyip building, and being softer in their approach to the tasks within the project—possibly because they have a sense of autonomy in determining what they do, and how they do

it. More speaking needs to occur to tease this out, and unfortunately time runs on, and this conversation-dialogue remains, in my mind incomplete. Perhaps I will learn more with the older children as they speak with the red cards.

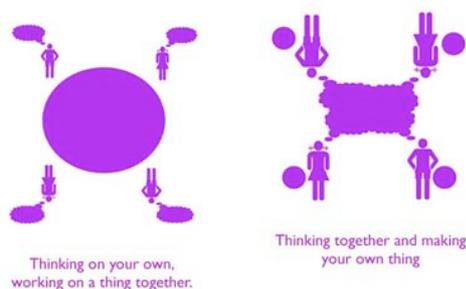
And now Violet, and then Navy and Turquoise again

The children are not nearly as interested in the violet conversation-dialogue as I thought they would be. It plays out as a very short conversation, they want to speak with the navy and turquoise cards again. In front of a group of children the violet, and then the navy and turquoise cards are separated out of the box of cards. The violet cards are lined up.



Two are pulled forward by one small hand, and sit on the floor in front of, and closer to the children.

A pause.



The conversation begins and is very succinct.

Conversation 7 Vlad and Gwynni

A violet conversation, including the scaffolding activity type cards.

Me: "How did you work?"

Voice 1: "Thinking on your own and making together."

Voice 2: "They'd have to come here to work together."

Voice 3: "Thinking together and making your own would be a mess".

The children's words speak of experiences that are potentially opposite.

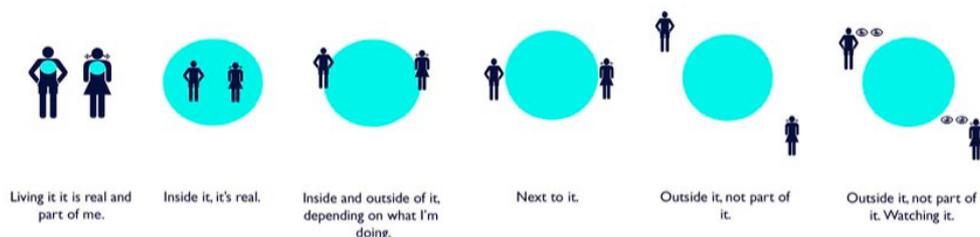
I pause.

I wonder.

The projects appear to have been the same in their doing, yet the words the children speak communicate different experiences. Both cards acknowledge an experience that has aspects of togetherness and independence. Perhaps the children's speaking is referring to different stages of the project? My small conversationalists have moved on. This conversation is left hanging, and leaves my thinking in a place of unknowing, a space of negative capability (Keats, 2009) and I leave it there for now.

The children shuffle and arrange the navy and turquoise cards, they place them in a loose line in front of them.

I set down the scaffolding cards with the images of activity types so that they are easily accessible.



The children's eyes light with energy as they consider the question I put to them.

Me: "When you are doing the Bunyips, which pictures help you speak about how into it you are?"

I pick up each card and explain the images and words to the children. Several pairs of eyes look intently at the cards. Little hands touch, pause, and move some cards and set them below the original line up.



Conversation 8 Vlad and Gwynni

A navy and turquoise conversation, including the scaffolding activity type cards

Stella & Louis: "In and out of it."

Lizzy: "The Bunyip is here helping me."

James: "In it".

Louis: "In it."

Stella: "Living it, sometimes when I'm living it the Bunyip talks to me."

James pulls down another card.



James: "Next to it".

Louis pulls down a different card. The line of cards below the original line of cards is growing.



Louis: "Out of it."

Stella glances at the box of cards and pulls the yellow cards out. She looks at them and picks them up. She shuffles through them, pauses at two (I can't see which), and then puts them back in the box.

Stella: "Next to it...(pause)...In it, living it. When a game I'm living it and I'm in it. When I'm out of it, work."

James: "Work."

I think back to James' earlier conversation about Lego©, work, game and play. In this current conversation he affirms how seriously he takes his playing and working. He makes visible that work is a complex relationship for him, and is linked substantially to his sense of proximity to his focus be it subject or object.

Stella speaks in a similar manner. She speaks of her experience of the project as a game when she feels intimate with the project, and describes it as work when her proximity to the Bunyips is more distant.

The conversation-dialogues with the assistance of the two sets of cards are full of complexity and deep thought. The children are speaking of their experience in a manner that is re-tracing and re-enchanting the possibility of web projects. I have gathered a collection of data that can be said to honour the voices of the children.

I pause.

I make ready for working with the older children and set these conversations to the side for now, ready to come back to later on.

Chapter 6 — Gazing into and through a Mirror of Erised

“Strange how short-sighted being invisible can make you,” said Dumbledore, and Harry was relieved to see that he was smiling.

“So,” said Dumbledore, slipping off the desk to sit on the floor with Harry, “You, like hundreds before you, have discovered the delights of the Mirror of Erised.”

“I didn’t know it was called that, sir.”

“But I expect you’ve realised by now what it does?”

“It – well – it shows me my family –”

“And it showed your friend Ron himself as head boy.”

“How did you know - ?”

“I don’t need a cloak to become invisible,” said Dumbledore gently. “Now can you think what The Mirror of Erised shows us all?”

Harry shook his head.

“Let me explain. The happiest man on earth would be able to use the Mirror of Erised like a normal mirror, that is he would look into it and see himself exactly as he is. Does that help?”

Harry thought. Then said slowly, “It shows us what we want ...whatever we want...”

“Yes and no,” said Dumbledore quietly. “It shows us nothing more or less than the deepest, most desperate desire of our hearts...However, this mirror will give us neither knowledge nor truth. Men have wasted away before it, entranced by what they have seen, or been driven mad, not knowing if what it shows is real or possible.” (Rowling, 1997, pp. 156-157)

Harry Potter is a boy, older than the children in my last chapter, and similar in age to the children in this chapter. Like Harry they often find themselves entranced by a ‘Mirror of Erised’ (Figure 61). Their Mirror of Erised is one or more of the digital devices they live

with, work with, and play with. The Mirror of Erised in the Harry Potter series is a mirror in which one sees not a mirror image of one's self but an image of one's heart's desire. I use the mirror here as a metaphor for describing the thrall in which technology can hold children.



Figure 61. The Mirror of Erised

(Erised stra ebrú oyt ube cafru oyt on wohsi. Reversing the inscription and rearranging the spaces produces: I show not your face but your heart's desire.) Image retrieved from:

<https://ladygeekgirl.files.wordpress.com/2014/12/harry-potter-mirror-of-erised.png>

Bring into your mind an image of 40 Grade 4-5 students, split into three groups. One group is participating in *The MindsEye Monsters Project* (which I refer to as *The Monsters Project*), another in *The Bunyips Project* and another in *The Flat Stanley Project*. As with the last set of conversation-dialogues, those that follow are underpinned by my central quest questions,

What is a web project?

What are web projects for?

The Bunyip Project's presence is one among three in this chapter, it sits in the company of *The Monsters Project* and *The Flat Stanley Project*. “Crystallisation” and “refraction” (Richardson & Adams St. Pierre, 2008) are an intentional part of the reverie that unfolds in this section. I imagine myself as a crystal acting as catalyst for refraction and crystallisation as I listen and write. In this chapter my experience of web projects is a dual one. I inhabit the same roles as in the previous chapter and I live an ethnographic role in a slightly different sense to my earlier experience. I find myself moving and living as outlander in *The Monsters Project* and *The Flat Stanley Project* and then returning to my original web project community (*The Bunyips Project*). My movement between the projects mirrors the children’s proximal relationship with their object-subject-focus-experience as they experience their web project. The conversation-dialogues are initially dominated by task design and the idea of collaboration (the green and violet cards), and then they move onto the other three threads of my five-ply web project conversation.

As with the last chapter my entire inquiry shifts to the children’s perceptions of work, game and play (the yellow cards). With the perspective of hindsight I come to understand that I am trying to prove value, and I am using the unspoken value traditions of the labels of work, game and play to do this. There is tension between ideas of, and the values bound within, work and those assigned to game and play.

The idea of proximity (with an object, subject or focus) as a way of viewing children’s engagement reveals itself to be an important thread. I am pulled towards the navy and turquoise cards as in my mind, they make visible a way to talk of and measure children’s experience of engagement. And what of the red cards? They were not a prominent feature of conversation-dialogue with the younger children. During this chapter the ideas encapsulated in the red cards emerge again as possible indicators of

proximity, and play, affirming the creative and imaginative nature of softer approaches to activities and tasks.

Ambling towards Mirrors and Reflections of Experience.

The dark shapes of desks and chairs were piled against walls and there was an upturned waste-paper basket – but propped against the wall facing him was something that didn't look as if it belonged there, something that looked as if someone had just put it there to keep it out of the way.

It was a magnificent mirror, as high as the ceiling, with an ornate gold frame, standing on two clawed feet. (Rowling, 1997, p. 152)

Imagine a warm Australian November day. Imagine Eucalyptus scenting the air, sprinklers beating a rhythm heralding the settling of high summer over the land. Picture a group of rosy-cheeked children sitting on a floor displaying varying degrees of enthusiasm and boredom on a continuum of interest and engagement. This is the setting for an introduction to a new learning experience for a group of children. With my colleagues I introduce our new work to the children, web projects. My colleagues and I hold our breath and hope to see evidence of curiosity amongst the children.

I look intently at the crowd of sweaty faces sitting before me—I imagine them as a Mirror of Erised.

I wonder.

Am I seeing my heart's desire in these faces, or a reflection of their curiosity and expectation?

The children are divided into three groups of approximately 15 children based on reading and comprehension skills. Decoding, and an ability to comprehend not just literally, but also inferentially, are the main criteria used to determine the grouping for

each project. *Reading Running Records* (Clay, 2000) and *PROBE* © (Parkin, Parkin, & Pool, 2002) are the assessments we use to place the children. The children with the most sophisticated literacy skills participate in *The Flat Stanley Project*. The children who are consolidating their inferential understanding, and have strong literal understanding participate in *The Bunyips Project*. The children who require more scaffolding for their literal and inferential comprehension participate in *The Monsters Project*.

A teacher who teaches the children regularly leads each group. The teaching team is comprised of three teachers. Two of the teachers, Mrs B. and Mrs J-L. team-teach one Grade 4-5 class, and Mrs H. teaches the other Grade 4-5 class. Mrs H. leads *The Bunyips Project*, Mrs B. leads *The Monsters Project* and I (Mrs. J-L) lead *The Flat Stanley Project*. Each group of children knows their teacher and their group of peers well, as the groupings are established before the web projects, with some shifting of children between the groups.

All the children who participate, as with the younger children, have written permission to participate in the projects and this research. As spoken of earlier, parents are encouraged to ask questions, and may withdraw their children at any time from the web projects and this research. All the names in this thesis are pseudonyms, honouring the agreement I have undertaken with parents concerning my ethical commitment to them and their children.

On Christmas morning in *Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone* Harry receives an invisibility cloak as a gift and he uses it to move through his environment, and in doing so he hears and sees unexpected happenings. Rowling (1997) writes, "He slipped out of bed and wrapped the cloak around himself...He could go anywhere in this, anywhere, and Filch would never know" (pp. 150-151). I imagine myself wrapped in an invisibility cloak of web project tasks.

I pause.

I imagine.

Web projects are like an invisibility cloak for me. They offer me assurance, a sense of security, impetus to be courageous and to act upon feelings of curiosity. Just as Harry's cloak allows him to travel invisibly, web projects allow me to travel as outlander through unique conversation-dialogues with children and enable me to interpret, understand, imagine and create connections.

Looking into Mirrors, and looking through Reflections of Lived Experience.

“The mirror will be moved to a new home tomorrow, Harry, and I ask you not to go looking for it again. If you ever do run across it, you will be prepared. It does not do well to dwell on dreams and forget to live, remember that. Now, why don't you put that admirable cloak back on and get off to bed?”

Harry stood up.

“Sir – Professor Dumbledore? Can I ask you something?”

“Obviously, you've just done so,” Dumbledore smiled. “You may ask me one more thing, however.”

“What do you see when you look in the mirror?” (Rowling, 1997, p. 157)

I read and contemplate this exchange.

A wry expression settles upon my features, a possible mirroring of Dumbledore's expression when he encounters Harry sitting in front of the Mirror of Erised. At this point in time, my interpretation of what the children describe when they speak of their web project experience with voice, text, conversation, image and dialogue is as simple and complex as the question Harry asks Dumbledore.

“What do you see when you look in the mirror?”

The conversation-dialogues that unfold in the coming pages are framed by active experience, and use conversation and drawing as their reflective material to cast back at me memories of and sensory experiences of web projects. I interpret what I experience, and during my acts of interpreting I imagine myself shining a spotlight on my collection of conversations, both visual and aural, limiting my scope to what is caught in the orb of my inquiry. This is the work, the risk, I believe, of hermeneutical phenomenological inquiry—I might see what I don't want to see, or expect to see.

I pause.

I see and hear. I do more than interpret what I want to see. I attend to what the children speak. This undoubtedly means that I am making meaning that is more than just what I want to see as I listen.

Time moves.

Experiences of Monsters

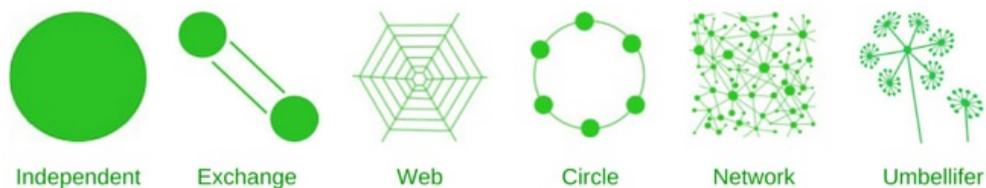


The earlier conversations with younger children about their *Bunyip Project* experiences are taken from the scribed versions in my scrapbook, which sits alongside this thesis. The same methodology has been used for the conversations recorded and interpreted here.

I invite *The Monsters Project* group of children to sit on the floor with me. The classroom is very warm. A pungent smell of cut grass permeates the room. The windows are open to their full height, and a summer breeze causing the blinds in the room to rustle and bang on the window frames creates some relief from the heat of the afternoon. The conversation card pack (my-pack-of-cards) that the younger children used to help them speak of their web project experience is lying before this group on the carpet. The children look curiously as I place the second pack of cards—the activity-type cards next to the box of conversation cards.



One student picks up the box of cards and sorts them into the coloured suits. I wonder how the conversation-dialogues will unfurl from the anchor points these cards provide. My heart rate increases as I anticipate the beginning of this quest stage. I pick up the green set of cards from the conversation card pack.



I introduce the dialogue conversation. “Here are some images that show how a web project might work. You can use them to help you explain how you think a web project might work.” We talk about what each card suggests, and that they can be combined in any way. The children smile and go and collect their pencil cases. The group draws and creates in an easy manner, there is smiling and conversation about their drawings.

In their graphic language, as we see later in this chapter, the children speak of *The Monsters Project* as a kind of exchange, circle, network—a circular exchange network.

I see the children oscillating between states of work, game and play and find it puzzling when they try to speak of their web project experience using these three labels (work, game, play). Comparing experiences of *The Monsters Project*, *The Bunyips Project* or *The Flat Stanley Project* with an activity the children are very familiar with (using the activity cards), and when speaking with the pack of conversation cards, the children speak confidently and explore their experience deeply. They reveal experiences of interaction and meaning making that are complex and diverse. This shows how they use current knowledge as an anchor to explore possibility. Their conversation shows that being given the conditions and expectation to imagine is a kind of magic that enlivens experience. I suggest here that the fluidity of rules, as they are shaped and re-shaped by the children speaks of autonomy as a key ingredient in a sense of play. As explained in the preceding chapter about the younger children’s web project experiences, each conversation is given a unique title, Conversation 1 Bunyips (*The Bunyips Projects*) , Conversation 1 Flat Stanley (*The Flat Stanley Project*), Conversation 1 Monsters (*The MindsEye Monsters Exchange/Monsters Project*) and so on. The number represents the number assigned to that particular conversation.

I listen to the children speak.

Conversation 1 Monsters – A yellow conversation, and a conversation of comparing and contrasting

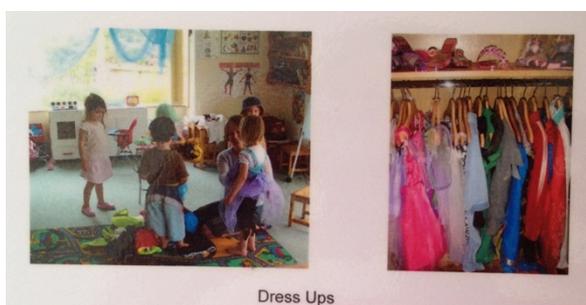


Alistair: "I reckon our monsters is similar to golf because you play alone in golf ...in golf you're responsible for your bit of the game...(your) own equipment, own turns...monsters is like golf."

Alistair pulls the card saying Sports Games towards him.



Tilly reaches for the Dress Ups card.



Tilly: "Monsters is like dress-ups because a make believe character and our monsters are and we have to make our monster up and so you're

pretending...sometimes people do believe that monsters are real and alive just like when you play dress-ups."

Tammy: "Web projects and dress-ups are the same because you agree to go into a world of make believe - that you pretend in and you agree to pretend and go along with stuff. In games imagination is kinda the magic in the game."

Me: "Is there any of that magic, pretending gives things, in your project?"

Tammy: "Yes real. Sometimes you do think of it as real, alive."

I listen.

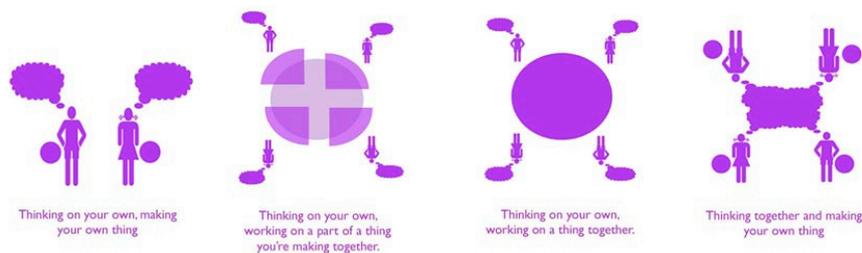
I hear words that speak of intimacy and distance (proximity), of children breathing life into the imagined character-beings in this web project. I hear children openly speaking of the web project characters as living, and that imagination is the magic in games. I believe that the children talk of conditions that enable magic, and think of playing imaginary games as the act of entering into an unvoiced agreement to pretend.

Allistair's words in the following conversational snippet make visible the importance of autonomy, and that a perceived degree of autonomy within an experience contributes to a sense of proximity felt by the children as they work through the web projects. This captivating conversation continues,

Allistair: "The bits when you use your own wild imagination is the bits when you're drawing your own monster and sending the instructions. But when you write the instructions you had to mention every little detail and it was more like work. When you get the instructions from the other person's monster work because you have to follow the instructions they've written so you can draw their monster."

The children move the yellow cards as they try to classify the web projects into work, play and game. One child lines the cards up, arranges and re-arranges them. I wait. I listen intently. Allistair affirms that autonomy is important in determining work, game and play.

The next conversation is violet, and continues to speak of a *Monsters Project* experience.



Conversation 2 Monsters – A violet conversation of working together

Molly: "I think in the Monsters Project they have half play half work and a game. Because you have to do work and play together a game."

Allistair: "Yeah."

Molly: "Mmmmm. I think a combination of work and play. You have to think and quite fun when you're playing in it."

Allistair: "like when you ask people to join in your game, we asked them and e-mailed them to ask. Some people are disappointed because they didn't get their partner's monster instructions, they weren't sent. They didn't play properly".

A pause – a silent space.

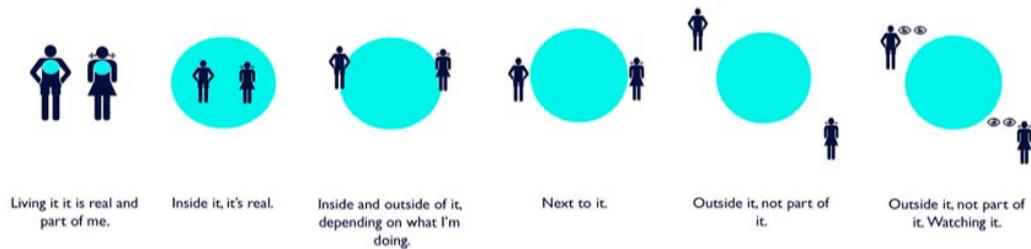
Allistair: "Monsters is thinking together and doing your own thing."

Chris: "thinking together and making on our own."

Scott: *“Thinking on your own and working on a thing together. Because a project so we’re working on the same thing but each doing something different.”*

A pause.

I introduce and explain the navy and turquoise cards and place them in front of the children.



Me: *“During The Monsters Project how into it were you? Use the blue cards to help you talk.”*

Scott: *“In the monsters I love it, and live it.”*

Chris: *“I live it”.*

Colin: *“Inside and outside of it.”*

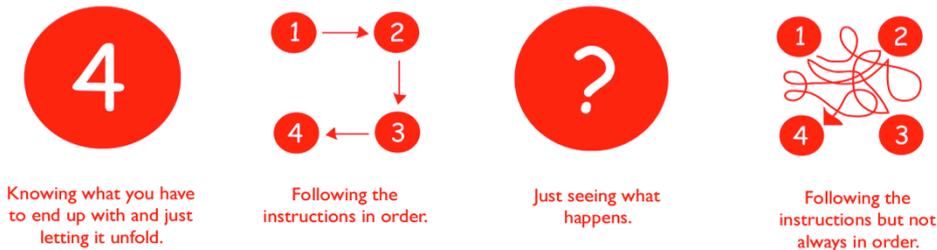
Brian: *“In it, when I’m in it a game – a working game, a game. a game. When I’m out of it, work, work, work. Monster’s is more work than play.”*

Tammy: *“I’m in it and out of it, because we are not always doing the project. When I’m in it, I’m pretty in it.”*

In their speaking the children are linking the idea of work to a decreased sense of autonomy, and that a game is a mix of autonomy and direction from an outside source. I hear the children speak of play as a state of being which feels more autonomous than the state of work.

I motion to the pile of red cards in the black box and place them with the other cards. The yellow and blue cards are pushed to the side. The red cards are lined up.

A conversation-dialogue begins,



Conversation 3 Monsters – A red conversation of activity approach

Brian: “I follow the instructions but not always in order.”

Joe, Tim and Colin nod in agreement.

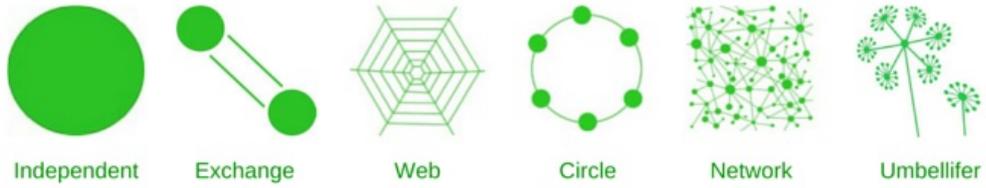
Scott: “I follow them in order. Draw the monster, send it, follow the instructions of my monster partner.”

Chris: “I follow them in order, because if you don’t you can get muddled up, if you do follow in order you know what you’ve done.”

One of the children: “As a group we follow the instructions in order. If we don’t it just ends up muddled. When you work on your own – you follow in order, but not always in order though.”

I listen, and I hear that when the children work in a group they tend to follow instructions in order, and when they work independently they work with a softer approach.

The green cards are used next. One child, Brian lines up the green cards and speaks.



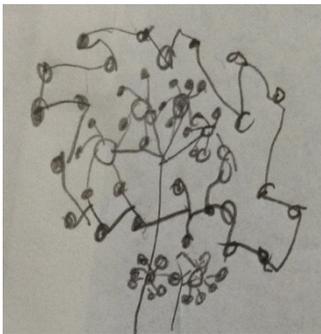
He pulls down the exchange, network and umbellifer cards.



Conversation 4 Monsters – A green and yellow conversation about what a web project is.

Brian: “Monsters is like an exchange, like a train track and wheels going round and round. like a network, umbellifer connected to different schools and people. The middle is where we could be.”

A pause. Brian reaches for a pencil and draws.



His drawing is a series of interconnected dots and lines. Umbellifer forms are recognisable in his graphic speaking. Brian’s graphic speaking is only part of the story—

his verbal commentary enriches it. I imagine Brian's train track between the dots and a train going around and around the connecting lines that represent the happening of communication.

The yellow cards are picked out of the messy collection of cards that have been pushed to the side of the green cards. Brian places one card firmly in front of him.



Conversation 5 Monsters – A yellow conversation of work, game and play

Brian: "Monsters is all of them – work, play and a game. It just depends which bit you're in – you do have fun in it. You have lots of work to do, its funner when they send the instructions to us."

Scott: "a game when you draw your monster, fun when you send it to Saratoga funner. Monster's is exciting like playing a game."

Scott picks out the Game card from the yellow cards. He holds onto it then places it back on the floor.



Chris picks out three cards. He picks up the card that has just been put down, and then picks up the Work card and the mix of two card.



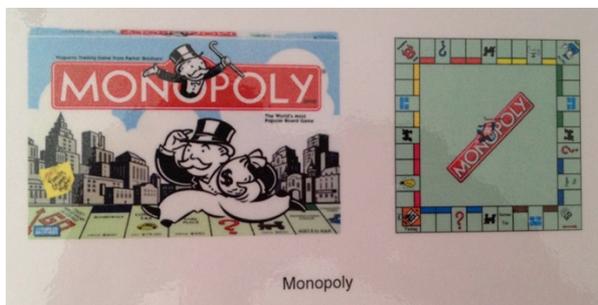
Chris: “work when you have to write instructions, a game when you send it.”

Brian chimes in again.

Brian: “Monster instructions are like a game.”

And we come full circle, and I am again listening to words which compare and contrast *The Monsters Project* to others games and play activities. The children variously see themselves as players in the conversation, and also reveal ways of seeing *The Monsters Project* from their point of view. The yellow cards are placed in a line, and Brian places the Monopoly© card near them.

Conversation 6 Monsters – A yellow conversation of work, game and play that compares and contrasts



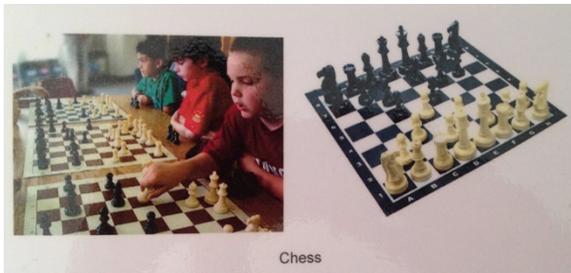
Scott: "Monopoly is a board game. Monster's rules are by a teacher. Monopoly rules are from a game."

Brian: "A teacher could have made the rules for monopoly."

Scott: "Us, we're the players in the monsters."

One of the children: "Monopoly is a game that you get to do lots of things in. a game which is fun, monsters is fun. Monopoly is a Maths game, Monsters have Maths thinking – but different types of Maths thinking."

Allistair adds the Chess card to the collection in front of him.



Allistair: "Chess is a bigger sort of game than monsters, monsters is about drawing from instructions."

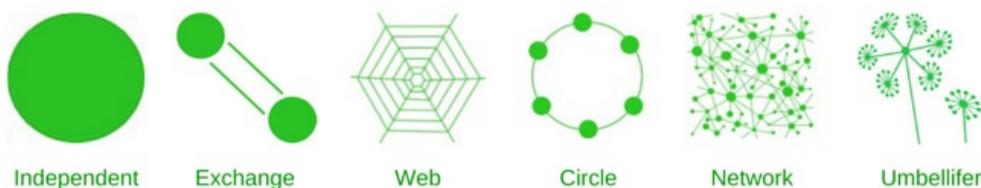
Jim: "Monsters has players, the people in the monsters."

Molly: "I think the blank pieces of paper are the boards. You draw your monster on the paper, so the paper is like a board."

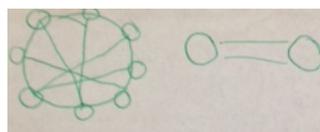
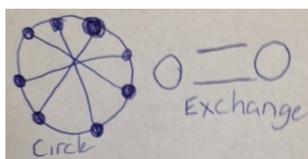
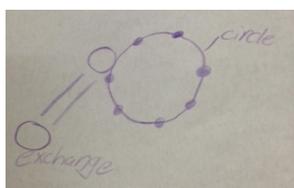
Allistair: "The board is the background for where you draw your monster on the paper."

In this conversational exchange the children liken being a participant in a web project to being a player, and liken aspects of the project to game equipment, or game rules. The act of comparing and contrasting the web projects in this thesis to work, game and play activities is enabling the children to talk about the web projects in a manner that opens up their ability to describe their experience.

As a group, the children show their experience of this web project to be one of motion that moves between work, game and play. It is not a static experience, and a sense of autonomy is a contributor to the children's naming of their experiences as work, game or play. The children tend to adopt a hard approach to their tasks as a group, working step by step, and are softer in their approach when working by themselves within the project. All describe an experience, which is not one or another, but is a combination of experiences that are defined by transition through perceptions of autonomy spoken of in terms of intimacy explained as proximity with the beings in the project. Further, proximity appears to contribute to a sense of play as the children participate in the web project. Some of the other children in this group work in similar ways, identifying and combining the graphic elements to explain how their web project works. A pattern of thought is shown through the repetition of the same elements. The elements are exchange, circle and umbellifer. The network and independent symbols did not show themselves as regularly in the children's graphic speaking.



The children's graphic speaking uses two elements. The graphic speaking shown here is representative of the group's conversation-dialogue. The circle and exchange elements are present in the children's speaking.

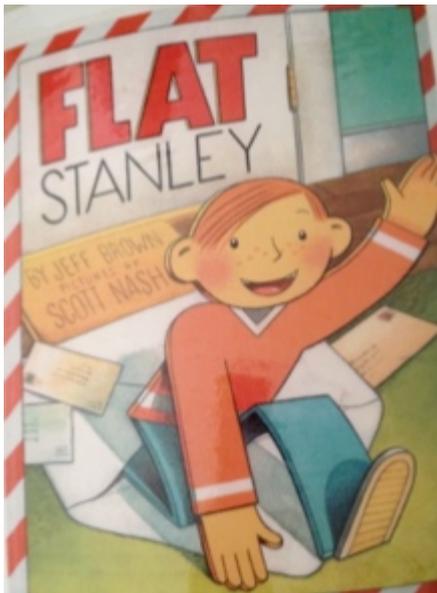


within and her cyber world. The monsters appear to sit betwixt and between these life-worlds, as well as across and through them.

I pause.

Perhaps this happening is the essence of web projects, and is how they enchant learning. They appear to create, promote, and encourage intimacy with a subject, object and focus (the web project and web project character) and to also communicate an unspoken valuing of, and engaging of imagining that is enacted, determined and controlled by each child.

Experiences of Flat Stanley



Imagine a different day with the same sounds and smells of an Australian summer. A different group of children sits with me in a circle on the floor with the pack of conversation cards in the centre. The activity-type cards are next to them in a messy pile. One of the children arranges my-pack-of-cards into piles based on their colour. Five stacks sit in front of our group.

Me: "Which ones will we start with?"

Me: "Which one would you like to start with?"

One child: "I reckon the yellow cards."

Me: "Okay, let's start with them then."

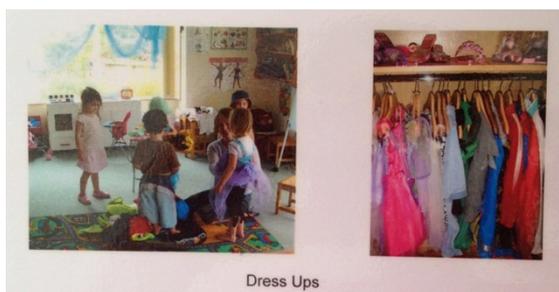
And so our Flat Stanley conversation begins with the yellow conversation cards and the children bring me with them into a space of thinking about the type of activity Flat Stanley may be – work, game, play or something else.



Conversation 1 Flat Stanley – A yellow conversation of work, game and play

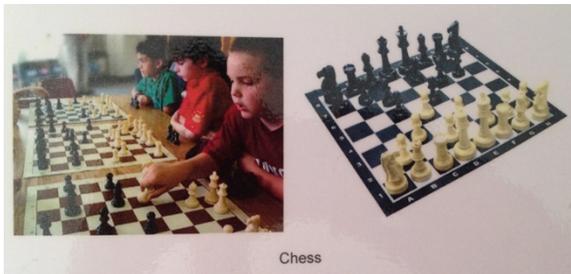
Ellie: "Flat Stanley is a game not just work. work when we have to write. a game when we move him around, as moving him around a big board, sort of."

Sally points to the Dress Ups card as she begins to speak.



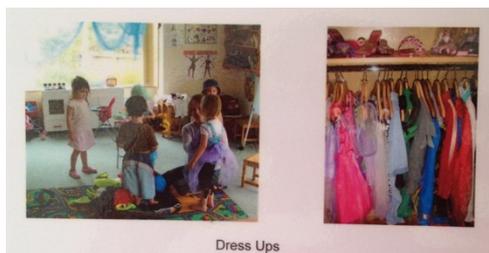
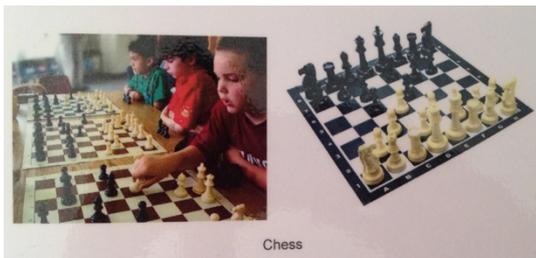
Sally: "In Flat Stanley you can use your imagination and you can have adventures and you can imagine certain stuff like dress-ups, you can pretend your surroundings."

Jane begins to speak, and she pulls out the Chess card from the loose pile on the floor.



Jane: "There are different types of games. Flat Stanley is like chess because a thinking game. With Flat Stanley you build on, like new adventures and knowledge. You don't send a chess board but you send Flat Stanley because you have to use your knowledge. Chess is more of a strategic game, you have to think of strategies. (Flat Stanley) also a bit like dress-ups because you can change things around the same as in dress-ups."

Jane pulls the Dress Ups card towards her and places it next to the Chess card.



She continues,

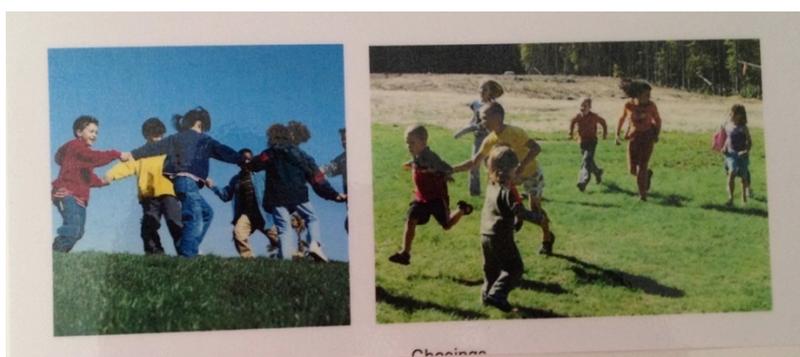
Jane: *“ (Flat Stanley) pretend. You sort of go places and be someone interesting.”*

Milly: *“Carolyn and I still do that with our horses, we pretend other things. We pretend to be anyone we want. You can imagine Flat Stanley in other places, where he’s been going, he’s come alive. You pretend they’re alive and when they’re alive playing.”*

A pause.

Milly: *“When you’re doing Flat Stanley without instructions and your wild imagination, you imagining – when you’re building your own thing a game. And you build whatever you want and you can have wild imagination about whatever you want with Flat Stanley, and what he’s been doing in the other countries. play because you don’t have a set of instructions on what he’s done – the sorts of things he’s done.”*

A small pause, and Hugh speaks up for the first time. He chooses the Chasings card and puts it in front of him.

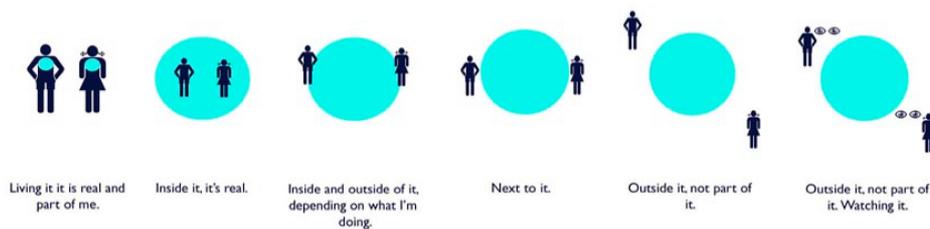


Hugh: *“Flat Stanley is like chasings as you have to ask people to join in and you do that with Flat Stanley.”*

Jane: *“With Flat Stanley you have an umpire which is like the teachers and they guide you along.”*

The children’s dialogue emanates energy as the children shape and re-shape their understanding of their web project experience and work together to describe it and name it. Again the act of comparing and contrasting appears to enable the children to talk about the experience of web projects in a detailed and thoughtful manner. This Flat Stanley conversation-dialogue is not dissimilar to the ideas in the earlier web project conversations. Trying to situate web projects in one domain that is either work, game or play is hard for the children, and they consistently speak of it as a mix or combination of two or all three. A general understanding in this particular web project conversation is that Flat Stanley is a type of game. The world is the game board, the Flat Stanley’s are characters travelling the board, and you are allowed to imagine wildly as you play.

I now listen to another group as they talk of Flat Stanley with the navy blue and turquoise cards, with the activity-type cards close by.

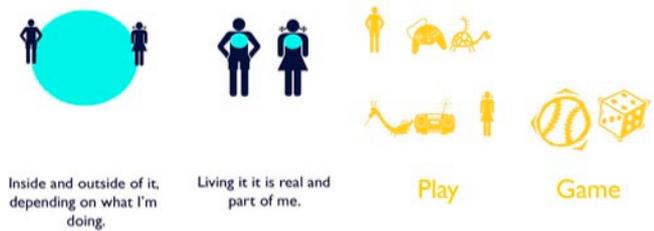


Conversation 2 Flat Stanley - A turquoise and navy conversation with a hint of yellow (work, game and play)

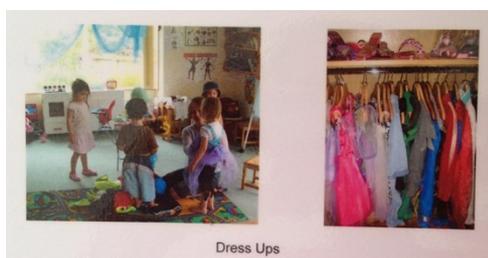
Ben: "When I take a Flat Stanley home and write the e-mails and blog I'm in it.

When someone else takes home Flat Stanley then I'm out of it. When I take him home I'm living it because you're at your house doing what you want living what you're doing. Living in it, playing or a game."

As he speaks Ben lines up two navy blue and turquoise cards and two yellow cards (see immediately below).

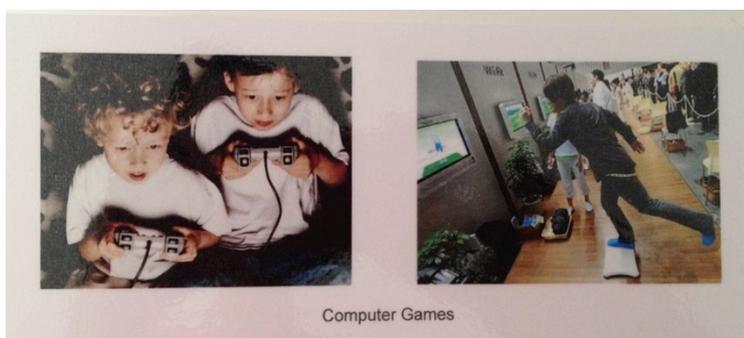


Euan speaks. He leaves Ben's cards as they are and adds the Dress Ups card to the pile.



Euan: "Tabitha (Euan's younger sister) decides to magic herself as a fairy when she dresses up, she's a fairy going around the house until she decides she's not a fairy. I think there is magic because I think when you pretend Flat Stanley is real you go on lots of adventures...Like Lucy (Euan's older sister) still has her Flat Stanley from when she did it, and she still does things with it, sometimes it just goes in her bag sometimes."

A pause. Euan picks up and places the Computer Games card in the growing collection that has been singled out.



Euan: "Flat Stanley is also like a computer game."

Euan: "Sometimes you have lots of imagination in games. Like in Cluedo© you imagine you're a detective, and in Monopoly© you pretend you have lots of money and you buy lots of things. Playing web projects doesn't quite fit with the definition of a web project."

What do these words reveal to me?

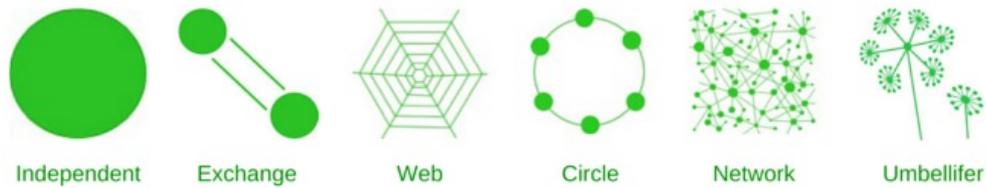
I imagine web projects sitting at an intersection of work, game and play in which children transition through, and situate themselves within, depending on their sense of autonomy, and the conditions within a web project experience that provoke and activate imagining.

I am still. I imagine wildly. My heart quickens.

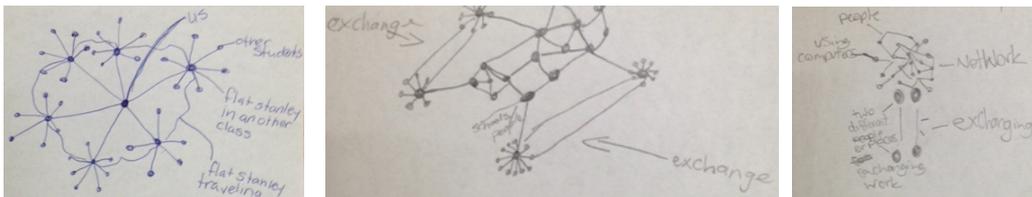
The web projects are like Lucy's wardrobe in *The Lion, the Witch and The Wardrobe*. They are portals leading the children to life-worlds of work, game and play that transcend life-worlds within, outwith and cyber worlds.

I imagine web projects as object, subject and focus within these life-worlds and the children relating to work, game and play differently depending on their sense of proximity to their web project. I find, in their speaking that the conversation-dialogues in my quest are re-imagining web projects—the children are enabling me to re-imagine web projects because I am able to see their web project experiences differently because of their speaking. I am coming to see web projects in new ways.

A green conversation follows with a group of sweaty-faced thinkers furrowing their brows as they think and speak.



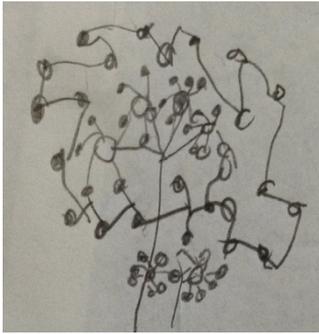
I ask how web projects work, and explain how the green cards assist us to speak about this. The cards lie in a line in the middle of the circle the children have moved into. One child changes the cards into a circle within the circle of children. Pencils and blue pens are reached for and the children begin speaking graphically. Verbal chatter accompanies the drawing.



The graphic speaking immediately above is representative of the group. The identifiable elements in all the children's graphic speaking includes umbellifer, exchange and network. The workings of *The Flat Stanley Project* appear to be more complex than *The Monsters Project*. In the Flat Stanley drawings a new motif appears. The children use wiggly lines to represent travelling. These structural drawings of web projects have no anthropomorphisation in their rendering, they are abstract and conceptual.

Brian's drawing (below) of how *The Monsters Project* works is closer in appearance to the three drawings above that speak of *The Flat Stanley Project*, than the other structural drawings of *The Monsters Project*.

I wonder about these graphic words and what they are speaking.



I listen hard. I look intently at the speaking that sits before me.

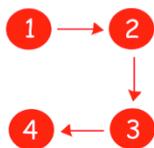
These graphic conversations of how web projects work, speak of web projects as clusters of people, connected by communication, and anchored together in a common task.

I am, again, enchanted with the children's speaking, as they lead me into their inner worlds through the portal of their drawings. My-pack-of-cards is magical in the power it holds to open conversation, and pull me within the inner life-worlds of the children.

We now move into a red conversation and speak of the children's approach to the web project tasks. Are they adopting a hard or soft approach? Or is it more accurately a preference for a harder or softer approach that is flexible?



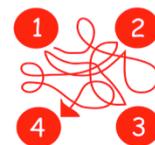
Knowing what you have to end up with and just letting it unfold.



Following the instructions in order.



Just seeing what happens.



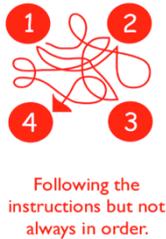
Following the instructions but not always in order.

Walt looks thoughtful, and begins to speak.

Conversation 3 Flat Stanley - A red conversation of approaches to tasks

Walt: "I think I would choose following instructions but not always in order. I choose the less exciting bit first so it gets exciting and I can do extras."

Walt singles out the Following instructions but not always in order card and places it away from the other cards.



Harry fans the remaining three cards out, looks at them carefully and places the Just seeing what happens card near the card Walt set down.



Harry: "I wait and see what happens. Sometimes I have no idea what I have to do and sometimes I do follow the instructions. Sometimes I listen really well and sometimes I don't."

Kate: "I think I usually know what to do and I just let it happen at other times I do things in order."

She places the corresponding card in front of her.

4

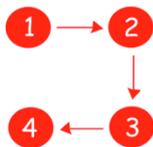
Knowing what you have
to end up with and just
letting it unfold.

*Walt: "Yeah, I follow the instructions but not always in order. I might jumble it
up."*

Hettie: "I think of how long it will take me."

Harry: "I think I follow the instructions in order."

Harry taps the Following the instructions in order card.

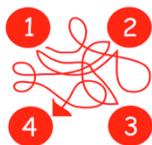


Following the
instructions in order.

Kate: I follow it in order and I do it.

Sally is looking in her tub near our conversation circle, and like other curious children in the class she meanders by and pauses, watching and listening. Sally is bursting to say something, she pipes up, bends down and taps a red card.

*Sally: "I do it in order until you get it, but then you can muddle it up. I follow the
instructions but not in order."*



Following the
instructions but not
always in order.

Brian and Harry are standing by the rubbish bin sharpening their pencils and listening to our conversation. They chime in. Harry nods as Brian speaks, and then he adds his thinking to this conversation.

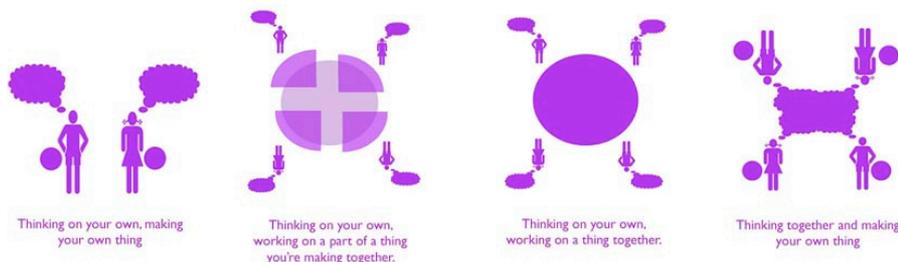
Brian: "Follow in order but not always in order."

Harry: "Following instructions but not always in order."

This group of children speak of approaching their web project work in a manner that is softer rather than harder. I hear them speak of times during web projects when a hard approach is required and that at other times when tasks allow, a softer approach is adopted.

The next conversation is violet, and focuses on how the children worked with each other.

The cards are pulled from my-pack-of-cards and are lined up.



Conversation 4 Flat Stanley - A violet conversation of ways of working together

Kate: "not thinking on your own making your own thing because we are thinking together as a group."

Walt: "kind of thinking on your own and working on a thing together but some things you do on your own like colour them (the Flat Stanleys) in and laminate them, we take them on adventures by ourselves. And classes around the world not just us."

Kate: "It would be the same as us...oh no..."

Hettie: "Thinking on your own, making a part of a thing together."

Walt: "something else."

Me: "Do we need a new card?"

Walt: "Yes."

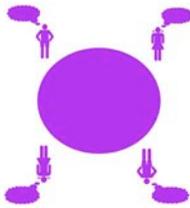
Me: "What would you put on the card?"

Kate: "Lots of people like a class."

Walt: "And like the bubbles. I'd have two people like this."

Me: "Like the card thinking on your own and making a thing together."

I point to the card below.



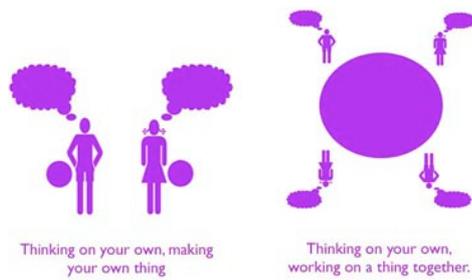
Thinking on your own,
working on a thing together.

Walt: "I'd have that one but with two people and they would be working together."

Kate: "Put the thing in the middle and the clouds."

Harry: "Kinda a mix of thinking on your own and making your own thing, and thinking on your own and making a thing together."

Harry pulls the two cards he speaks of away from the others.



Silence.

Kate tentatively speaks.

Kate: "They're doing it all together."

Walt: "Actually now I think, well it could be that one."

He points to the card he is speaking of, Thinking on your own, working on a part of a thing you're making together.



Hettie nods her head enthusiastically.

Hettie: "If it had even more pieces then it would make more sense. We're sending him off and interacting together."

Me: "What are you making together?"

Walt and Kate: "We're making the project together."

Me: "Will it work if someone or a class doesn't do it or pulls out, or they can't send their stuff back?"

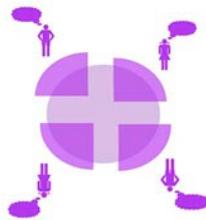
Harry: "Kind of, because we've got more than one class we sent them to but if one class can't we've still got other classes to work with."

Hettie: "I think a bit like what Harry said. We've got to work together. If one didn't want to do it anymore it doesn't really work. You wonder what happened and don't hear from them. You just wonder. We wouldn't know what to do."

Kate: "It would work but not really."

The conversation peters out.

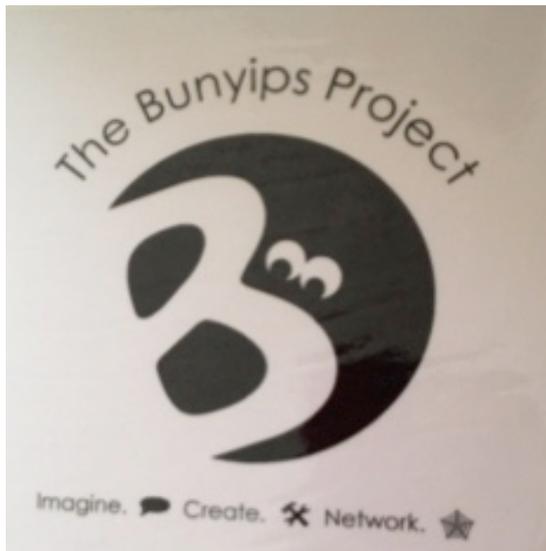
I hear the children speak of mutual responsibility, of working together and of working alone depending on the task at hand. This violet conversation speaks of autonomy and working with others, of motion between dimensions of independence and working together on a common goal or task. The children speak of thinking on your own, working on a part of a thing you're making together.



Thinking on your own,
working on a part of a thing
you're making together.

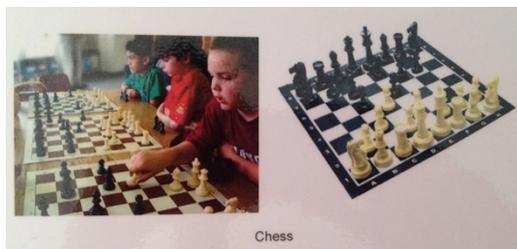
The conversation-dialogue of *The Flat Stanley Project* draws to a close. The conversations are representative of the huge amount of words spoken by the children, and encapsulate the spirit and themes the children speak of as their combined Flat Stanley experience.

Experiences of Bunyips



This conversation, like the earlier ones, happens in a classroom pulsating with the sound of a fan to move air around as the Australian summer takes hold and makes its presence felt. These conversations add to the conversation-dialogues of the younger children who participated in the earlier Bunyips projects in my inquiry.

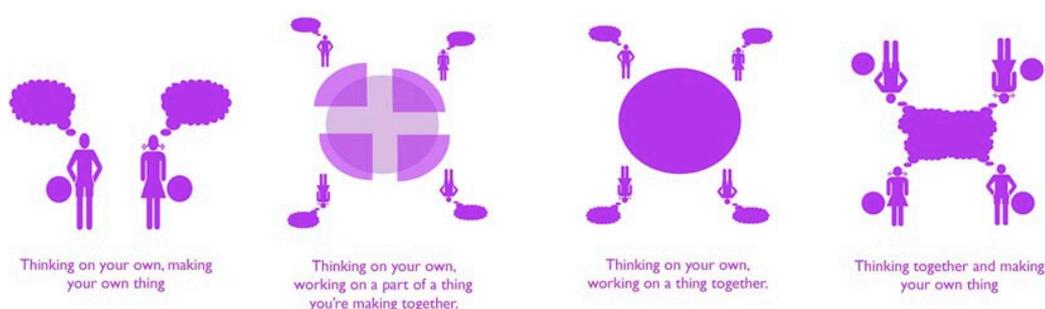
I place my box of conversation cards, and my pile of activity-type scaffold cards next to each other on the floor in front of the children. The first conversation-dialogue begins when Jon picks up the Chess card and begins to speak and sets it next to the singled out yellow cards.



Chess

that the children feel comfortable, listened to and respected, which is one of my intentions in this quest.

The next conversation-dialogue brings to the fore and makes visible the mutual dependence deliberately built into *The Bunyips Project*. Speaking with the violet cards the children recognise and talk about the collaborative experience they have in *The Bunyips Project*, and easily explain what happens if people do not carry through on their commitment to the project. The children know what mutual dependence is, and how it can sabotage or ensure the success a project.



Conversation 2 Bunyips - A violet conversation of how people work together

during the project

Me: "What happens if someone doesn't play by the rules?"

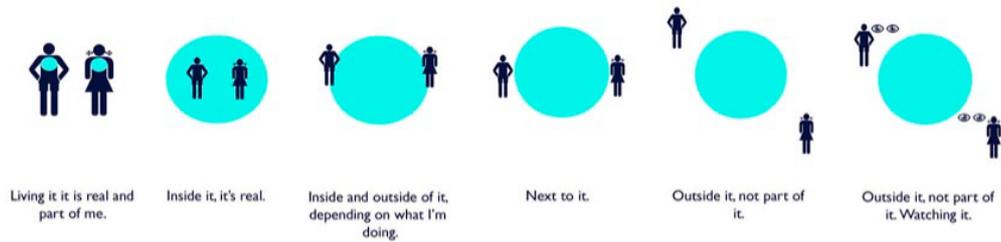
Hugh: "They spoil it."

Jake: "The Bunyips is thinking on your own but part of a thing together. We've

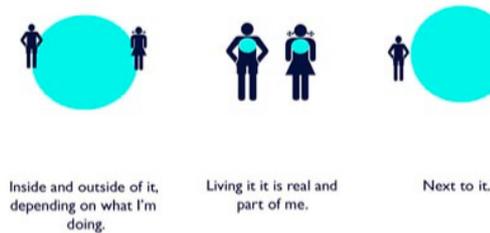
all got different jobs, parts. We've got tail, the other school have the

head. And we do our bit and combine it back together."

Hugh reaches for the navy blue and turquoise cards and rifles through them. He wants to move the conversation to these, and so our conversation shifts from violet to turquoise and navy. Hugh lines the cards up on the floor.



He pulls one card, and then another from my-pack-of-cards and speaks about them.



Conversation 3 Bunyips - A navy and turquoise conversation about how into the project the children are

Hugh: "I think I'm inside and outside of it depending on what I'm doing. When I'm in it I'm living it. I can imagine a bunyip. I'm next to it when I'm not really into it, when more like work."

Me: "Is it ever real - the Bunyips?"

One of the children: "No, not really, he's just a thing. I might have said he, so he sort of does become real!"

Mia touches one of the navy and turquoise cards, and then slides it in front of her.



Mia: "Sometimes he becomes real to me."

Monica points to the card Mia has in front of her.



Living it it is real and
part of me.

*Monica: "When I'm in it I'm kinda living it, but not really. kinda a he or a she,
not an it or a they. I'm living it. The Bunyip is like an imaginary friend."*

Hugh: "Yeah."

*Jon: "You might catch him out of the corner of your eye. You imagine he's
walking beside you and if you look back he's back on the wall, you
weren't fast enough."*

Hugh, Jon and Monica: "When you're into it, real."

Me: "Why is it real?"

*Monica: "Because we've had lots of stories and he seems real because we've
found some facts out. One family a long time ago, a family saw one at
The Great Lake and also with Dreamtime stories."*

*Hugh: "With the Dreamtime stories, when I'm living it I get really get into the
story and I'll try and picture it actually happening."*

Monica: "Like when you're reading a book."

Hugh: "Like Harry Potter."

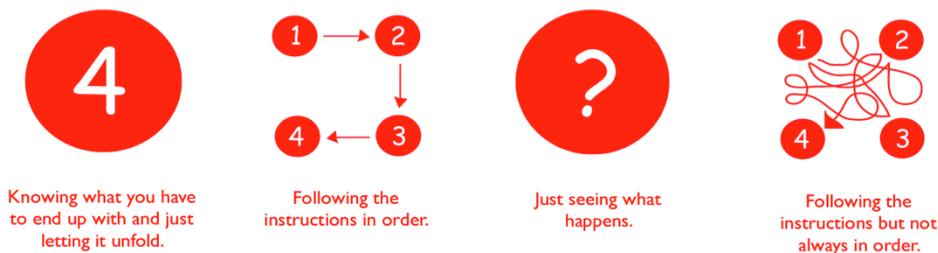
*Monica: "You imagine it and you see yourself in it, you're living it with them.
What they wear and sound like, I get a movie in my head."*

*Jon: "You get a movie and you can replay it by playing it and imagining it. You
sort of do that with Harry Potter."*

The children bring me with them deep into this conversation. I hear the children speak of imagining and in doing so, they make visible a deep proximal relationship to

their Bunyip. As the children speak, they give life to their Bunyip, and by giving life to their Bunyip they situate themselves in a life-world that transcends a life-world within, outwith and in the cyber world. Once again, the children’s talking makes visible an experience where imagining appears to link to an autonomous sense of self that moves through dimensions of work, game and play.

We now move to the red cards in my-pack-of-cards.



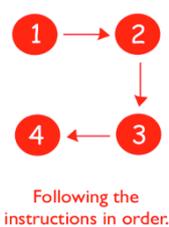
Conversation 4 Bunyips - A red conversation of task approach

Hugh and Jon: “Follow in order.”

Hugh: “If someone sends me instructions I’ve got to do it in order because of the instructions.”

Monica: “I follow them in order.”

Hugh: “We had to follow in order or we could have put the corks where the eyes go which would be in the wrong place. Or the ears where the legs were.”



The children pull to the side the card above. Hugh glances up at Gilbert the Bunyip (Figure 62) who is watching from the wall above us.



Figure 62. Gilbert the Bunyip

Me: "Do you always follow the instructions in order? Or were there times when you didn't?"

Harry: "I'm going to change to following but not always in order."

Jon: "I like to go in order and follow the instructions."

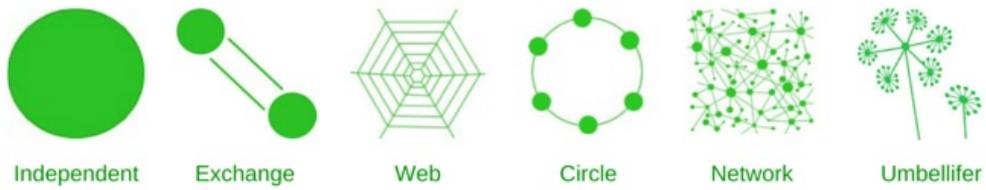
Harry: "We follow them in order when we're in our groups. But sometimes we finish them (the instructions) faster or out of order so the ears might be done before the legs. 98 percent following not always in order and 2 percent in order. But at the same time you can't not follow instructions it would just muck it all up. If we didn't follow the instructions it would be embarrassing when we sent the photos to the other schools because ours would be mucked up and wrong."

Jon: "When our turn to imagine and make the Bunyip it doesn't matter about the order, it would work a little bit."

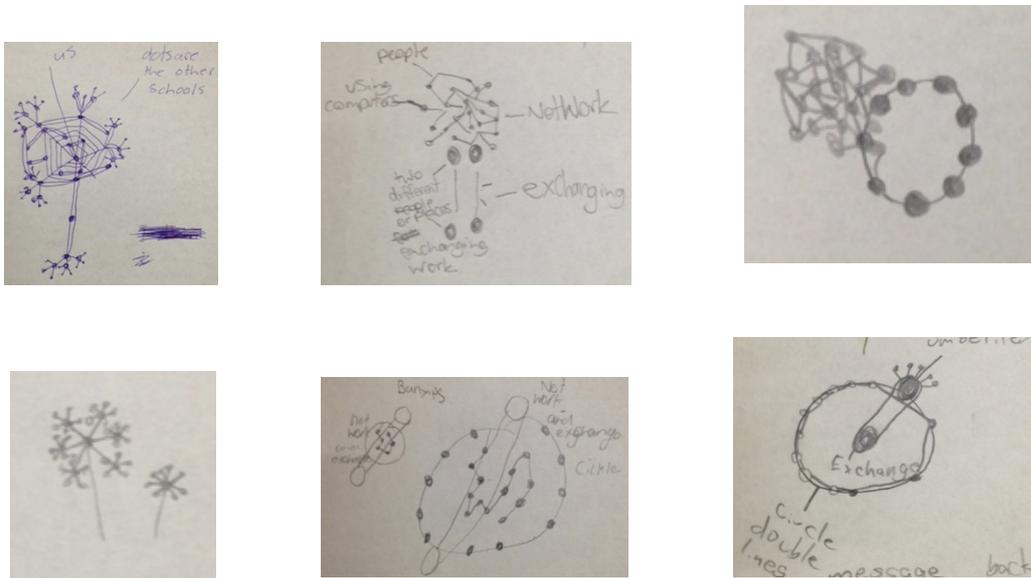
Harry: "If we were making it we could easily make it because we'd know what we were making. If you're waiting to follow a group's instructions, we can't make it, we don't have a clue what it looks like. And it could end up nothing like it."

Jon: "You have to follow the instructions."

The children speak of following instructions but not always in order. I hear echoes of the speaking heard in the previous project group. The approach the children take when working is a result of personal preference mixed with the requirements of the task, sometimes harder, sometimes softer. The green cards are our last focus.



The children, as those before them have done, gather paper, pencils and pens. The children's chatter is noisy as they set to speaking their thinking graphically.



The elements that they speak with include umbellifers, circles, exchanges and networks.

I hear web projects spoken of as sophisticated things that are comprised of people, communication and common tasks. The umbellifer describes a particular group of children within a circle or network centred on a common focus. The communication within this project is spoken of in terms of an exchange. These drawings speak of being in relationship with a web project, and the character that anchors it, and hint of proximity—of a proximal relationship between the self and the project.

The conversation ends.

The children move away from my-pack-of-cards, and activity-type cards.



I sit and smile. I have enabled the children's voices to be heard.

So much speaking about what I wanted to hear of.

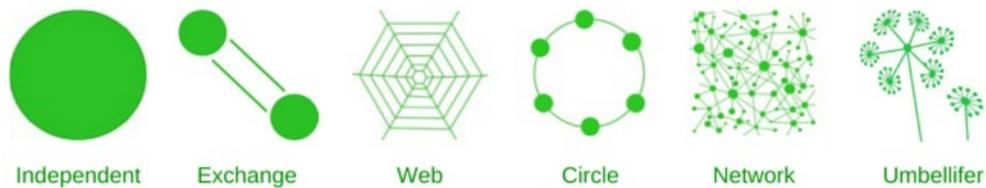
Before the creation of my-pack-of-cards there was speaking, but not the kind of speaking that I was pulled into, or could easily make sense of.

My cards are a quest-object interlaced with enchanting magic—the magic to pull me into children's inner world as outlander and bare witness to their experience, record it and interpret it.

Chapter 7 — Experiences of Web Projects

A pattern is something that has repeating elements. In this thesis pattern is experience, observation, phrase or behaviour, which occurs repeatedly in some way. The patterns that I identify within the web project conversation-dialogues come from interpreting my lived experience as researcher, perceiving them as they arise from the children's speaking. In this chapter the patterns display recurring visualisations, interactions, activities, approaches and proximities.

Visualisation



As we have seen in the previous chapter, the children collectively speak of their web project experience as circle, exchange and umbellifer, sometimes separately, at other times running parallel, sometimes as combination. The children most often speak with the exchange element, followed by the umbellifer and circle elements.

The visualisations the younger children speak incorporate the character or being (Bunyips) around which their web project is built. The older children's visualisations are more diagrammatic and conceptual, and interlace and enmesh the visualisation elements within my-pack-of-cards. Whilst drawing, the older children pause a great deal and their visualisations come into being whilst conversing. The younger children tend to draw first and talk later.

I believe that the omission of the character in the older children’s visualisations of their web project experience is evidence of a growing distance in proximity from the character or being they build in their project. The intimacy of the older children’s web project experience shows itself differently in their visualisations, it speaks in the complexity of their drawings. I look at all the drawings (the graphical speaking) and imagine.

I conjure a new graphic, a new imagining of what the children are speaking as they work to describe their visualisations of web projects’ structure. The visualisation I render combines the three elements most often spoken – exchange, circle and umbellifer. I speak using graphic language.

I pause and draw.

On my page is an elegant visualisation of how web projects in this quest narrative are spoken of by the children (Figure 63). I choose the word ‘elegant’ deliberately because of the elegance—ingenuity and simplicity of the children’s speaking. This is one possible interpretation amongst many, this one feels right within this quest. With this graphic another card will be made and added to my-pack-of-cards.

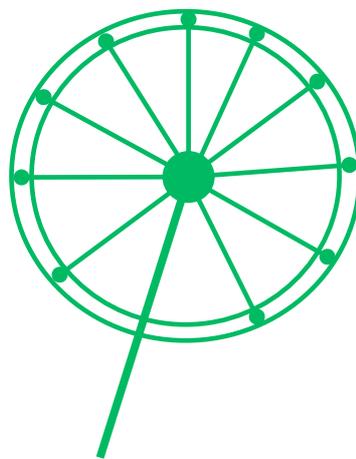
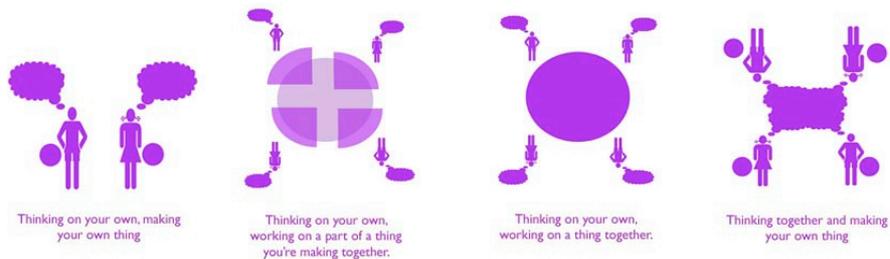


Figure 63. A new visualisation and speaking of how web projects work

Interaction



As a group, the children shared that the possible style of interaction most often likely to occur in a web project is thinking on your own, working on a part of a thing you're making together. This suggests then, (using the conversation-dialogue framework in this thesis) that *The Monsters Project*, *The Bunyips Project* and *The Flat Stanley Project* can all be described as collaborative web projects.

Each project is an example of thinking on your own, working on a part of a thing you're making together. The children also speak of other types of interaction depending on the project phase or tasks they are undertaking. According to the children the three web projects incorporate mutual dependence in their design and rely on all participating groups to do their bit.



Activity



The yellow cards are an area of animated dialogue, characterised by a great deal of motion and movement. The disclosures the children make speak of motion when one is engaged in an activity. In a conversation not rendered here and recorded in my scrapbook as an anonymous snippet, work, game and play are described in the following way,

Work is not the opposite of play, but they are related but they are very different – they are cousins, as are games in an activity family tree.

As a collective, the children decided that work and play are not opposites, and games are between them somehow. They develop a community of understanding around web projects that speaks of web projects as more like work than play, sitting somewhere between work and a game and could be called a work game, and they are more like a game than play – but you can play with and through them.

The children lean towards a linear representation of work, game and play, emphasising that work and play are not opposites. They also ascribe traits to each activity type (Table 1). I recall a child's words spoken earlier, "work is not opposite to play, but they are very different, they are cousins, as are games, in an activity family" (Joscelyne-Loane, 2009-2015b, p.80).

Table 1. *The traits the children ascribed to work, game and play*

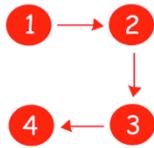
<i>Work</i>	<i>Game</i>	<i>Play</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Serious</i> • <i>Sometimes fun</i> • <i>Set by teachers or a grown up</i> • <i>Concentrate</i> • <i>Lots of different types of thinking at once</i> • <i>Can be interesting</i> • <i>Can be difficult and perplexing</i> • <i>Imposed</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A clear, beginning, middle and end</i> • <i>Need equipment</i> • <i>Has rules</i> • <i>There is a boss, umpire or coach</i> • <i>Invited or invite people to join in</i> • <i>If someone doesn't play it properly it gets wrecked</i> • <i>It ends, there is a clear goal or time limit</i> • <i>Can be hard and fun</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Self-determination</i> • <i>Autonomy</i> • <i>You can pretend</i> • <i>Not competitive</i> • <i>Changes all the time</i> • <i>Wild imagination</i> • <i>Creative</i> • <i>Fun</i> • <i>You set the rules yourself or with your friends and they can change when you want</i> • <i>Ends when you decide</i>

I share these words from the children as a prelude for the conversation to come and which unfolds from this anchor point. As spoken earlier, I find a linear relational representation of the ideas of work, game and play problematic, as it becomes very difficult to move seamlessly between the spaces of work, game and play without passing through another. As this quest progresses and I listen intently to the children, I imagine work, game and play as dimensions of being, that may possibly intersect in some way, and that the place of intersection is a zone of enchantment. I am pulled strongly towards and into the children's speaking of work, game and play. There is more to be spoken of here. I sense that this conversation-dialogue of activity which is tinted yellow, is closely related to the navy and turquoise tinted conversation of proximity, subject, object, focus and experience, and that the two, when entwined, offer a way of explaining teacher and learner engagement that is a deep and profound experiential meeting.

Approach



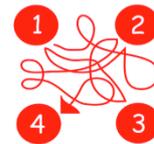
Knowing what you have to end up with and just letting it unfold.



Following the instructions in order.



Just seeing what happens.



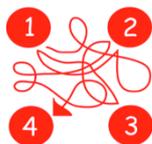
Following the instructions but not always in order.

The red card conversation-dialogues suggest that there is a group approach tied to the norms of the group, and to the specific web project task being worked on. During these occasions the mastery style approach is harder, more rigid and adheres to the order tasks are completed in, and the way they are completed. As well, there are elements of flexibility present during group work, which means that the group's way of working is softer than a hard approach. I settle on referring to the style mastery approach during group work as harder. I think of labels to name what I am hearing in the conversation-dialogues. I hear the children speak of approaches to tasks as very hard, hard, harder, softer, soft and very soft.

The children disclose that individually there is an approach, which is unique to them and is a mix of hard and soft elements depending on the activity being undertaken. Most often the children speak of their approach whilst participating in the three focus web projects as knowing what you have to end up with and just letting it unfold and following the instructions but not always in order.



Knowing what you have to end up with and just letting it unfold.



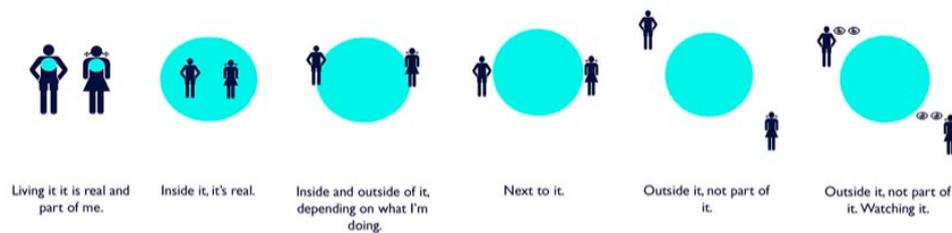
Following the instructions but not always in order.

The children’s preferred approach in web projects is softer, not soft, or hard—just softer rather than harder.

I wonder.

I have an inkling that the proximity the children experience to a object, subject, focus and experience may influence one’s approach to a task. This is an inquiry for another time, as is beyond the scope of this thesis. My curiosity is piqued though.

Proximity



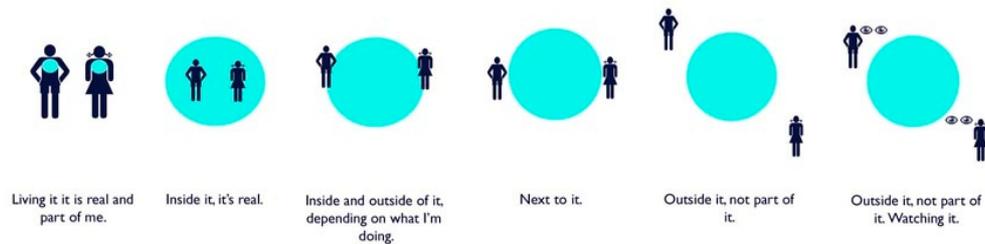
The children like speaking about how into it (their web project) they are with the navy and turquoise cards. I hear that a sense of proximity and being able to speak about it is a golden key to unlocking the pull that web projects appear to have on the children.

It also becomes apparent when I analyse the pronouns used to refer to Flat Stanley, the monsters and the Bunyips in the conversation-dialogues. The pronouns mirror the cards the children choose. Combining the use of pronouns with the cards chosen makes visible the proximal relationship the children feel with the character (monster, Bunyip, Flat Stanley) in their project.

The children’s use of a character name, and the pronouns they use show an intimate relationship with the project. When children use the pronoun “it” to refer to the web project character, they are usually making visible a sense of distance to the being, or they are referring to the project as work. More often than not the children give the web project characters life by referring to them by name, he, she, they and them or assign

them a gender – girl, boy. The children’s conversation with the navy and turquoise cards speaks of proximity—of being in relationship with the characters in the web projects they participate in.

An alignment of pronouns to the navy and turquoise cards as a possible expression of proximity unfolds in the following way (Figure 64) –



<p><i>“I say he (she) when imagining</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>and playing with</i></p> <p><i>him (web project character).”</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>it</i></p>
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Figure 64. An imagining of pronoun use as an indicator of proximity

I feel a sense of excitement

I think and imagine. I wonder.

Could an intersection of work, game and play be a place where intimacy with an object, , subject, focus or experience becomes a space of enchantment?

Could web projects hold children’s attention because they offer conditions that allow the children to become intimate with the web projects and then move through dimensions of work, game and play seamlessly?

The children speak of being in relationship with their web project and its character through their use of pronouns (Table 2). The closer and more intimate their proximity

to the web project, and web project character, the more likely the children are to use the name of their monster, Bunyip or Flat Stanley. The use of the pronouns speaks of a relational proximity that is less intimate and suggests growing distance.

Table 2. *Pronouns and names as indicators of being in proximity to a web project*

	Pronouns and names used to refer to web project						
The groups of children participating in the web projects	he, him a boy	she her a girl	it	they them	The Bunyip, Bunyips, Vlad, Gwyneth	Flat Stanley	The monsters
<i>The Bunyips Project</i> Younger children (8 children) (Prep-Grade 1)	6	1	5	5	10		
<i>The Bunyips Project</i> Older children (7 children) (Grade 4-5)			37		60		
<i>The Monsters Project</i> Older children (9 children) (Grade 4-5)			10				11
<i>The Flat Stanley Project</i> Older children (12 children) (Grade 4-5)	17		77	2		105	
Totals	23	1	129	7	70	105	11

The children's talk indicates a proximal relationship that is more distant as they get older. The younger web project children speak the most intimate conversations. There is intimacy amongst the older children, but it is not as close or intimate in comparison to the speaking of the younger children.

The number of children in each group is taken from the scribed conversations, and does not represent the total number of children who participated. Some children chose not to talk of their web project experience.

The older 'Bunyipping' children do not use intimate pronouns (he, she, him, her) they tend to call their Bunyip, the Bunyip, or Bunyips, referring to the project rather than the character at their web project's heart. They speak of being in relation with the project rather than with the character that their web project is anchored to.

The Flat Stanley Project participants speak with personal pronouns, and the project/character name, Flat Stanley, suggesting that they are in relationship with the web project character and the web project.

The speaking captured in this table, and the speaking that uses the turquoise and navy cards makes visible a relationship between the children and the object-subject-focus-experience of their learning. The cards appear to make speaking of this relationship easier, and enable the children to pull me into their thinking within as an outlander.

There is more that I can speak of in so many areas of these enthralling, blue-hued conversations-dialogues. What I present here is my understanding at this time. I am sure every time I read my scrapbook I will find more to interpret and speak of regarding patterns and insights. In this moment, I have one pressing thread of interpretation I am pulled into by the children's speaking. It centres on my imaginings of work, game and play as dimensions that intersect and what that space of intersection may speak of when viewed through a blue tintured lens.

And so this quest stage closes, and the challenge of how to enable speaking about a web project experience is achieved. I have in the process collected new quest objects and insights that will assist me as I journey forward.

The challenge now is to listen more deeply to the work, game and play (yellow) conversations, and proximity (navy and turquoise) conversations. I turn back to my

scrapbook, singling out these conversations and intentionally listening to them in a different way. I hang my mirrors up at different angles (Woolf, 1942/1970, p. 195). I wonder how I will navigate all the words that I hear and make meaning from them in a manner that honours the children's speaking of web projects.

How will I find my way through the quest landscape of words unfolding before me?

This is my next quest challenge.

Chapter 8 — *Navigating with a Golden Compass*

When he unfolded the cloth, Lyra saw something like a large watch or a small clock: a thick disc of brass and crystal. It might have been a compass or something of the sort.

“What is it?” she said.

“an alethiometer. one of only six that were ever made. Lyra, I urge you again: keep it private. It would be better if Mrs. Coulter didn’t know about it. Your uncle.”

“But what does it do?”

“It tells you the truth. As for how to read it, you’ll have to learn by yourself. Now go – getting lighter – hurry back to your room before anyone sees you.” (Pullman, 2007, p. 72)

My quest explores the phenomena of web projects and weaves possible interpretations of why they are enchanting into narratives of understandings. At this stage of my quest, I’m drawn into Philip Pullman’s (2007) *Northern Lights*, and find myself with the character Lyra, on the edge of new perception, insight and understanding. I am holding an alethiometer and I eagerly need to learn to read it to divine my way forward to fulfil my quest’s purposes. Web projects enchant me and draw me into their thrall with their possible inner life-worlds that move between work, game and play, and now I recognise their power to bring things—object, subject, focus and experience into proximity, into nearness in space, time and relationship.

I imagine.

I wonder. I draw.

I think of the three web projects as points on an alethiometer. I imagine the act of “being in” work, game and play as engagement that can be pinpointed on the

alethiometer—as “being” in one area or another, in a certain mode of being, or in a sedimented dimension of experience. .

Lyra’s alethiometer hovers before me. Might I be able to use it to traverse a new landscape of understanding? Am I to find that this alethiometer becomes another quest object in my growing collection, and might it act, most importantly, as a metaphor for moral guidance, a compass that has moral purpose situated at its heart for the honouring of the children’s speaking? What possibility does the conjuring of an alethiometer have for this quest?

Alethimeters are said to tell the truth, according to the protagonist, who reveals and gives the alethiometer to Lyra in *The Northern Lights* (Pullman, 2007). By constructing a possible alethiometer for this quest, perhaps a possible hidden truth or truths will be revealed, or I will be re-oriented within this narrative and see new possibilities. Before we move further I find that I want to stretch out, unfold, and shape an understanding of the word alethiometer.

The word alethiometer like so many words that come into being is an invention born of necessity to describe a thing, which does not have a name. In this instance, an imagined thing in a novel conjured and written by Pullman. In one sense this named thing does not have the echoing centuries of meaning that Woolf describes because the arrangement of the word segments is new and the context in which it sits, and lives through is newly imagined and therefore young. However when these word segments are enfolded together to create the word alethiometer there are echoes of the past and voices which must be acknowledged and heard, and which in fact cannot be ignored even though the arrangement of the word segments is new. This word is a child in the world of words, its meaning and history is threaded through with known meanings,

which have been re-combined – tinkered with - to create a new word in an act of *bricolage*, which is rich with history, ideas and nuance. In my mind this means there is the possibility of boundlessness as well as limitation in this word, and my interpretation enfolds this quest’s lived experience into its folds, and weaves imaginative possibility through it and in doing so, possibly provides scope for re-imagining new shades of meaning.

In a BBC Radio 4 web chat Pullman shares that his “source for the alethiometer was partly emblem books of the Renaissance and partly the memory theatre as described in a wonderful book by Frances Yates called *The Art of Memory*” (BBC Radio 4, 2014). In this web chat he goes on to share that he made up many words and names in the *His Dark Materials* trilogy from the Nordic languages and cites “*panserbjørne*” as an example, “another word I made up from the Nordic languages the *bjørne* part is bear, and *panser* means armour. So putting the two bits together, it was easy to make the word I have now.”

The name alethiometer is made from two words *alētheia* and meter. *Alētheia* is from Greek and means truth and truthfulness, deriving from *alethes* (true), and in its most literal interpretation means not concealing. The meaning of *alethes* is comes from *a*, meaning not, and *lethe* meaning, forgetfulness, oblivion. It is also referred to in this source as a feminine proper name (Harper, 2001 - 2014). *The Free Dictionary* (Farlex, 2015) describes *Aletheia* as an ancient Greek personification of truth.

The word, meter, has several meanings in the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (2007) and for this work there are two I wish to explore, first, meter as “an instrument for automatically measuring or indicating the quantity, degree, or rate of something,” second, meter can indicate “a person who measures, a measurer” (p. 1766). Such

meanings hold possibilities for unconcealing ideas and re-imaginings. Both hold possibilities for conceiving the alethiometer as an instrument for evaluating what happens in the humanly lived experience. The alethiometer can hold measure, degree and personality.

In the most literal terms then the alethiometer in *His Dark Materials* trilogy is a truth measurer. I draw **an** alethiometer from **the** alethiometer of Pullman's creation. As *bricoleur*, I re-imagine Pullman's idea, and re-imagine an interpretation which transforms his alethiometer it into an alethiometer crafted and tinkered with to be used as a truth measurer for the quest I am living.

“It was very like a clock or compass...”

(Pullman, 2007, p. 77)

My first rendering of an alethiometer is simple (Figure 65). It addresses one dimension of this quest that of activity - work, game and play.



Figure 65. *Alethiometer One*

This is an attempt to make sense of the tensions and possible truths, which are bound within the work, game, play dimension of the children's speaking.

This is, in simple terms, an attempt to measure the degree of work, game and play that a holder of an alethiometer may experience, and therefore gathers evidence about how people, particularly children, experience being in work, game and play. The alethiometer's hands spin, whirl and click.

One of this alethiometer's three hands attempts to show that movement is possible between the domains of work, game and play. It spins and whirs, bouncing between each domain showing where the holder of this alethiometer is situated at any given moment. Another hand is included to measure the length of time spent in each domain. The other hand points to specific symbols telling this alethiometer holder of the particular type of activity within each domain they are in.

The symbols are those found on the yellow conversation cards in my-pack-of-cards.

I pause.

I read this alethiometer in another way.

The three hands are representative of the three domains (work, game and play), and I imagine that they move as the degree of work game and play is revealed to the holder. The hands spin upon the energy each type of activity generates. I imagine them spinning, locking and ticking over different symbols, or on one symbol depending on the holder of this alethiometer.

I imagine this alethiometer being held by a child as they move through a web project experience and the dials and needles spin, pause, vibrate and point in constant motion.

Imagining this measuring device affirms the possibility of re-imagining work, game and play as domains that intersect, and reasserts an image in my minds eye of swinging through the domains in a circular manner or as some kind of attractor.

I pause.

This is one rendering, my first.

I reach for my pencils.

I draw a second alethiometer on my page and my pencil attempts to create a truth meter that addresses the worlds and portals which have emerged so far in this quest narrative of the web project experience. The worlds are the lived world (a world outwith), stepping through and a world beyond. This is a change to how I have used the phrase ‘a world within’ up until now. I’m not sure where this has come from, but it has arrived on my page, so I let it sit and I wonder upon it.

I draw and tinker with this possible alethiometer. This re-imagining of an alethiometer unconceals in a different way the importance of imagination and what it may bring to our lived experience.

The lived world is the world we exist in as a being, and which we experience through sensation. A world of routine, patterns, seasons and traditions, which we can mould but which is steeped in the history and patterns of human existence.

The world within and beyond, as I imagine them are worlds we bring into being in conjunction with the lived world. They are worlds that are not always revealed or unconcealed, and they are situated within the mind or one’s cyber life. I sense that the web project experiences the children and I speak are an un-concealing of life-worlds that would otherwise remain concealed. The speaking of our web project experiences with the card sets allow the children’s worlds within (their imagined world) and beyond (their cyber world) it to appear in the living world for a time. My addition of the word ‘beyond’ into the phrase “the world within and beyond”, also alludes to, and recognises the cyber world, and the world beyond a lived experience.

This alethiometer (Figure 66) is a useful imagining and permits a kind of re-orientation.

I look intently at the image before me.

I pause.

I feel unhappy with this rendering.

I act upon the urge to shape and re-shape my alethiometer until I am happy with it and there seems rightness about it.

This second alethiometer still does not capture the complexity and depth which I request—it lacks that elusive essence of joyful emotion that wells up when our minds feel and know that we have expressed an idea in a form that sings true.



Figure 66. Alethiometer Two

Deflation is not an enjoyable emotion to feel, it can stifle creativity or motivate it. And so I return to my questing knight sensibility, I wield my pencils again.

My knightly tools and weapons are not armour and swords but colour and graphite. I pause and allow myself to step through into my world within—into the boundlessness of being.

In my mind I arrange and rearrange the elements and concepts I have collected in my imaginings, and I look over the array of tangible quest objects I have come to have—my collection of motifs and symbols, my-pack-of-cards and my drawings. I begin to organise and re-organise the collection of quest treasures found whilst navigating through this quest with an alethiometer, which includes domains and dimensions I have come to comprehend—the real and the imagined, the lived world and the world which is within and beyond. Another possible alethiometer surfaces on my page.

This one feels, as an alethiometer should, beautiful yet complex, tangible yet ephemeral, solid yet fleeting. This alethiometer has an aura of alchemy radiating from it as it asserts itself on my page.

I have captured a possible re-imagining that has a quality of rightness and feels worthy of my quest.

My third alethiometer's incarnation is a multi-dial, multi-handed, multi-domain imagining. This drawing is most similar to John Lawrence's (2007) exquisite woodcut of Pullman's alethiometer (Figure 67). Lawrence's *Northern Lights* woodcuts grace the covers of Pullman's (2007) editions of the *His Dark Materials* that I have on my bookshelf.

Lawrence's woodcut, *Northern Lights*, has situated at its centre his rendering of Pullman's alethiometer. There are landscapes and objects engraved around the alethiometer, an Oxford dome, a hot air balloon, a zeppelin and landscapes beyond Lyra's Oxford that hint of the land in the North. The wood cut links the alethiometer to

the life-worlds and landscapes within Pullman's narrative. Lawrence's woodcut speaks to me of the *Northern Lights* landscapes and objects and their ability to pull me into Pullman's world within. I imagine the alethiometer in the woodcut as bridging Lyra's world within and her life-world outwith—an object that at times bridges worlds, at other times acts as a portal to understanding and on yet other occasions, appears to sit betwixt and between the landscapes and life-worlds Pullman creates, and Lawrence makes visible.

An alethiometer in my quest has similar mantles to bear. At times it bridges worlds within and worlds outwith, it acts as a portal that illuminates perception and at other moments it lies suspended betwixt and between the explicable and that which is difficult to make sense of until time is taken to navigate through it with an alethiometer.



Figure 67. Pullman's alethiometer, a woodcut print by John Lawrence (2007), called Northern Lights

My third alethiometer (Figure 68) has two sets of dials, hands and delicate whirled wire details inspired by Lawrence's woodcut. These whirl, spin and click with the

energy of the dimensions they describe. The hands tick and pause, they rest and then take off again.

The outer ring of symbols contains the sets of conversation card motifs on a background colour to match the colour the motifs are rendered in on the cards. The inner dial shows imagery representing the ideas of quest scapes and portals, as well as lived experience (a world outwith). There are images included to represent some of the portals and objects found in the children’s literature. In the literature these are the objects that enable “stepping through”, or a transition to another world, and possibly could act as a portal to an individual’s world within and beyond. This new act of bringing forth something complex into meaning is a way to re-orient myself—and navigate through and within this quest.

I pause.

I silently sit in wonder.



Figure 68. Alethiometer Three

I listen to the graphics speak.

I come to see my alethiometer as representative of me working through my own thinking, actively interpreting, and being in relationship with my object-subject-focus-experience of web projects.

I am in the zone, and magic is happening.

I reflect.

This alethiometer is not quite as accurate in its form as I had intended. Its image does not match what I am thinking. I cannot put my finger on why, or name what perhaps is missing.

Running my finger-tips along and around my collection of young people's literature, flicking the pages and disappearing into the worlds between the book covers piques my curiosity. For this quest I have until now omitted the most important symbols—the mystical and fictional characters that breathe life into each web project. By adding Flat Stanley, a monster and a Bunyip to the dial that represents 'a world within and beyond' a sense of completeness settles into and through my being.

Gazing at this drawing, which happily rests on my desk, questions form and more possibilities are given to me.

In the web projects are Flat Stanley, the monster and the Bunyip, characters *or* portals, or characters *and* portals?

Should they bridge the two worlds and be in the portal section of the alethiometer?

Should they be in both the portal section and the world within and beyond section?

Is it possible that all these objects and characters are thresholds?

Are they better described as Gert Biesta (2012) describes as interruptions?

Pausing for a moment as I write, Martin Heidegger's (2002) words from his essay *The Origin of the Work of Art* elbow their way into my consciousness.

These drawings of mine are not works of art, they are snippets of art, but they are art, and I can't help thinking of my alethimeters as possible thresholds or interruptions, which open worlds. As Heidegger (2002) writes, "By the opening of a world, all things gain their lingering and hastening, their distance and proximity, their breadth and their limits" (p. 23). I become ready to suggest that the alethimeters I have drawn are things that open up worlds of possibility, things that hold attention and silence, things that give sensations of nearness and distance, slowness and quickness, elasticity of time in its past, present and future essences.

I come to think of my alethimeters as acts of visual "supposal", as Lewis (1982) writes, "Every supposal is an ideal experiment: an experiment done with ideas because you can't do it any other way. And the function of an experiment is to teach us about the things we experiment on" (p. 23). So I experiment hanging of mirrors at different angles (Woolf, 1942/1970, p. 195)

Biesta's (2012) idea of interruptions seems to sit in companionship with the idea of thresholds and stepping though. Biesta describes an interruption as,

The encounter with something that is other and strange – that is not of one's own making - is an encounter with something that offers resistance (and we could even say that it is an encounter with the very existence of resistance). (p. 42)

Where I focus on drawing the rings of thematic symbols in my alethimeter I bring symbols into an encounter with something other and strange. The symbols might offer

resistance to one another and therefore amplify their power to vibrate and spin, even hurl, the alethiometer's hands.

I think about the symbols, which would be on each dial and map them out, sorting, shuffling and organising, always with the symbols from my-pack-of-cards recurring.

I add three new motifs to the collection - a computer, a doorway with a threshold, and a drawing representing the imagination or at least an imagining of a motif to represent the imagination (Figure 69).

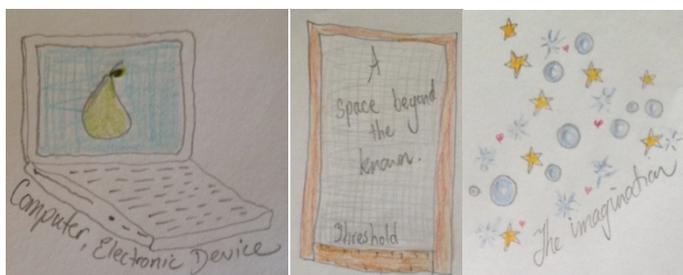


Figure 69. Alethiometer motifs – a computer, a doorway and the imagination

The addition of these are like threads coming together off many spools and all of a sudden spinning together to create a thread of harmonious alchemy. I may change the nuance of the labels I have given the images as I distil my thinking.

As I oscillate through the possibilities that an alethiometer offers as an interpretive tool I consider the word *Alethia* again. Suddenly I comprehend that the drawing I conjure is a representation of me, the personification, the person who meters or measures.

My alethimeters draw me into intimate proximity to my web projects, my living of them, allowing me to be an alethiometer myself. The objects I have drawn represent me as interpreter. My alethimeters are phenomenological ideas that have become artefacts,

objects for interpreting and understanding lived experience. They are “art as a source of lived experience”, van Manen (1990) writes,

Although phenomenologists often use literary sources (poetry, novels, stories, plays, etc.) as case material and as textual resources for phenomenological writing, non-discursive artistic material is also commonly used for phenomenological human science. Of course each artistic medium (painting, sculpture, music, cinematography, etc.) has its own language of expression. Objects of art are visual, tactile, auditory, kinetic texts — texts consisting of not a verbal language but a language nevertheless, and a language with its own grammar. Because artists are involved in giving shape to their lived experience, the products of art are, in a sense, lived experiences transformed into transcended configurations. (p. 74)

He goes on to write,

Just as the poet or the novelist attempts to grasp the essence of some experience in literary form, so the phenomenologist attempts to grasp the essence of some experience in a phenomenological description. A genuine artistic expression is not just representational or imitational of some event in the world. Rather, it transcends the experiential world in an act of reflective existence. An artistic text differs from the text of everyday talking and acting in that it is always arrived at in a reflective mood. In other words, the artist recreates experiences by transcending them. (p. 97)

I pin down fleeting thoughts of my alethimeters and see them as non-discursive artistic material, phenomenological graphic descriptions, objects born out of reflective existence, objects born of transcending—new objects making new thinking possible (Turkle, 2008; Papert & Harel, 1991).

In fantasy and factually, I am become *Alethia* in feminine form, a measurer of truth, and a measurer of possibility.

It is time for me to re-collect those modestly derived artefacts that *Alethia* carries.

Mirrors and Looking Glasses



Mirrors and looking glasses appear and reappear in this quest. A mirror in this quest has different attributes to a looking glass. Though reflective in its physical form, it is also a metaphorical device to talk with and through.

The word ‘mirror’ comes from Vulgar Latin *mīrātōrium*, a derivative of *mīrāre*, to look at, which is closely related to the Latin *mīrāri*, wonder at (Ayto, 1990, p. 350). *The Book of Symbols* adds the idea “to marvel at”, and says that our word ‘mirror’ comes from *mirari*, to wonder or marvel at. There Ami Ronnberg and Kathleen Martin (2010) suggest a link between mirror and looking-glass, and I understand both objects to be related.

The nature of the mirror and its ability to enthrall us is described in this particular book as follows – “The wondrous nature of the mirror is how it draws our imagination into its seeming depths, the sense that beyond the mirror image of our immediate reality

might be seen something entirely different. In Lewis Carroll's famous story, the world of dreams lies 'through the Looking glass'" (p. 590).

A looking glass is made of reflective material, and in this thesis a looking glass suggests looking with and through a reflective tool into a world which is beyond the lived and seen, as well as reflecting the self back onto the self and possibly suggesting a world within that is veiled by the reflection of the physical presentation of the self.

A mirror and a looking glass symbolise acts of seeking different possibility. Both of these objects when hung on different or unusual angles inevitably reveal new perspectives, they unconceal the concealed, or illuminate a thing or idea in a new way (Woolf, 1925/2003, p. 195) thus prompting a different or new imagining, or way of interpreting a thing, experience, pattern, collection, observation, dialogue, image, impression or act of creating. The re-hanging of mirrors happens metaphorically, to disclose ideas that occur and reflect identifiable phenomenological moments which illuminate possibility. The hanging of mirrors is something I do visibly and every time, I shift, I re-orient myself.

In this quest a mirror or looking glass can also be a portal or a threshold to another parallel world, or a world beyond that which we can see and live in - as we see in *Alice Through the Looking Glass*.

Wardrobes



The wardrobe we recognise today is not the original thing that the word ‘wardrobe’ described. Wardrobes were originally a room where clothing was kept. Wardrobes did not shrink to their current more modest form until the 18th Century. The word we know today is derived from the Old Northern French word *wardrobe*. *Wardrobe* literally means *warder*, look after, keep, and *robe* meaning garment.

In this thesis the wardrobe symbol is not limited to the word’s literal meaning, it is inscribed with the properties and history of Lewis’ (2002) wardrobe in *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*. The wardrobe I render in this thesis possesses magical properties like Lewis’. Unlike Lewis’ wardrobe, my wardrobe does not lead to Narnia, it symbolically represents the idea of transitioning. It is a portal to another world. A threshold to step over to another world. Beyond the wardrobe is an imagined world, made with, and inhabited by the familiar and mystical, magical and fantastical. The world beyond the wardrobe is concealed until one steps through and is within it. The world beyond the wardrobe is unknown and unglimped, which is a noticeable difference between the mirror and looking glass threshold and portal, and the wardrobe threshold and portal. The mirror and looking glass both show some of what is within and through them, and are possibly transparent windows into what may be possible.

When scrutinised, the wardrobe of Lewis’ imagining holds within it the surprise of its true nature, and is unreliable as a tool of transition through, as one cannot not always step through—at times the portal is closed. An example of this is when Lucy tries to revisit Narnia with her siblings after her first visit and is unable to show the others the world she has discovered. Unlike the mirror and the looking glass I speak of, the wardrobe in my thesis is not always an open threshold into the other world. I imagine the wardrobe threshold as an appropriate metaphor for when I was in conversation-dialogue with the children before I had my-pack-of-cards. My ability to cross the

threshold into the children's lived experience of web projects was unreliable. When I did I accessed another world, but when I was unable to step through, that other world was unavailable.

As with the other portals and thresholds in this section the world transitioned to can be beyond the known world, or exist within the self, or sit across the known world merging with a world constructed by the self which has elements of the lived and imagined world.

Computers, Electronic Devices



What is a computer or electronic communication device? In one sense a computer or electronic communication device like a tablet or smart phone is a machine with the capability to link into the internet and to send and receive messages, images, signals and the like. I propose another way of thinking about computers and electronic communication devices. From this point I will just call this wide range of ever-changing devices, 'computers'. *The Oxford English Reference Dictionary* (1996) defines computer as “an electronic device for storing and processing data according to instructions given to it in a variable program” and as “a person who computes or make calculations” (p. 298).

In my thinking computers are as the dictionary describes them, they are physical objects and possess physicality in common with mirrors, looking glasses and wardrobes. In this thesis though computers are more than devices for storing and processing data, or a person who makes calculations. Computers have attributes in common with the mirrors, looking glasses and wardrobes. Let me explain. Computers in this thesis can be

seen as thresholds and portals into worlds beyond and worlds within. In this way, they are critical in my quest to understand and pedagogically fulfil the full potential of web projects. They allow and enable the creation of a space in which the Bunyips, monsters and Flat Stanley become alive in worlds, possibility and educational purpose. The computers in this quest connect people to people, people to a world within, and people to a cyber world.

In this story of quest and meaning, unfolding and enfolding, computers are both a symbol and a thing, portal and threshold—mirror, looking glass and wardrobe in a different guise.

Imaginings



During the Middle Ages, in attempts to discover an elixir of life, that which is gold or golden, alchemy became a form of chemistry and speculative philosophy. It became a method for transmuting base materials into gold. It seems always to have been revered as a magical process that transforms ordinary things into things of “true merit” (Farlex, 2015). The process of imagining is alchemically magical and this quest embraces its miracle to traverse within, through and across the lived experience of web projects. Imagining, as one of *Alethia's* artefacts, is a form of philosophical speculation, thought, observation, sensation and wondering woven through with creativity, using her and her children-students’ “mental faculty [for] forming images or concepts of external objects, not present to the senses” and their “ability of mind to be creative or resourceful” (Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 705)

I practice imagining within spaces which are most often accessed by stepping through a threshold or door or portal, or conjuring up an object which occupies an ability to transport, even teleport, or motivating an interruption to a lived and familiar experience in some way. In this thesis the alethiometer symbol that depicts imagining honours its place in the world of web projects and gives weight to its importance in creating and appealing to what might be possible.

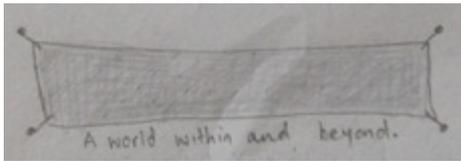
Doorways and Thresholds



Doorways and thresholds are common in narrative writings as devices that enable the telling of stories where entry is gained into other worlds where time seems distorted, and magic and mythical beings inhabit fantastic landscapes. A symbol to represent a doorway or threshold is included on my alethiometer as another way of explaining the experience of stepping through or accessing an imagined space, world within or a cyber space.

In some instances this imagined space remains unrevealed, in others it is divulged. A number of literary works are quest companions in my narrative, chosen because they poignantly assist me to be whimsical in imagining doorways and thresholds that lead to spaces of understanding enthrallment when an outlander such as me and the outlanders such as the children enter new worlds of space and time.

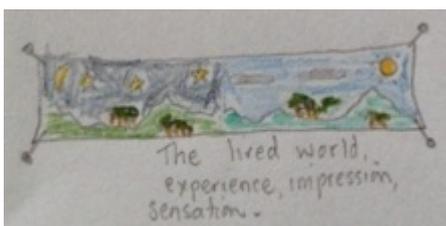
A World Within — A Gauzy Veil



The symbol on my alethiometer, which represents a world within and beyond, is an image of a silvery gauze veil. I have been toying with the words ‘a world within and beyond’ for quite some time. I come to realise that this phrase is wielded with difficulty. If I continue to add ‘a world beyond’ to the phrase I become unclear of my meaning, I confuse. I return to my original phrase, ‘a world within’. The image then, of a gauzy veil represents a world within, something that can be light and transparent.

The image of the veil symbolises and acknowledges that a world within our being might be hidden and concealed, but sometimes only by a veil of gauze. It might only be seen and experienced if it is unconcealed in some deliberate or uncanny way. In this thesis the world within is as important as one’s lived experience outwith. This quest attempts to unconceal, to unveil the experiences of the children that are situated within them, experienced but not always visibly or verbally explained whilst they participate in web projects. Within this thesis, my-pack-of-cards are meant for making a world within visible, the cards pull me, the outlander, into the children’s inner worlds. In another way, pedagogically, with my-pack-of-cards, I might pull the children’s world within outwith, making it visible and, enabling it to be shared.

The Lived World, a World Outwith



My alethiometer motif for the lived world, a world outwith, portrays a world, which is tangible and experienced through touch, sound, taste, vision and smell. The motif includes day and night, landforms and plants, and echoes the types of imagery found in very old documents and maps.

In this quest the lived world is one dimension of experience, which is named, described and lived through the voices and stories of the children in this work. It is possible to say that the lived world is usually visible, that it is not concealed nor does it require revealing. It is the world we observe, experience with our senses and live in, daily. It is so natural to live in this world that we might not even notice our living in it. Sokolowski reminds me of this when he writes, “‘The world’ is not an astronomical concept; it is a concept related to our immediate experience. The world is the ultimate setting for ourselves and for all the things we experience. The world is the concrete and actual whole for experience” (2000, p. 44).

Monsters, Bunyips, Flat Stanley



Mystical beings and fictional characters are symbols with which to orient oneself within a particular web project like compass points. These characters and beings—monsters, Bunyips and Flat Stanley—suggest a promise of magic and enthrallment within web projects. The three by their presence suggest, allow, and in fact demand, participants live across and betwixt and between the lived world (a world outwith) and the world within.

The monster, Bunyip and Flat Stanley symbols, are necessary in my alethiometer. If I were to create a generic version of my alethiometer I wonder about the interpretation that the stars might mean for other types of web projects that other teachers and children might participate in. Other users might divine different characters for the stars. Might I be able, as a result of my research, to create a generic alethiometer that might be used to create a web project, with an object-subject-focus-experience anchored in teaching and learning—one that might, for instance, be adopted and adapted to teaching and learning in areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science, history, geography, visual art, performing art or personal interest investigation.

I am pulled up short.

My alethiometer is not right after all.

I mould, and re-mould in my mind.

I nail down the thought that is flitting about.

I realise I need to re-draw my alethiometer to show my current conceptualisation of a world within, I need to omit a world beyond from my graphic speaking. Alethiometer number four (Figure 70) is drawn in 0.5 graphite pencil. I draw it larger than the others, and as I finish it I decide not to colour it.

I leave it as a monotone rendering.

My impulse for truth has brought me to this act of making and imagining.

My web-project-quest-narrative alethiometer lies before me.

The outer ring of symbols is taken from my-pack-of-cards and the symbols are drawn in their suits with the suit name inscribed on the outer rim. The inner ring has

three partitions. The motifs within the partitions are comprised of symbols to represent stepping through of thresholds, as well as a world within, and a world outwith.

Cogs, spindles and threads spin and whirl, click and move. There are three hands. One hand points to the portal partition and the needle comes to rest on the symbol that represents the means of travelling within, or it rests on nothing if the holder of the alethiometer is in a world outwith. The second hand points to either a world within or outwith. The third hand points to the symbols from my-pack-of-cards. It measures which conversation thread the alethiometer holder is being in.

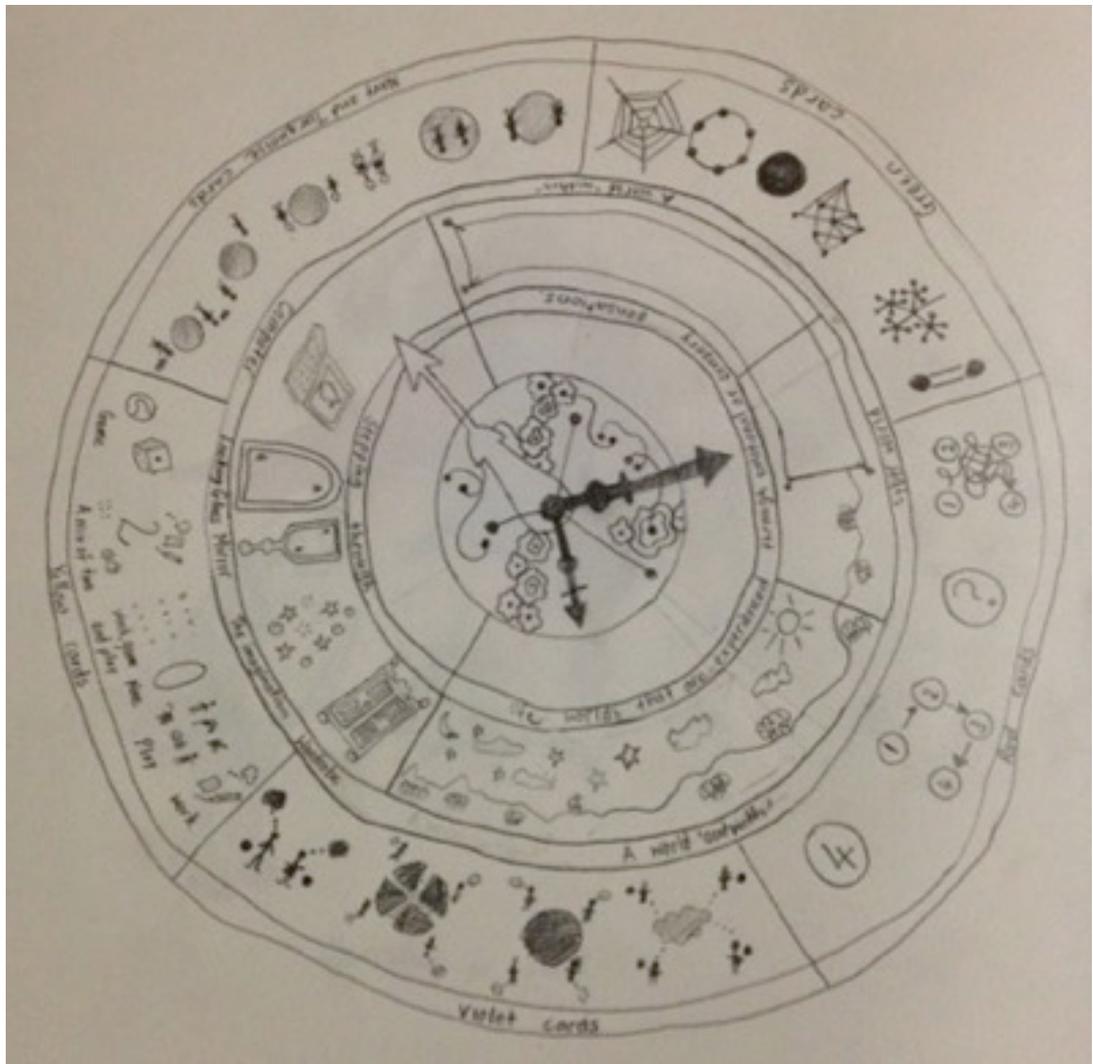


Figure 70. Alethiometer number four

What Truth then is Measured with my Alethiometer?

My alethiometer measures truth in a manner that echoes the definition Heidegger (2002) gives to the word *alethia* – an un-concealing. In this thesis un-concealing is not a state, but rather a happening (pp. 30-31). Heidegger writes, “Beauty is one way in which truth as un-concealment comes into presence” (p. 32). With these thoughts in mind, I pause.

What truth then is measured with and by my possible alethiometer as I navigate through this complex, layered quest?

I measure the un-concealing of possibility, prompting connections between, with and through knowing. Here in this moment of being, knowing is, as Heidegger describes, “knowing means having seen,” and I add—having felt and experienced through the senses.

It takes me time to learn how to read my alethiometer. Like Lyra with her alethiometer in the *Northern Lights* (Pullman, 2007), I need to study mine, and use it to ask questions and seek possibility as I enact and live my impulse for truth as un-concealing and art. My alethiometer measures un-concealing, and sensations of being in relationship with an experience of web projects spoken of by the children. It measures my impulse towards truth (my *Alethia*), and of experiencing and interpreting phenomena in an art-poetry-living anchored through and with web projects.

I as Alethia, and my Blue Pear.

Alethia as truth is a noble idea, and could be constricted by the traditions and definitions through the ages bound up in measuring or metering rightness or wrongness. What rings true? Sokolowski suggests that we always lean towards the truth this way.

Evidencing veracity, that which speaks truthfulness, may be better than trying to prove the facticity of right or wrong (Sokolowski, 2008, p.20). I return to my original research question.

What is a web project?

I pause.

I unfold my current idea of truth, stretch it out and mould it, re-imagining it. Heidegger (2002) writes, “truth means the essence of what is true. We will think it from out of the memory of the word used by the Greeks. “*Ἀλήθεια* (*alethia*) means the un-concealment of beings” (p. 28).

In this quest *Alethia* is my impulse toward truth and the un-concealing of things and beings. The works of art my quest creates (my-pack-of-cards, and the set of activity-type cards created as part of this quest), might, following Heidegger, be said to un-conceal my narrative as itself a work of art. Heidegger (2002) says, “Art is, then, a becoming and happening of truth...all art,...is, in essence, poetry” (p. 44).

The notion of un-concealment seems akin to that of revelation. Lawn (2006) refers to Gadamer’s truth as “revelation, what is opened up in the encounter between the familiar and the unfamiliar” (p. 62).

Silence.

In the stillness of silence, I come into seeing, that my quest narrative is revelation, an opening up of an “encounter between the familiar and unfamiliar” —between the world within, the world outwith and the cyber world. It is a narrative of *poesis*, a bringing of something into being, that enacts my impulse to reveal truth with poetic sensitivity.

Gadamer (1975/2006) in *Truth and Method* speaks of play in terms of movement. I recognise this. He speaks of a movement to and fro, a backwards and forwards movement (p. 104). I agree with his observation of movement but am not so sure if this type of movement, one with a back and forth nature, best describes what the sense of motion children speak of in their experience of play (and I extend play to include work and game) in web projects.

I sit on this for now.

I “moodle” (Ueland, 2013)

I recall Dewey (2005) and his *Art as Experience*. He joins my group of “writer friends” (Conle, 2000, p. 210). Dewey says, “only imaginative vision elicits the possibilities that are interwoven within the texture of the actual” (p. 360). He says, “Imagination is the chief instrument of the good” (p. 362) and, he writes of an aesthetic way of being—“because the artist operates adventurously he opens new fields of experience and discloses new aspects and qualities in familiar scenes and objects” (p. 150).

These words resonate with me.

I live adventurously within my quest-life-world of web projects.

I reach for my copy of *Dewey and Eros. Wisdom and Desire in the Art of Teaching*, by Jim Garrison (2010).

Garrison’s words speak of *poesis* in a way I understand and his writing brings me to deeper understanding of working as poet,

...‘there is more than one kind of poetry in the true sense of the word — that is to say, calling something into existence that was not there before, so that every kind of artistic creation [*poiesis*] is

poetry, and every artist is a poet'(Symposium, 205b)...*Poesis* for the ancient Greeks meant productive science, art, or making. Creation, 'calling something into existence,' or simply making meaning is poetry.

(2010, p. 8)

Once I moulded a blue pear (Figure71), an object made in response to Garrison's chapter, *Play-Doh, Poetry, and Ethereal Things*.

My bright, ultra-blue pear is an object I brought forth from a lump of clay, Fimo©, in my desire to create, and let an object reveal itself from a lump of moulding clay in an act of *poesis*. My "writer friends" (Conle, 2000, p. 210) whisper and speak, suggest and nudge.

My blue pear makes visible my on-going, intimate reverie on pears and the colour blue, in my world within. I poeticise the fru shape, colours, textures and imagine a multitude of pear variations—variations on a theme. Usually my imagined pears lie collectively behind the gauzy veil that delineates my world within from my world outwith. My lapis lazuli-hued pear now formed and present as an object, sits outwith, and is visible. I am able to hold it and enter into relationship with it in a different manner to the way I am in relationship to it in the privacy given by my gossamer veil. My blue pear symbolises living poetically, and is an example, be it a simple one, of art as object and experience. I recall Turkle in *Falling for Science, Objects in Mind* (2008), "objects do not determine the particular ideas they inspire" (p. 281), these words resonate. Ultra-blue pears, cards, alethiometers and upcoming zones all herald particular ideas, connections and wondering, and each object does not determine the ideas that follow, yet without them the ideas that are un-concealed during this quest would remain

obscured from view, and from coming into being, as in their making connections are made and ideas sparked.



Figure 71. My bright, ultra-blue pear

Thus I come into thinking of this research and meaning making work as living in poetry, as an object, and experience of art, as an expression of *Alethia*, my impulse toward truth. A work inspired by the treasures I collect around me—of the thinking they inspire.

Just as the children personify their web project characters through their graphic speaking, and make visible being in relationship with web projects, my alethiometer makes visible my intimate relationship to this quest as object-subject-focus-experience.

As I conjure and make alethiometers, I show my deeply personal experience and style of interpreting—of living hermeneutically. I pull my reader into my inner world of consciousness as outlander, who moves back to contemplate yet remains in relationship with this work.

I arrive in a place of re-imagining. I feel questions bubble, some welcome, some not.

What does this all mean?

What does my imagining make possible?

Once more I pause.

As I narrate, and give voice to my imagining and thinking, un-concealing and unfolding, playing and creating, I realise that that my simple quest goal, to settle upon meaning, is persistently interrupted by internal, un-anticipated questions and fluttering half thoughts.

Questions are desirable, but not always welcome in a complex landscape. They interrupt our constructions be they tangible, metaphorical, kinaesthetic, abstract or emotional. Biesta (2012) speaks of teaching as always being “an interruption, of some kind”, or, as he cites Emmanuel Levinas (1969), as “something that comes from the outside or the ‘exterior’” (p. 42). Biesta (2012) writes:

The encounter with something that is other and strange – that is not of one’s own making - is an encounter with something that offers resistance (and we could even say that it is an encounter with the very existence of resistance). (p. 42)

I come to understand that Lyra’s quest in *Northern Lights* is one of continual interruption, as is my web project quest. Lyra and I are forced to make sense of the things we observe, experience and hear. We both journey through, and solve challenges which are external to us. Lyra and I both have an object which orients and re-orientes our journeying—our alethiometers. Our alethiometers prompt us to ask questions that cause interruption to our sense of, and impulse to arrive in truth.

In this moment I journey into understanding of, and into relationship with my “writer friends” (Conle, 2000, p. 210) and the literature woven through this thesis. They are “like a favourite aunt who brightens my scholarly life with unexpected questions” (Nicolson, 2000, p. 78)—in my case like many favourite aunts and uncles. My “writer

friends” (Conle, 2000, p. 210) friends are guides, illuminators and regular interrupters of my thinking. The same can be said for the quest objects I create and collect in this quest, they assist me to come into understanding, and they also act as interruptions to my thinking, pushing me forward to make new connections and imagine wildly.

I return to Gadamer (1975/2006). He speaks. I listen. He writes in *Truth and Method*, “the work of art has its true being in the fact that it becomes an experience that changes the person who experiences it” (p. 103). This resonates with me and affirms once more that this quest is a work of art, as the experience of it changes me, I see things differently because of my experience of it.

I recall Gadamer’s notion of transformation, and come into seeing it akin to my object-subject-focus-experience of web projects. Gadamer says, “Transformation means that something is suddenly and as a whole something else, that this other transformed thing that it has become is its true being, in comparison with which its earlier being is nil” (1975/2006, p. 111). I arrive at seeing that I am transforming how I imagine the nexus of work, game and play, and proximity. I prepare to step through another threshold into re-imagining. I hold my alethiometer and prepare to see where it guides me.

Next I recall Le Guin’s (1989) words,

...narration in general, may be seen not as a disguise or falsification of what is given but as an active encounter with the environment by means of posing options and alternatives, and an enlargement of present reality by connecting it to the unverifiable past and the unpredictable future. (pp. 44-45)

The narrative that has unfurled so far is rich, populated by mythical beings, the joyful sound of children speaking and digital alchemy, robust in telling – as yet though, only partially told. Navigating with my golden compass (my alethiometer) I live in phenomenological possibility. My alethiometer pulls me into the next part of this quest journey, an act of supposal (Lewis, 1982, p. 23) and imagining, that embodies my living as *bricoleur* in this quest. My alethiometer leads me into being a poser of options and alternatives, enlarging my present reality by connecting it to past and future within web projects, to imagining and possibility beyond them.

My collection of artefacts, my-pack-of-cards, the set of activity-type cards and an alethiometer lie before me in a box (Figure 72). I think of teachers using them, evaluating them, appreciating them, making visible their phenomenological attitude in their teaching life-worlds. This collection of potentiality has life beyond this work of web projects, especially in times when educational standardisation may stifle educational values and outcomes, like imagining, engagement and creativity, which are harder to quantify. I imagine a box of teaching possibilities (Figure 73), turning a normal day into an extraordinary-everyday, situating teachers in relationship with their students in a different way, a transformed way.



Figure 72. My collection of artefacts



Figure 73. A box of teaching possibilities

Chapter 9 — Moral Complexity and Teacher Present Learning

The rock flickered from shape to shape as he named them, and returned to rock. ‘But that is mere seeming. Illusion fools the beholder’s senses; it makes him see and hear and feel that the thing has changed. But it does not change the thing. To change this rock into a jewel, you must change its true name. And to do that, my son, even to a small scrap of the world is to change the world. It can be done. Indeed it can be done. It is the art of the Master Changer, and you will learn it. But you must not change one thing, one pebble, one grain of sand, until you know what good and evil will follow on the act. The world is in balance, in Equilibrium.

Ursula Le Guin, *A Wizard of Earthsea*, 1983

For me teaching presents many possibilities and because of this it is saturated with moral complexity and entwined with boundless possibility. I am filled with joy at the thought of boundless possibility, though the moral complexity I see and feel in my teaching terrifies me and I often freeze, fight a battle within my personal landscape or find myself in a state of flight—escaping to my inner world. I wish to do good, to make good, to aspire to good. I feel the mantle of teaching to be a heavy responsibility just as the moral complexity of magic is to the characters and beings regularly encountered in the young people’s literature I have shared throughout this thesis. The work that is woven intentionally through this quest stage is a story that I have loved since I studied it at school, *A Wizard of Earthsea* (Le Guin, 1983). I think I hold it dear because it is a quest that does not shy away from moral complexity, imagination or possibility when dealing with that which is noble, or that which is good. *A Wizard of Earthsea* faces imagination and possibility, works through them and does not avoid moral complexity,

rather it embraces it and then revels in the unexpected possibilities, which a personal engagement with the novel's complexities throws up.

Le Guin's tale of wizarding and the land of Earthsea is a quest to put right a wrong, as well as a quest for understanding and awareness of the self within, and the self in the world. The essence of the story is moral, described through a lyrical questing narrative. I believe that the art of this narrative is that it shares an imagining and re-imagining of concepts we are familiar with and present in, which we experience, and within which we grapple in our world.

The concepts of balance, wisdom, responsibility and moral complexity are imagined into a world through a tale filled out to its corners and crevices with moral dimensions which align with those I encounter in my life-world. The landscape of Earthsea enfolds them in magic with its accompanying burden of responsibility. This artfully spun story is of Ged, a young wizard who lets loose a shadow in a moment of youthful pride and arrogance.

In Earthsea, moral wisdom is the navigation point which rules the magic within the land and the actions of those who defend the balance of the land, and which guides those who teach, protect and defend within the land. The mages and archmages are the powerful and wise wizards of Earthsea. *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (2007) defines 'mage' as "a magician; a person of exceptional learning and wisdom" (p. 1672). I like the word 'mage' rather than 'wizard'. These letters strung together make their own magic, mage rolls from my tongue and sounds melodic, perhaps this melody humbly whispers its true name to me, *philo sophos—philo* (p.2184) the Ancient Greek word for loving or having and affinity with, and *sophos*, wise.

For me the word, mage is akin to the word, ‘philosopher’. Perhaps a philosopher mage is one who acts by being mindful of the I and the other they interact with, who is a lover of wisdom, who quests for understanding in landscapes within the self and the self, outwith who navigates by a moral compass, who holds the virtue of imagination dear, and for whom language, be it in words, image or object, is a form of magic, an alchemy in the space of understanding and illumination – that “a-ha” moment.

I use *A Wizard of Earthsea* to help me describe and clarify my web project quest through a voice that is akin to an Apprentice Mage on Earthsea, or in my current realm as Apprentice Philosopher, or perhaps even Apprentice Mage Philosopher. The narrative I write, and the one I use to frame my interpretation of this quest stage—*A Wizard of Earthsea*—speaks to me of true names. For in the realm of Earthsea “‘true names’ wield great power - ‘for magic consists in this, the true naming of a thing’” (Le Guin, p. 59). Kurremkarmerruk, the Master Namer speaks of the power enveloped in the true name of things,

...that which gives us power to work magic, sets the limits of that power. A mage can only control that which is near him, what he can name exactly and wholly. And this is well. If it were not so, the wickedness of the powerful or the folly of the wise would long ago have sought to change what cannot be changed, and Equilibrium would fail. The unbalanced sea would overwhelm the islands where we perilously dwell, and in the old silence all voices and all names would be lost. (Le Guin, 1983, p. 60)

So here lies one person’s imagining of a moral essence or truth, an example of the potency and moral responsibility to be found in using language, as well as the impeccability we strive for as we choose words to name ideas and interpret. I find the

responsibility of acting honourably within this morally complex interlacing of language daunting. This is magnified when one considers the meaning I have imbued into my naming of, and meaning building of language as *di cento*—a hundred languages. Consider the beauty when one thinks of words not just as text or thought but as image and object, and the depth that this can bring to meaning making and teaching—to the essence within words and language. Le Guin (1983) expresses this so beautifully when she writes of Ged coming into understanding of what wisdom is,

My name, and yours, and the true name of the sun, or a spring of water, or an unborn child, all are syllables of the great word that is very slowly spoken by the shining of the stars. There is no other power. No other name. (p. 182)

I see the words made boundless and possible in the hundred languages as “syllables of the great word that is spoken very slowly by the shining of the stars.” And in listening deeply to the words I honour the meaning I give to the hundred languages, and to the children’s speaking of web projects.

As dialogue ebbs and flows in my quest, and silence punctuates and creates a space to pause, I feel that I want to share again these words of Woolf (2009),

Words, English words, are full of echoes, of memories, of associations – naturally. They have been out and about, on people’s lips, in their houses, in the streets, in the fields, for so many centuries. And that is one of the chief difficulties in writing them today – that they have stored meanings, with memories... (p. 3)

So part of this quest is to gift words and phrases with their true name in honour of the voices of the children I work with, as well as pay homage to, or tip my hat to

“stored meanings” of words. I humbly extend the nature of words to language, and enrich the tonal range of the word ‘language’ to enfold all the richness and complexities which are bound in the essence of words – words – spoken or written evocatively as images or as created objects “full of echoes, of memories, of associations – naturally” (Woolf, 1942/1970, p. 203). Further by declaring my interpretation and application of ideas through language as a moral responsibility and letting the ideas loose, to live beyond me, I am to be clear on my intent and the possibility of what my words may do. As Le Guin (1989) writes, “If one believes that words are acts, as I do, then one must hold writers responsible for what their words do” (p.103).

My hope is to look beyond Woolf’s (1976/1985) “cotton wool of daily life” (p. 72), and to see the “pattern hid behind the cotton wool” (p. 73)—patterns in language, ideas, image and participation in ways which are imbued with positive intentionality. I then hope that I have, through my choice of words, been true to the moral intentions I set out to live within during my quest and that I am living, in a mindful way, and living the responsibility I feel regarding words, language and what I do with these. I feel an affinity with the crusading knight on a quest for truth and understanding. The moral complexity I face is multi-dimensional, one important aspect of which is to make conscious decisions of inclusion and exclusion when interpreting and naming, explaining and describing throughout this narrative.

We weave stories between ourselves, as well as with and through literature for many reasons, one possible reason is questing, exploring and imagining new possibilities which may illuminate, affirm or act as a catalyst. By spinning our own stories with those of others, and entwining them with the lore we gather from literature, we create a rich, strong narrative which vibrates with voices of many, and which plays with ideas,

characters, events and landscapes. I share this idea and within it hear an essence described by Wittgenstein (2009),

... in spinning a thread we twist fibre on fibre. And the strength of the thread resides not in the fact that some one fibre runs through the whole length, but in the overlapping of many fibres. (p. 36)

As my narrative quest has unfolded from and through spaces, essences unveil and possible moral courses crystallise into points for consideration, from whence choices must be made and decisions enacted. I pause and consider the words wrapped on either side of Woolf's (1976/1985) description of finding patterns in everyday life, of "patterns hid behind cotton wool,"

...we are the words; we are the music; we are the thing itself. . .It proves that one's life is not confined to one's body and what one says and does; one is living all the time in relation to certain background rods or conceptions. Mine is that there is a pattern hid behind the cotton wool. And this conception affects me every day. (pp. 72-73)

As a female who lives a life deeply enfolded into the patterns of agricultural life, who is imbued with a feminist conscience regarding voice, opportunity and possibility, and who lives imaginatively, with sensitivity, it is not beyond thought that a sense of tension has arisen as this thesis has been brought forth when one considers the desire for a moral re-telling and a moral re-imagining as passion to be re-traced.

Again I reach out to Le Guin (1989) as I face the challenge of moral complexity, as our dialogue moves beyond language.

Only the imagination can get us out of the bind of the eternal present, inventing or hypothesising or pretending or discovering a

way that reason can then follow into the infinity of options, a clue through the labyrinths of choice, a golden string, the story, leading us to the freedom that is properly human, the freedom to open to those whose minds can accept unreality. (p. 45)

Arriving in Teacher Present Learning

In this chapter I enfold patterns I observe within each of the project narratives and consider them within the sphere of teacher and teaching. In doing so, moral complexity is unveiled and possibility revealed. I choose not to enter too far into the language of learner, learning or learned, as at this point I wish to “give teaching back to education and the teacher” (Biesta, 2012). Let me explain. Biesta’s description of the rise of “the language of learning” conveys that

Constructivist theories have shifted the emphasis away from the activities of the teacher towards those of the student and have thus put those activities – often referred to as ‘learning’...– on centre stage ...Claims and statements such as these clearly show how the language of learning, particularly in its constructivist form, has repositioned the teacher from someone who is at the heart of the educational process to one who literally stands at the sideline in order to facilitate the learning of his or her ‘learners’.

(p. 38)

I believe all web projects have been built on constructivist principles. A sense of umbrage swells up. So why acknowledge this thinking and let it interrupt my equilibrium? The teacher finds herself sidelined, suggests Biesta (2012), who possibly invokes perplexity with this—an idea some teachers might see as counter to constructivist principles and it may become a discordant note. But here I wish to

entwine these two ideas—giving teacher back to education and bringing teacher back to centre stage—into a powerful possible rendering of meaning for teachers whose pedagogy is constructivist and who particularly work in digital education as the teacher.

Biesta (2012) goes on to say,

...the rise of the internet does raise the question as to what makes schools special; and, to a certain extent it cannot be denied that people only learn something, for particular purposes and that they learn it from someone. The language of learning is unable to capture these dimensions partly because learning denotes a process that, in itself, is empty with regard to content and direction; and partly because learning, at least in the English language, is an individualistic and individualising term whereas the educational question – if, for the moment we want to phrase it in terms of learning – is always a matter of learning something from someone...the language of learning operates as an ideology, making what really goes on invisible and inaccessible. (p. 38)

Within the heart of this narrative is a desire to make teaching visible and special by describing the participation of the children through their voices, by honouring their perception of their experience of being taught through and with web projects. At the heart of my experience of web projects is a desire to share the value of a tight, intentional act of teaching, which is framed by clear purposes, precise intentions and visible purposes, inside an intentionally created space for children to be taught within.

The space for web projects differs slightly from Biesta's teaching space. Obviously web projects need to take place in a particularly designed web space, a constructed space for teaching and learning. Digital teaching spaces brought into being as web projects are

made with constructivist principles in mind, which creates a kind of alchemy. The teacher has to be at the centre. Web projects give education back to the teacher nevertheless. Let me explain. For me, it comes back to essence.

‘Essence’ derives from the Greek *ousia*, which means the inner essential nature of a thing, the true being of a thing (van Manen, 1990, p. 177). For me, flexibility is essential to the true nature of web projects. They are temporal elastic spaces for communicating, making, doing and imagining. Viewed with such nuance, a web project space can unfold and enfold, mould and be moulded. A web project makes possible a space where a teacher teaches, where she has scope to honour the learners by allowing, encouraging and demanding *di cento*, a culture of a hundred languages. A web project requires acts of teaching in a space where essentially, something is learnt from someone, where children and young people are being “taught” (Biesta, 2012).

Distinguishing and highlighting being taught, rather than learning from, is essential in clarifying the role of the teacher, and empowering the teacher to teach. It also makes teaching an active undertaking in the digital realm, after all, we can all learn from an array of things, including books, television, software applications, the Internet and from simply existing in the world. The magic of being taught is realised with a teacher who has a specific intention or purpose. That specific intention or purpose is to teach relationally. Whether learning takes place, or what we, as teachers, intend to be learnt occurs, is beyond our certainty, no matter with what form of research we attempt to unfold it in all its unexpectedness (Sinner, 2013, p.2) At least we can be present and seen in the acting, thinking and judging of teaching by intentionally creating an environment to teach in, where dialogue and planning sequences of activities reflect “ethical purposiveness” (Pugh, 2015). Be the environment in a conventional or unconventional

teaching space, tangible or digital, the hand of the teacher is visible, and the role of teacher is clear.

I am present as teacher, mindful of language and intentionality when I use language – the hundred languages. I journey back and place here a reminder of Project Based Learning. Project Based Learning “allows students to work autonomously to construct their own learning, and culminates in realistic, student-generated products” (Buck Institute for Education, 1999)—a narrative echoing rings here in terms of pedagogy and student autonomy. Project Based Learning is interpreted in many ways beyond the Buck Institutes tenants, just as teaching built on pedagogies, which construct knowledge structures, are interpreted in many ways. The Buck Institute for Education’s inclusion of the word ‘construction’ in its manual aligns this teaching approach with pedagogies that describe knowledge and understanding in building and construction terms, for example, constructivist and constructionist. There is a pedagogical thread joining these two pedagogies that is traced in the prefix ‘construct’. The appeal of web projects may lie in teachers and young people being architects in their own teaching and learning in the education web project life-worlds they co-construct.

To end this brief reflective chapter, I ask, where is the teacher in project based learning such as web projects? I know that the teacher is there, present, at work, and I bestow the teacher with a clear role in this approach to learning. I know from the web projects I have participated in, taught and facilitated that the teacher is truly present. I want to name the kind of teaching that happens in web projects—‘teacher present learning’.

I come into being in, into, Keats’ “negative capability” that feeling of indecision, wavering unease as described earlier in Chapter 2. I sit in moments of being, “accepting

uncertainty, accepting mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason” (Keats, 2009, p. 492).

I wonder.

I know from the web projects I have participated in and intimately observed, taught and facilitated that the teacher is truly present. I want to name the teaching in web projects *teacher present learning*.

Chapter 10 — Re-imagining Proximal Zones into a Zone of Proximal Engagement

Slowly there had opened within her something intricate and many-chambered, which one must take a torch to explore, in prose not verse; ... ‘I will write’, she had said, ‘what I enjoy writing’ (Woolf, 1928/1993, p. 124).

In his *Alice* books which he wrote during 1865 and up to 1872, Carroll re-imagines possibility as a world beyond our world, which can be accessed only through particular kinds of thresholds—the mirror and the rabbit hole. Woolf writes *Orlando* in 1928 as a re-imagining of possibility. She re-arranges and re-presents the writing traditions associated with biographies, creating a biography-novel, a novel, which is written using a biography text structure. Le Guin re-imagines in *A Wizard of Earthsea*, published in 1968, a world which is only accessible through her words as she builds and creates a world within our imagination, we are outlander in a life-world of her creation. Though Lewis’ imagined world of Narnia, introduced to us between 1950 and 1956, is similar to Le Guin’s as an act of re-imagining, it differs. Lewis’ imagined world is accessed through thresholds and portals that lead us into a different imagined world, anchored to our life-world by a wardrobe-portal. In her *Harry Potter* books, Rowling, from 1997-to 2008, re-imagines possibility in a different way. She imagines a world that sits parallel with our own today, in which common experience runs between, across and through both an imagined world and our everyday life-world. Rowling accesses her imagined world through thresholds and portals in her books that bring our “muggle” world close to the wizardly world she evokes. Myers re-imagines possibility in her *Twilight* series written from 2005 to 2008 by creating a world, which is situated within and parallel to our world, and invokes the ways vampires might exist alongside us. This long tradition of imagining different worlds forays thus back and forth in time, diachronically, across

times. Each of these authors re-imagines possibility using elements of his or her life-world and what he or she draws from their inner world into a world outwith themselves. What we see these writers do is similar to what Richard Kearney (1998) suggests in *Poetics of Imagining*, when he particularly explains Gaston Bachelard's poetic imagining. Bachelard's poetic phenomenology, says Kearney,

...describes imagination as a perpetual interaction between the human subject which imagines and the image itself. Imagination is thus recognised to be conscious of something other than itself which motivates, induces and transforms it. (p.97)

With this in mind I believe that this thesis might potentially be an example of Bachelard's poetic imagining. At this point of my philosophical quest for re-imagining, possibility is both a poetic and scientific imagining derived from the narrative of my inquiry and from the *aporia*, the perplexities, which inhabit it. My thesis is inscribed with "the world of possibility, at once invented and discovered by imagining, ...[as]... the source of *both* scientific and poetic creation" (Kearney, 1998, p. 97, my brackets). Following Kearney (1998), I continue with a poetic imagining which enacts a "creative ability to break with the everyday 'facts' of *homo faber* and transmute each one of us into a *homo aleator* – someone able to explore those imaginary possibles which emerge into existence at the intersection between self and world" (p. 97). Thus Kearney encourages me to understand that "scientific and poetic creation both derive from a deeper *poiesis* wherein imagination and reality make and remake each other" (Kearney, 1998, p. 97).

The web projects in this work are a re-imagining of possibility, situated at an intersection of the real, the imagined and that which is possible because of digital technology. All are accessed through thresholds or portals. Within the realm of web projects the portals sit at the nexus of two worlds—a world fuelled by imagination and

inhabited by mythic beings, the other, a world, an amalgam of the imagined brought forth as technological possibility and the parallel life-worlds which sit within cyberspace. The nexus of these two worlds, the mythical and the cyber worlds, shows elements familiar to everyday lived worlds and elements from worlds within and worlds outwith.

In this thesis, interlaced in a known pedagogical zone, object and subject “make and remake each other” (Kearney, 1998, p. 97), in a kind of un-concealing interpreting of observed happenings within work, game and play. Object and subject arrive in new spaces of exploratory thinking about how movement between, and through pedagogical zones may occur.

One might say that the multiple lenses of possibility that disperse understanding in this thesis makes it hard to grasp—its language prompts, presents and questions, and attempts to avoid definitively asserting knowledge. I believe that this may be its strength, even through its vulnerability—strong because the language of possibility honours the moral heart of this thesis as a work of re-imagining, enfolding science with literature in what might be conceived as an aesthetic enterprise. It becomes a reverie of poetic imagining (Kearney, 1998) in which truth un-conceals something of itself in acts of revealing, imagining, bringing and setting forth of possibilities to be explored, deconstructed and clarified in dialogue towards life-world making.

We enter scenes of re-enchantment, a word I choose purposefully to suggest its loss during attempts to twin education with information and communication technology. The *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (2007) defines ‘enchantment’ as “put under a spell, bewitch” and “endow with magical powers or properties” (p.826). Other nuances of meaning given are, “Influence powerfully; induce or compel to do” and “charm, delight, enrapture” (p. 826). I interpret enchantment in this encounter in its most simple guise, a

sense of charm, delight and rapture, which imbues a thing and an experience with an element of magic. Magic here is not the magic of the occult but is as the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (2007) defines ‘magic’, in its second interpretation as “An inexplicable and remarkable influence producing surprising results. Also, an enchanting quality...” (p. 1672). To re-enchant is for me then an act of re-charming, re-delighting and re-creating a sense of enrapturement that re-magics a thing or space which once held a sense of charm and enchantment that has become dulled for one reason or another.

My quest is interlaced with magic and enchantment sourced from literature and populated with objects, beings and ideas found in books filled with thaumaturgy, marvel working, wonder and fairy-tale like events. Bruno Bettelheim (1975) describes a child’s need for magic. For children, fairy tales are suggestive and imply solutions but never spell them out (p. 45). What we arrive at are some kinds of understanding.

My Vygotsky, and the Zone of Proximal Development



Figure 74. My Vygotsky (a Pop Art imagining)

Before I can imagine something beyond what exists, I have to share what I know as it exists for me. As Le Guin (1989) writes, “the primary experience has to be connected

with and fitted into the rest of experience to be useful, probably even to be available, to the mind” (p. 42). In this section I start with a known, and move beyond it, transforming it into something different.

I share the way I hear, and understand Lev Vygotsky’s work, and his Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) in my living as teacher. I call my interpretation and imagining of him, his person and work, My Vygotsky (Figure 74). Vygotsky (1978) writes of the ZPD in *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes* as the,

...actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the higher level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 103)

For me the ZPD becomes a zone imagined into possibility by Vygotsky to describe a space situated within, where learning takes place with guidance and support, which may begin as imitation, and which with support evolves into individualised responses or a unique construction of knowledge, involving active thought, problem-solving and bringing into being—imagining, creating, doing and making.

Vygotsky (1987) speaks in *The Collected Works of L.S. Vygotsky, Vol 1: Problems of General Psychology* of an invisibly present aspect of collaboration that echoes my own intuition. I listen,

When the school child solves a problem at home on the basis of a model that has been shown in class, he continues to act in collaboration, though at the moment the teacher is not standing near him. From a psychological perspective, the solution of the second problem is similar to the solution of a problem at home. It is a solution accomplished with the teacher’s help. This help – this

aspect of collaboration – is invisibly present. It is contained in what looks from the outside like a child's independent solution of a problem. (p. 86)

Of interest to me is the idea of help that is invisibly present. Think of the web projects in this thesis. Often there are children and teachers who are working in collaboration with other children and teachers in different geographical locations, yet their role is crucial to the workings of the web projects and the children's new constructions of knowledge and understanding. I see that the mythical beings within the projects, (Bunyips, Flat Stanley and monsters) are at times invisibly present, though at other times visibly present—like others who participate in the projects.

Malaguzzi (1998) re-enters my thinking and reminds me that interpretations, conceptualisations and applications of Vygotsky's ZPD are often moulded, re-moulded, and tinkered with according to educational, cultural and philosophical contexts. Malaguzzi talks of Vygotsky's ZPD as a matter, which is somewhat ambiguous, and that circularity is key (p. 83). 'Circularity' is not a term found in Vygotsky's writing, it is a term used by Malaguzzi. He puts the idea of the ZPD the following way,

Vygotsky reminds us how thought and language are operative together to form ideas and to make plans for action, and then for executing, controlling, describing, and discussing that action. This is a precious insight for education...we can dispel any risk of returning to traditional teaching by holding to our principal of *circularity*...we seek a situation in which the child is about to see what the adult already sees. The gap is small between what each one sees, the task of closing it appears feasible, and the child's skills and disposition create an expectation and readiness to make

the jump. In such a situation, the adult can and must loan to the children his judgement and knowledge. But it is a loan with a condition, namely, that the child will repay. (1998, p. 84)

This interpretation of Vygotsky's ZPD comes close to what I hear in the children's speaking during the web projects when they speak of proximity (in navy and turquoise conversations) and interaction (in violet conversations). They move with circularity through their web project experience, they borrow another's knowledge and jump into new and different understanding. My-pack-of-cards enables the children to speak of coming into understanding of their web project experience.

I recall Gadamer's (1976/2006) words from earlier about movement in play being back and forth, to and fro (p. 106). I prefer to think of the movement the children experience when they are being in work, game and play as something other than this, as the children are moving between three dimensions that are not lined up on a continuum, their words speak to me of dimensions which overlap.

Kearney (1998) takes me back to Bachelard, and I see a parallel between Malaguzzi's (1998) circularity and Kearney's explanation of Bachelard's imagining as an act of intentional consciousness and as "the spiral of man's dialogue with the world" (Kearney, 1998, pp. 97-98).

In *The Hundred Languages of Children; The Reggio Emilia Approach – Advanced Reflections* (Malaguzzi, Edwards, Gandini & Forman, 1998) there is an interview with Carlina Rinaldi and Lella Gandini and I recognise my own imagining of a teacher's role.

...the teacher's role must be imagined in terms that are holistic and circular, not segmented and linear. Such a circularity – or better, spiralling – is seen in reciprocal connections among the three protagonists (educators, children and parents) as well as the

temporal dimension. The actions that teachers do are not expected to take place in a set order, or once only, but instead repeat in continuous cycles of revisiting and representation. (p. 183)

I recognise the circularity and spiralling Rinaldi speaks of, and I imagine it as a way to explain the nature of web projects, and possibly of how many of us interact with technology. I imagine my relationship with technology, my relationship with my-world-within as one of proximity and of circularity and spiralling through.

I come into seeing a pattern that has many navigation points. I imagine that I am holding my alethiometer. The dials and hands spin and whirl. They stop, and I read the hands and symbols. My alethiometer hints to me of the harmony rules of nature described by Doczi (1981) as “the golden section” (p. 2) and by Wales, Juniper, & Skelly (2010) as the “golden section” (p. 85) and spoken of in Chapter 1, emerging from the interacting, observing and interpreting I perform within web projects. Threaded through my idea of circularity, spiralling, revisiting and re-representing is a harmonics of transforming.

Roland Tharp and Ronald Gallimore (1988) bring to my attention that Vygotsky’s (1987, p.103) original explanation of the ZPD centred on problem-solving and can be expanded to examine other competences and skills. They talk of specialised zones for development including cultural zones, individual zones and skill-oriented zones (pp. 30 - 32).

I pause.

I am silent.

My heart quickens.

In the way of Lewis's suposals, I 'suppose'(Lewis, p.) into being a zone that has a different emphasis to the one imagined and arrived at by My Vygotsky—a different zone, born out of the children's speaking of work, game and play in web projects, a zone, space or dimension, which enfolds proximity as a way of seeing learning. Learning in this zone is an act of 'being in' saying, 'being in' making, 'being in' doing, 'being in' imagining, and 'being in' playing—a way of describing and naming engagement as 'being in' work, game and play.

I pause and wonder – supposing, transforming.

Vygotsky (2004) writes that

No invention or scientific discovery can occur before the material and psychological conditions necessary for it to occur have appeared. Creation is a historical cumulative process where every succeeding manifestation was determined by the preceding one (pp.30-31)

James Wertsch and Peeter Tulviste's (1992) *L.S. Vygotsky and Contemporary Developmental Psychology*, interprets Vygotsky's perspective, they write "... any creativity that occurs involves the transformation of an existing pattern or action, a new use for an old tool" (p.555). I recognise creativity being written of in a way akin to the manner of a *bricoleur*. As *bricoleur* I am an agent of changing existing patterns and traditions of action. Gadamer speaks of transformation in *Truth and Method* (1975/2006), and as I read his words I come into seeing that I am a player in a game of my own making within the closed life-world of this quest. I listen to Gadamer's speaking intently,

...transformation means that something is suddenly and as a whole something else, that this other transformed thing that it has

become is its true being, in comparison with this its earlier being is
nil. (p. 111)

He goes on to say,

...transformation into structure means that what existed
previously exists no longer. But also that what now exists, what
represents itself in the play of art, is the lasting and true. (p. 111)

I circle back to Vygotsky's ZPD, and Malaguzzi and the Reggio Emilia School's
ZPD. I tinker with them, I transform them, and I re-imagine them into something
altogether different within my world of web project playing.

Re-imagining Possibility – My Zone of Proximal Development

As I work through this conversational thread as *bricoleur*, I wonder. I flirt with my
collection of quest objects and hard won understanding—my evocative objects and
perspectives collected by thinking in a crystalline manner.

Papert speaks, and his constructionist pedagogy (Papert & Harel, 1991) has
resonance here. Think again of Turkle's (2008) lyrical description of constructionism,
“Papert moved to a constructionist position: children make their minds through actual
building. In Papert's model, we can expect that if we give children new materials, they
will build different things and be able to think new thoughts” (pp. 15-16). Firstly, Papert
begins with constructivism and transforms his understanding of it into
constructionism—into something different—it is an example of re-imagining. Secondly,
my-pack-of-cards and alethimeters have led me to this moment of enabling new
thoughts.

I rewind back to Vygotsky and his act of re-imagining how and where knowledge
construction takes place. I usually think of Vygotsky's ZPD as a possible way of

describing a space betwixt and between, the learnt, and the not yet learnt—a description of the space where learning can take place if supported, scaffolded, practised and then seamlessly integrated into one's schema of knowledge and understanding.

I imagine a different possibility into being. From their edges, I look once more into the three dimensions of being in work, being in game, and being in play. I think of these dimensions of being as three intersecting bubbles existing artistically. In the overlapping centre of my dimension bubbles I imagine a triangular kind of space that I name a 'possible-ZPD' and then come to think of as 'my-ZPD'. It is made up of all three dimensions of being, work, game and play, with the points of a triangle overlapping into each dimension signifying the ambiguity of each dimension's beginning and end. There is an image forming in my mind, but it is not clear yet. The intersections between two dimensions represent game-play, work-play and game-work. I like this imagining because I see work and play as not being opposite, and there is a place for games.

Each dimension is an act of being in living, more than an act of doing. Being in work, being in game and being in play, could be observed as active or passive acts. If I restrict my thinking of each dimension to acts of doing then I may only be valuing what is visible, and I run the risk of devaluing acts of doing that appear outwardly passive and invisible, when in fact they are active within one's inner life-world. If I observe only acts of doing, I am not sufficiently honouring the voices of the children whose pronouns and references to the web project beings suggest the existence of intersubjective relationships. I risk seeing that the younger children may appear to be doing nothing, that is, they appear passive, yet they may indeed be actively, in their inner worlds, making something from what is visible to them.

By talking of 'being in', I suggest that relationships can be situated between, through and across the life-worlds experienced by the children within the web projects. If I limit my thinking to acts of doing, then the beings (Bunyips, Flat Stanley and monsters) cannot be other, in the web projects—they cannot be other in the dimensions named as being in work, being in game and being in play. The beings (Bunyips, Flat Stanley and monsters) are enlivened by, and controlled imaginatively by the children—they do things with the children and have things done to them by the children. We hear the children speak of relational transactions that are complex within a web project. They discuss whether one is in an act of being in work, game and play. We comprehend, as we shall see, that a child's perception of proximity plays a large part in their sense of autonomy.

My-ZPD is a space that is linked to chronological development and learning across a broad range of areas. Vygotsky (1978) says,

...play creates a zone of proximal development of the child. In play a child always behaves beyond his average age, above his daily behaviour; in play it is as though he were a head taller than himself. As in the focus of a magnifying glass, play contains all developmental tendencies in a condensed form and is itself a major source of development. (pp. 92-104)

This idea suggests that if we understand that experiences of being in imaginative learning—children being in work, being in game and being in play in web projects, as opposed to doing work, doing a game or doing play—has enormous potential for their intellectual development and for engaging children in learning.

I imagine that my-ZPD is a space that centres upon an object-subject-focus-experience, and as such, one can be in proximity to it and within it. This is what the

children's speaking has given to my seeing. I think perhaps that the ZPD as I have come to understand it has contributive implications for teaching and learning.

My-ZPD imagining grows from generalised conceptions of Vygotsky's ZPD, and the work of others who have interpreted it.

I pause.

I reach for pencils and paper and think of being in work, being in game, and being in play.

I draw.

I attempt to pull outwith and make visible what I imagine into being within my inner life-world. I call what I set forth, an imagining of my-ZPD. Figure 75 is its first version.

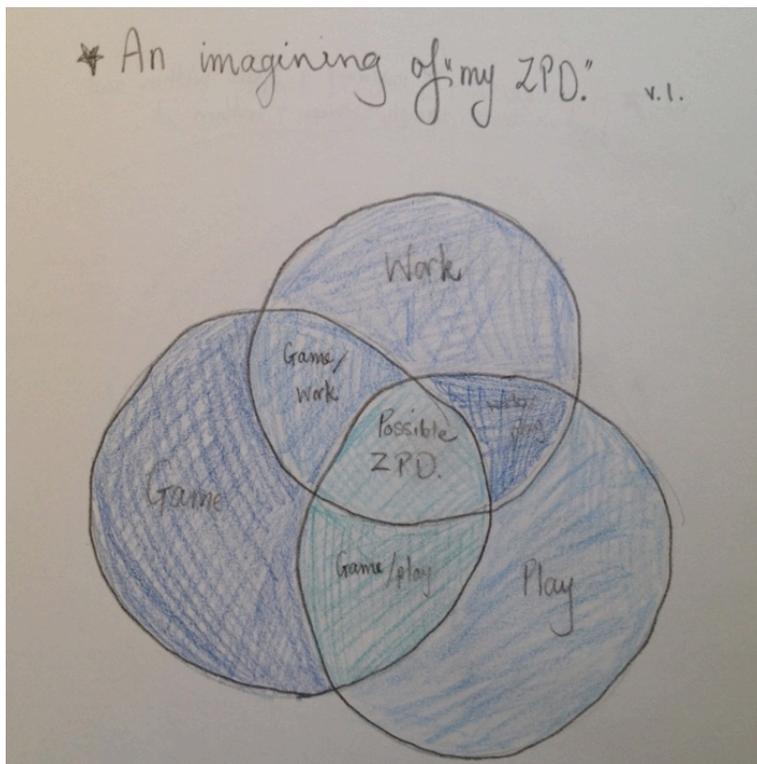


Figure 75. An imagining of my-ZPD, v.1

This imagining responds to the children's speaking. I hear them talk of an ability to move through and between dimensions of being in work, being in game and being in play without picking one over another. The drawing depicts being in rather than doing. As an act of being in, it is easier to place oneself in each dimension, and transition between dimensions, as one can decide for oneself which dimension one is being in as one is autonomous, free, in choosing. I imagine transitioning as swinging through the dimensions of being in work, game and play. I also imagine the transitioning as spiralling through whilst being in.

In my imagining there is room for the invisible and visible presence of one who is in collaboration with learners. In web projects this invisible and visible presence may be a teacher, or a more skilled other (peer, teacher's assistant, parent), and at other times, the mythical beings (Bunyips, Flat Stanley and monsters).

The dimensions are three dimensional, not flat or static. They are bubbles or spheres of engagement, and are representative of an intangible knowing and perception of consciousness, when undertaking an activity that is being in work, game or play. I prefer the idea of bubbles. In my mind bubbles move and shift, and change shape ever so slightly in their way of being, they are organic.

It is difficult to pin down, and to quantify, what I am trying to pull outwith because as I write, what I perceive and picture clearly in my mind feels ephemeral and hard to hold on to. I feel that I am just touching essences that are, at this point, a suggestion of possibility, rather than a thing, which, is described as definite, or empirical.

Bettelheim (1975) writes,

...many errors in understanding how our mind works could be avoided if modern man would at all times remain aware that these

abstract concepts are nothing but convenient handles for manipulating ideas which, without such externalization, would be too difficult to comprehend. There is in actuality, of course, no separation between them, just as there is no real separation between mind and body. (p. 75)

These words calm my thoughts. I battle with wanting to quantify my thinking, locking it down within a fence of description so I can wrangle it and manage it.

I pause.

I focus back on the drawings I make in my scrapbook.

My drawings of my-ZPD are a catching of ideas, pinning them down (Nicolson, 2000, p. 78) so that they do not disappear. Woolf's observation that "unless you catch ideas on the wing and nail them down, you will soon cease to have any" (Nicolson, 2000, p. 78), echoes my own experience of writing and imagining my thesis into being. Woolf's artistic medium is words—she paints with them. My artistic medium is a collage of words and drawings, a capturing and pinning down of thoughts that will escape if I am not fast enough or disciplined enough to catch them.

As I have written and described my first drawn version of My-ZPD, I realise my drawing not quite right.

It feels incomplete.

I draw.

My second imagining (Figure 76) shows the bubbles that represent the dimensions of being in work, game and play in a world within, a space where one can be actively thinking but outwardly passive.

Until I draw.

I label my drawing, and arrive in the intersection of being in dimensions of work, game and play. I name this as possible-ZPD (or my-ZPD). I settle upon it. There is a space of being in, which leads me to words I often hear children and adults use when they are living in close proximity to an object-subject-focus-experience—‘being in the zone’. For me, ‘being in the zone’ is a place filled with enchantment as it holds one in thrall, engaging one intersubjectively in work, game and play. There is balance. One experiences a sensation of being in work, game and play, all at once, and is, indeed, experiencing ‘being in the zone’, so to speak.

I stop.

I am silent.

I wonder.

How might moving through my-ZPD happen?

Having settled on my-ZPD as a representation of the being in dimensions and their intersection (Figure 76), I wonder how children might travel through these dimensions of being in.

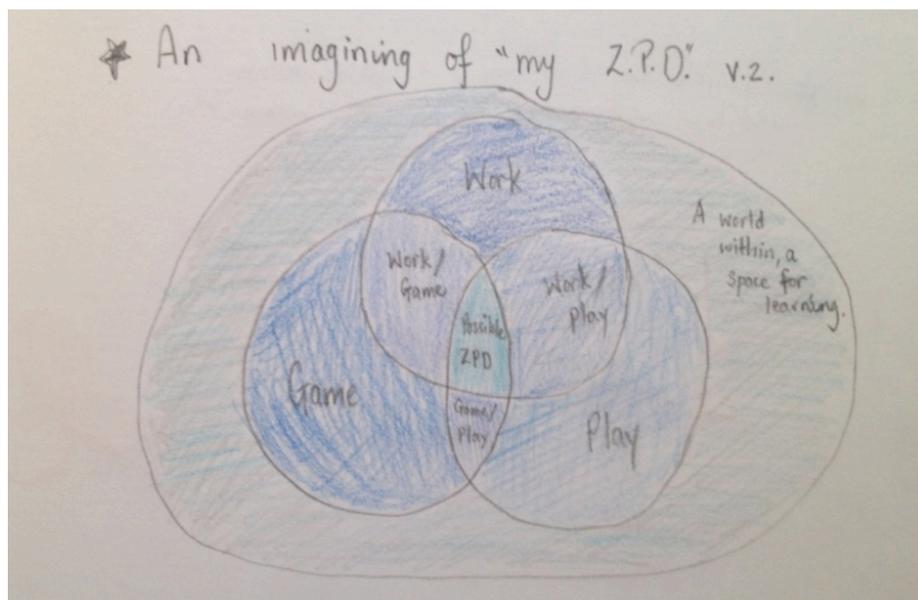


Figure 76. An imagining of my-ZPD v.2

The framework adapted from the work of Turkle, around proximity in my-pack-of-cards as a way to describe how ‘into’ something the children are, is very useful. Essentially the navy and turquoise cards in my-pack-of-cards, represent a scale of how into web projects each of the children is, and the cards do this by giving to the children a language with which to speak their experience. The children speak of autonomy through words describing proximity—how close or distant they feel to the web project being, and the task they are being within. Listen for a moment. These three conversation-dialogue snippets speak of relationships that are close, and autonomous. The children speak of control, and of free choice, in the relationship they have with their web project being.

Lizzy: “The Bunyip is here helping me, he’s living with me.”

Stella: “Sometimes when I’m living it, the Bunyip talks to me.”

Monica: “When I’m in it I’m kinda living it, but not really. kinda a he or a she, not an it or a they. I’m living it. The Bunyip is like an imaginary friend.”

The web projects can be seen as linear in their design, as they require a series of steps to be followed in each stage to ensure the success of the project. They can also be seen as cyclical, as the series of steps can be travelled through again and again. Within each step students are able to work either in a hard or soft approach to get to the point they are required, be it the completion of a writing, making or communication task.

I realise that I have not asked the children how they move through the dimensions they speak of. I can only draw together a pattern from the way they talk and share their web project experience, yet for the purpose of the life-world within my thesis, I infer and suggest how students might move through and between my imagining of my-ZPD.

The children speak of being in work, game and play in a way that suggests movement and energy, as well as of experiencing degrees of proximity to the object-subject-focus-experience of learning. The children are unable to consistently explain or represent how they got into being, unless they speak of being in work.

When the children speak of being in work, they speak of the teacher as the one who directs them, and this, in their words, makes the task work. This implies that being in a work dimension may mean a reduced sense of autonomy when they are in a writing, making and doing task. James speaks of being in work differently, he speaks of work as being autonomous and enthralling. I recall his speaking,

James: "work when I'm interested in it and I think important, and really interesting. When I play Lego© I'm working and the same with Bunyips."

I believe he uses the word 'work', to give importance to his activity. He knows that work is very important to adults, and is serious. Even though he speaks of work, I hear that he situates himself deeply in play, and he gives importance to his being in play by calling it work.

Travelling as a Trefoil Knot to describe Motion within my-ZPD.

My first imagining of how children may move between being in work, game and play dimensions is a kind of loop, like a pattern, which can be made without lifting a pencil from a page. I search for a name for the image I draw on the Internet and find two versions—one in the mathematical world called the "Trefoil Knot" and the other, a version of a trefoil knot which is found in Celtic symbolism called the "Trinity Knot". They are the same image or phenomena, one is explained with equations, and the other an image found in ancient Celtic art with a rich heritage and narrative of meaning.

I delve into the etymology of the word 'trefoil'. The second meaning ascribed to this word in the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (2007) is suited for me to choose for this thesis. It states that it is “an ornamental figure representing or resembling a trifoliate leaf; a thing arranged in or having three lobes, a set or group of three” (p. 3335). A trefoil knot then is a knot that resembles a trifoliate leaf. The mathematical information I find interesting, and perplexing, as I do not understand all of the terminology used to describe this image or phenomenon in mathematical equations. I glean that it is called the never-ending knot and is very important in knot theory. It is used in Celtic folklore and design and is known as a trinity knot, and believed to represent the three promises of a relationship such as to love, honour, and protect. This tradition seems to capture the moral intent of my quest.

I have drawn a trefoil knot in a never-ending motion. I imagine a pendulum swinging in this way. If I follow the path of the pendulum my pencil moves drawing the symbol of the trefoil in motion over and over again (Figure 77). I try to convey the movement the children speak of, as they move within, through and between a world within, a world outwith and the cyber world. It also represents how we may move within, through and between the dimensions of being in work, game and play, swinging through their intersection, named as my-ZPD (Figure 78).

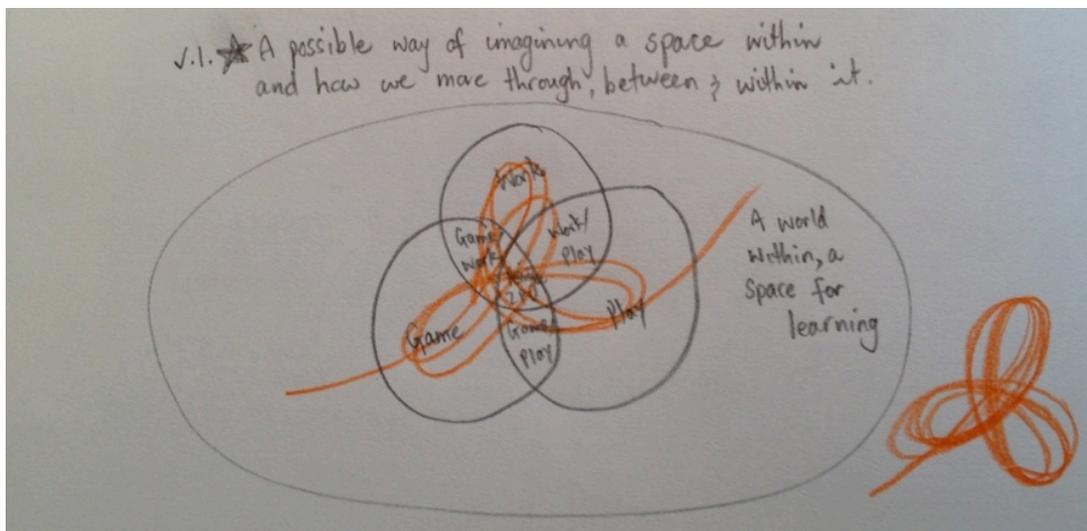


Figure 77. In motion, my representation of a trefoil knot

I wonder and I move within my own mind and metaphorically hang mirrors, reflecting upon the idea of a trefoil knot that I have nailed down. As I peer into my imagining another perspective crystallises, a word forms in my mind – circularity.

What might movement look like if I represent the motion within, through and between the dimensions of work, game and play and my-ZPD as circular and spiralling?

Figure 78. *In motion as a trefoil knot within, between and through my-ZPD*



Travelling as spiralling and circularity to describe Motion within my-ZPD.

As this representation inscribes itself on my paper I set the trefoil aside. I draw a spiral. I whisper the word 'dinergy', as I draw, enfolding it into my spiral (Figure 79). 'Dinergy' is a word I have spoken of earlier in Chapter 2, created by Doczi (1981) to describe a universal pattern-creating process from two words *dia* - across, through and opposite, and energy (p. 3). Spirals can be a manifestation of dinergy, Doczi's dinergy sits harmoniously within this imagining as a sensation of rhythmic, circular motion. If one

spirals out of control one can become dizzy. The spiralling motion I envisage is measured, with the potential to speed up, and slow down.

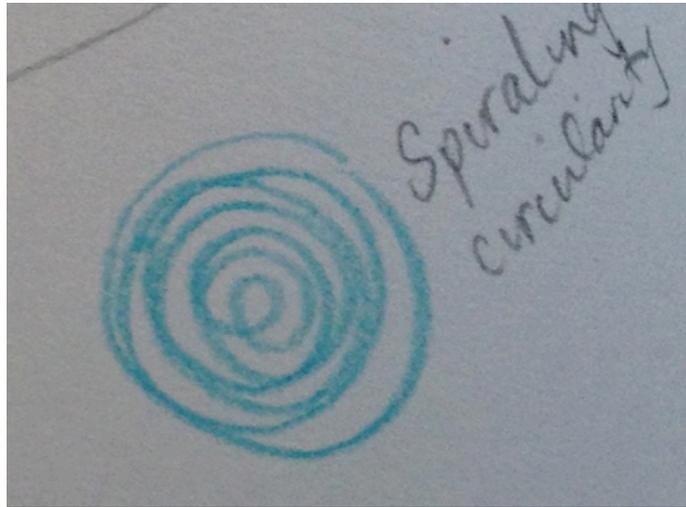


Figure 79. Spiralling, circularity

The Book of Symbols (2010) shows the spiral as a motif that appears worldwide in the symbolism of religion, art, dreams, folklore and mythology. It goes on to say that “its symbolic power is in its evocation of an archetypal path of growth, transformation and psychological or spiritual journey” (Ronnberg & Martin, 2010, p. 718). I read that the spiral “is the path that resolves conflict, allowing for balanced movement and natural unfolding; thus harmonious transformation can proceed. These spiral processes in nature form a language evoking the mythic journey, regeneration and awakening” (p. 718). Logarithmic spirals follow “the golden section” as described by Doczi (1981, p. 2) that I’ve mentioned before, and are referred to as growth spirals and golden spirals. They are found in the natural world, and are visible in the nautilus shell, Romanesco broccoli, seed heads and pine cones. I imagine a spiralling movement as a kind of

logarithmic spiral that joins back onto itself. Its circular nature enabling a spiralling back into a circular centre and then spiralling out again, an infinity spiral.

I recall Malaguzzi's notion of circularity and next remember the infinity spiral staircase made by artist Olafur Elliason in 2004. This is the kind of spiral and spiralling movement I see in my mind when the children speak of being in work, game and play, within my-ZPD and the other intersections of work, game and play (Figure 80).

I make another drawing (Figure 81). My graphic-speaking is comprised of spirals, dimensions and intersections in a circularity of a pattern of motion. My graphic-speaking melts into my teaching, in realms of web projects. My mind, ever restless, returns to images of attractors.

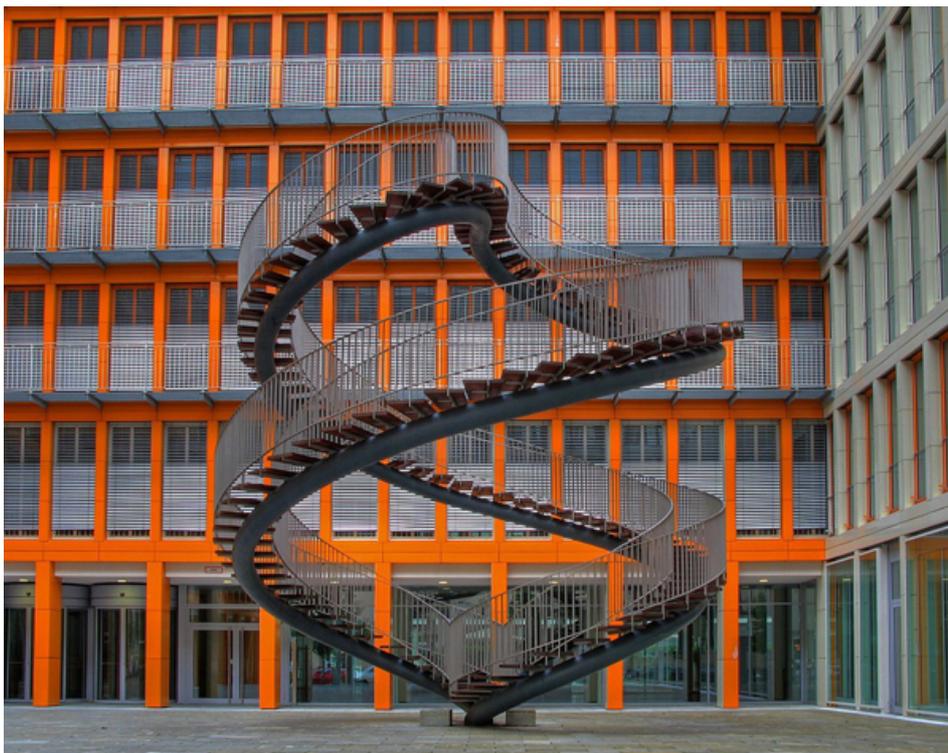


Figure 80. Olafur Elliason's (2004) Infinity spiral staircase, Germany

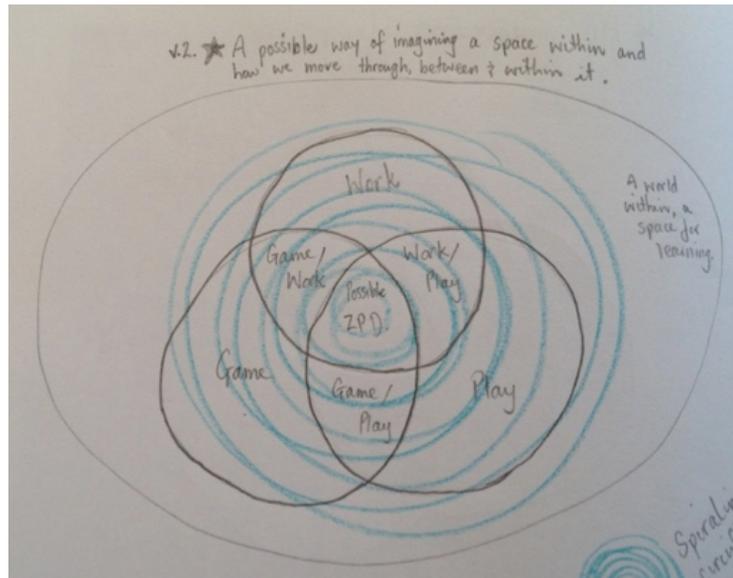


Figure 81. My infinity spiral moving through dimensions of work, game, play and a possible ZPD

Travelling as an Attractor to describe Motion within my-ZPD.

From Chapter 3, my mind goes to attractors and Capra (pp. 148-149), who playfully refers to The Lorenz attractor as “the butterfly effect” (Figure 82). I try to make a three dimensional model because the bubbles are not flat, neither is the spiral. One cannot flatten them onto paper without imagining them three dimensionally. I overlay them with the Lorenz attractor to stimulate the imagination further into visualising a vibrant three dimensional representation of a thinking mind.

This new “supposal” (Lewis, 1982, p. 23) is not a flat rendering of bubble or spiral. The addition of the attractor offers a more complex three-dimensional handle to manipulate and imagine moving through, between and within, and even transcending, a space, within and outwith life-worlds.

That the attractor oscillates, and is not always predictable in where it may go next in its trajectory, echoes how our minds work—sometimes they are clear, sometimes they are unpredictable. This pattern, even though it sits within an area of mathematics described with the word ‘chaos’, mirrors in my mind the ebb and flow, the oscillations and whirls of how our minds may move through thought, and between navigational reference points. The attractor’s description as “the butterfly effect”, also appeals to me, as often a small glimmer, sensation, rearrangement or tweaking can lead to an amplification of awareness, which was not present before.

Within the boundaries of the life-world of this thesis these nuances sit harmoniously as there is a pattern of unfolding and deliberate stepping to, from and between navigation points in an attempt to bring forth new understanding, perspectives and revelation. Perhaps this “supposal” (Lewis, 1982, p. 23) and imagining of movement and motion is the one to represent how the children speak of moving within, between and through the dimensions of being in work, game and play within the web projects.

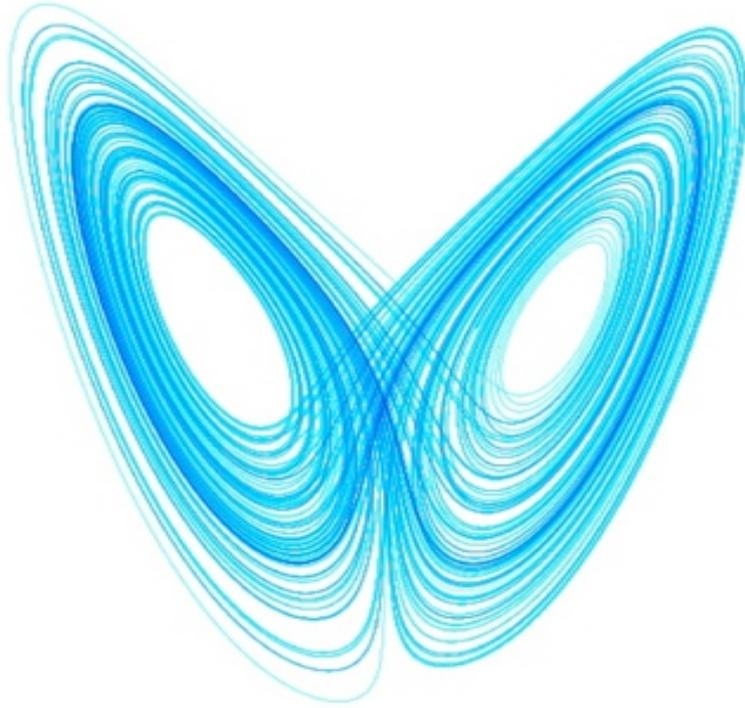


Figure 82. The Lorenz (1963) attractor

Perpetual Movement, and Motion as Trefoil Knot, Attractor and Spiral.

I have been supposing a quest landscape that now features the trefoil knot, Elliason's infinity spiral and the Lorenz attractor in which I can stand "at a different point and [hang] mirrors to purposefully reveal different possibilities" (Woolf, 1942/1970, p. 195).

One could see this as radical, impertinent even avant-garde. But I hope it is humble, as it speaks of possibility and never to be viewed as autocratically determined. It is a suggestion brought forth from curiosity, observation and living in close proximity with the object-subject-focus-experience of this research. It is brought forth from my intimate relationship with web projects and the beings and spaces occupied by them.

I realise I have collected three more quest objects—a trefoil knot, a spiralling circular image and an attractor. I add these to my box of teaching possibilities.

Orlando echoes in my mind, he and his creator have been ever present in my quest. Woolf described the writing of *Orlando* as “a writer’s holiday” (Woolf, *Orlando*, 1928/1993, p.xi). I have to confess that even though this quest is written and constructed in a spirit of experimentation akin to the writing of *Orlando*, it has not been a “writer’s holiday”, it has been a quest for meaning, a space for imagining and journeying and living as scholar and artist. Within *Orlando*, Woolf (1928/1993) conjures an individual who inhabits and lives within, and through different personas. Gender boundaries are not set, they shift. Time is shown to be both enchanting, full of possibility, and difficult to nail down, its characteristics are shown to be ephemeral and difficult to quantify.

The boundaries in this thesis are not of gender or history but are those of a world of strange attractors—once the trajectories reach their utmost stretch they bounce back and take off anew. Alethia, veracity, the anchor of the attractor, enables us to navigate spaces of inquiry in manners, which allow, and demand, re-imagining, supposal, and re-patterning of possibility.

Nomenclature - A Naming of a Name

Pavord’s (2005) book *The Naming of Names: The Search for order in the World of Plants* documents a story of the men who searched for the patterns and rules to be found in nature and determined how we name plants. Pavord’s narrative travels through an historical world over two thousand years and concludes in the 1990s. Finally, in the last part of her narrative, I see the zone I have brought into imagining mirrored in the story of the naming, and re-naming of Cesalpino’s umbellifers. In 1583 Cesalpino published a

book, *De plantis libri XVI* in Florence. It is essentially a tome that sets out his method for classifying and naming plants. In it there are 1,500 plants divided into thirty-two different groups. One such group is *Umbelliferae*, that family of plants that are a different sort of evocative object (Turkle, 2007)— they are an evocative plant.

Umbellifers are present throughout my narrative as a graphic in my-pack-of-cards and provide children with language to speak of how they visualise web projects working. By 1993, Cesalpino's umbellifers were re-named, re-thought of as *Apiaceae* as the result of a major restructuring of naming in the botanical world brought about through the analysis of plant DNA by the Angiosperm Phylogeny Group, and as Pavord says, “a new order has begun” (2005, p. 402). And it is here I seek to rename my-ZPD. I examine the etymology of the words I am toying with—I set out and examine my-ZPD's DNA and arrive at a possible name to christen it.

Perhaps the word Cesalpino or umbellifer should be built into the name. The act of naming brings a thing into being through language and gives it form and identity. A name which is essentially a word, as we talked of earlier, echoes with meanings given and enfolded over time (Woolf, 1942/1970, p. 203). The motif of the mirror returns and the associated imagery of language as narrative is reinforced. I find myself dancing with Woolf again, through narrative, within a spiral of dialogue and imagining.

The words ‘zone’, ‘space’ and ‘dimension’ are all words used through this narrative to describe an often, intangible space of ‘being in’. The meaning of the word ‘zone’ that may be enfolded into this thesis is “an area having particular features, properties, purpose, or use” (Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 1685). Of the word ‘space’, there are three explanations with which I could work in here—space as, “a continuous unlimited area or expanse which may or may not contain objects”, “an interval between

one-, two- or three-dimensional points or objects”, and “freedom to think and be oneself” (Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 1387). ‘Dimension’ is described by this dictionary as “a measurable extent of any kind, as length, breadth, depth, area and volume” (Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 399).

I consider these words and their nuanced differences. I keep circling back to the word ‘zone’. I decide to keep the word ‘zone’ in the name I am setting forth.

The word ‘proximal’ means “situated nearer to the centre of the body or towards the point of attachment” (Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 1164). I am not sure how to interpret this. Does Vygotsky’s naming of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) mean “an area having particular features, properties, purpose, or use” (Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 1685), which is “situated nearer to the centre of the body or towards the point of attachment” where it is possible for development to take place?

The word ‘proximal’ in this speaks of an essence of being situated nearer to the centre of the body and mind in terms of experience. I spiral back through words related to proximal. Words in this word family include – proximate, proximity, *proximo*.

The Online Etymology Dictionary (2015) tells me that “‘proximity’ derives from late 15th century Middle French, *proximité*, ‘nearness’”, this derivation of the essence of nearness metamorphosed from the “Latin *proximitatem*” and I read on in the process learning that this Latin root is shared with the word ‘propinquity’. Is it possible that the word ‘propinquity’ can contribute the name I am trying to find? So upon propinquity I focus my gaze, and *The Online Etymology Dictionary* (2015) describes it as nearness in relation to kinship. With these disclosures of meaning I interpret the word ‘proximal’ to mean, being in, being close to, being in kinship with.

I decide that zone and proximal remain part of the name I am making. I acknowledge them as a point of attachment to Vygotsky's work. I am, I believe, creating a threshold for a "poetic imagining" (Bachelard, as interpreted by Kearney, 1998) or an "interruption" (Biesta, 2012), which will bring forth new possibility beyond my earlier, assisted interpretation of the name *Zone of Proximal Development*.

Through unfolding, enfolding, un-enfolding and refolding I arrive at 'Zone of Proximal Something'. What will the last part of my true name be? I think of Ged in Le Guin's *A Wizard of Earthsea* when he speaks of true names.

I use the word 'proximal' intentionally as a measure to tell something of the nearness of being in relationship to object-subject-focus-experience. Proximity is imagined into my-pack-of-cards, and through my intentional act of creation (transformation) children are able to speak their web project experience in terms of proximity. A pattern of common experience makes its presence felt and reinforces that proximity is possibly a state of being in a web project landscape. For me, there is scholarly elegance and harmony in retaining the word 'proximal' in my naming.

Engagement, creativity and imagination—I test them out—Zone of Proximal Engagement, Zone of Proximal Creativity, Zone of Proximal Imagination. All three names could be used to describe a space or zone for 'being in'—learning which is centred on being in work, game and play.

Described in the *The Oxford English Reference Dictionary* (1996), 'engagement' is "occupied, busy" (p. 466). This description is a beginning. Lois Harris (2008) phenomenologically investigates the concept of student engagement in learning. Harris says, "there is general agreement that student engagement produces positive outcomes, defining the concept is problematic as there is disagreement about what counts as

student engagement”(p. 58). Harris also provides a narrative about the history of student engagement and she tells us that there are many different interpretations and models that have emerged to explain this concept. Each interpretation of the idea of engagement that Harris shares has strengths, and each has aspects that are problematic. Harris notes that the models that have evolved to represent, quantify and explain engagement are most often singular in nature. All researchers seem to agree that the concept of engagement in education is complex and possibly difficult to pin down. A singular conceptualisation of engagement does not represent the whole story of what engagement is, or how it looks. There is potential in intentionally setting forth a notion of engagement that is interpretive, and full of possible meanings understood from the children’s speaking within the web projects.

In this thesis, engagement, specifically learner engagement ,comes into meaning as an enfolding of cognitive and imaginative commitment expressed as a creative and cognitive act. Further, it folds into its fabric the essences of being in work, game and play.

So the true name I give to my imagining of an intersection of being in work, being in game, and being in play, is the Zone of Proximal Engagement (ZPE).

This zone may sit within the ZPD—it may sit parallel to it or be interlaced through it. That is work for another inquiry. I believe this ZPE is crucial when designing teaching. I think of the ZPE as a threshold to, and a space that precipitates learning that is made visible by being in work, game and play.

The unique set of circumstances that are the creation and experience of the web projects in this thesis have led us here to this threshold of possibility—the imagining of and bringing into existence of a ZPE. It is not the journey I imagined at the beginning

of this web project quest. I add the ZPE to my collection of quest artefacts, my evocative quest objects.

Upon reflection, I come into comprehending Wheatley and Kellner-Roger's (1999) idea of an "emergent world" that asks us to stand "in a different place" (p. 73) to embrace and allow emergence, and be led towards transformation. Thus I arrive in a Zone of Proximal Engagement as a way of describing how the children speak of proximity through their experiences of being in work, game and play. My next and last task for this thesis is embrace enchantment.

Chapter 11 — Re-Enchanting Possibility

The authors and stories that are my “writer friends” (Conle, 2000, p. 210) show themselves in many guises through this thesis. At this point in my quest I see my writer friends as thresholds and portals with whom I explore and play with possibility, they lead me forward.

In this quest section I examine what I mean by the art and science of web projects, how our observations and imaginings dance into the realm of possibility to re-enchant experiences of web projects. The ideas set forth here as an imagining of possibility, may also act as an interruption to existing pedagogy (Biesta G. J., 2010, p. 73) and lead to a re-orienting in electronic and collaborative teaching beyond the experience of web projects spoken of in this quest-narrative.

I, an Enlivening Imaginator of Art and Science.

How can we enchant?

How do we enchant?

In this moment the idea of “enlivening imaginers” comes to mind (Kearney, 1998, p. 134). To be an “enlivening imaginator” is to be in a relationship of reciprocity, and an active participant in a work of art as spectator or reader—a work outwith, be it a work of art, film, writing, a making of an idea visible to others. Before I go further, what do I mean by re-enchantment?

With all that has gone on before in this quest, re-enchantment shows itself to be an act of re-imagining, an act of being in imagining, being in possibility and standing in wonder and being at ease in a space of “negative capability” (Keats, 2009, p. 492), to

actually be in mystery, and embrace it, and just be comfortable in possibility and imagining.

I shy away from seeking empirical answers in this thesis about how to re-enchant. My aim is to describe what can be, may be and could be. I think of re-enchanting as a metaphorical hanging of mirrors and an intentional act of reflecting. An act of setting out to see, and look at the ideas, objects and experiences from different orientations, seeking essences and patterns that open thresholds and move into different experiences of a world outwith. I also weave into my imagining of possibility that which is within, pulling it outwith, making visible and tinkering with, playing with, transforming and transcending.

What do I mean by the words ‘art’ and ‘science’?

I believe that ‘art’ is an experience, and an object brought forth through an act of creation. I view the narrative of this thesis as two-fold—it is a setting forth and meaning making within the scrapbook and within this philosophical inquiry as experience and object. Both texts (this thesis and my scrapbook) can be viewed as objects, which are filled with artistry, and because of this, both can be seen as objects of art. The experience, which has brought forth these two objects (this thesis and my scrapbook) are an experience of art and can be described as John Dewey (2005) does when he talks of “art as experience”. The art in this thesis is drawn from living, from actively seeking out harmony in design and lyrical rhythms in the cadence of language used to scribe my quest narrative within these pages. This thesis seeks to honour essences found in art as object, subject, focus and experience.

Dewey’s (2005) voice answers a doubt, which makes its presence known, he contributes wisdom and quietens, “We may hesitate to apply the word ‘art’, since we

doubt the presence of directive intent. But all deliberations, all conscious intent, grows out of things once performed organically through the interplay of natural energies” (p. 25). This thesis is filled with deliberation, conscious intent, and has been created through an interplay of natural energies. Dewey (2005) explains, describes and talks of art in a way, which I believe reinforces the dimensions of art this thesis sits within. He tells us,

In a work of art, different acts, episodes, occurrences melt and fuse into unity, and yet do not disappear and lose their own character as they do so – just as in a genial conversation there is a continuous interchange and blending, and yet each speaker not only retains his own character but manifests it more clearly than is his wont. (p. 38)

Art in this thesis is made up of different acts, episodes that fuse into unity. The design of each web project speaks of this, and also speaks of intentional and deliberate choices in terms of design and sequence as a project based learning experience.

Art is synonymous with the words ‘create’, ‘creating’ and ‘creativity’. Bohm (2004a) speaks to us of ‘creativity’ as being such a complex phenomenon that it is impossible to define in words. He writes about creativity in a manner that requires one to open up possibility, and that to be open to creativity, recognition of originality is a pre-requisite. Bohm (2004a) writes of originality,

...that a person shall not be inclined to impose his preconceptions on the fact as he sees it. Rather he must be able to learn something new, even if this means that the ideas and notions that are comfortable or dear to him may be overturned. (p. 4)

‘Art’ in this thesis enfolds the ideas of being in possibility and being open to learning and “trying something out to see what happens” (p. 4). These two ways of being in the world are visible through the children as they speak of being in the web projects in this thesis. This creative, artistic sensibility mirrors acts of making and working that the children speak of when they speak of working with a soft approach in their learning.

I see the children being in the web projects as living in art, and living in possibility and by seeing their participation as an act of ‘living in’, I see them being open to creativity and originality. I sense enchantment in this possibility.

The children embrace the activities within the projects and live them in a manner true to themselves and their sense of being. The children are artists because an outcome of each web project is an intentional act of creating. Dewey (1934/2005) tells us “Art denotes a process of doing and making” (p. 48). The representations of the mythical beings are artistic, they are the creation of something, which is made with care, intentionality and enfolds the creator’s sensitivity to aesthetics. The children view their doing and making of Bunyips, monsters and Flat Stanley in a manner similar to that of an artist—always checking their art by asking themselves and others, “is it good?” “Have I finished making (shaping and re-shaping) it?” Dewey (2005) says,

Until the artist is satisfied in perception with what he is doing, he continues shaping and re-shaping. The making comes to an end when the result is experienced as good – and that experience comes not by mere intellectual and outside judgement but in direct perception. An artist, in comparison with his fellows, is one who is not only especially gifted in powers of execution but in unusual sensitivity to the qualities of things. This sensitivity also directs his doings and makings. (p. 51)

The art produced in the web projects is not full of intellectual meaning, political meaning or provocation, the art being made, is as an immediate realisation of intent (Dewey, 1934/2005, p. 89).

According to the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (2007) the word ‘art’ is derived from Latin *art-*, *ars* from a base meaning “put together” (p. 124). On the page I have turned to there are nine tones of meaning detailed for art. I pull from the dictionary into the meaning I am spinning here the following, “a pursuit or occupation in which skill is directed towards the production of a work of imagination, imitation or design, or towards the gratification of the aesthetic senses, the products of any such pursuit.” I choose another description on the dictionary’s page, “something in which skill may be obtained or displayed.” I single out another nuance and spin it into my thinking, “the application of skill according to aesthetic principles, esp. in the production of visible works of imagination, imitation, or design (painting, sculpture, architecture, etc.); skilful execution of workmanship as an object in itself; the cultivation of the production of aesthetic objects in its principles, practice, and results” (2007, p. 124).

I stop.

I am working intentionally as *bricoleur*.

I think of art as ‘putting together’ to create a work of imagination and design which incorporates aesthetic principles and demonstrates skilful execution and design. I remember that van Manen (1990) speaks of art as a lived experience, as does Dewey (2005). I seek van Manen (1990) out. He writes,

Of course, each artistic medium (painting, sculpture, music, cinematography, etc.) has its own language of expression. Objects of art visual, tactile, auditory, kinetic texts – texts consisting of not

a verbal language but a language nevertheless, and a language with its own grammar. Because artists are involved in giving shape to their lived experience, the products of art are, in a sense lived experiences transformed into transcended configurations. (p. 74)

These words sit in companionable communion with Malaguzzi (1998) and his *Hundred Languages of Children (di-cento)*. The stark difference is who the words are referring to. Malaguzzi (1998) refers to children, van Manen (1990) to artists, and therefore because our culture usually thinks of artists as adults, we can infer that he is referring to adults.

I sit for a moment in mystery and consider the nuances of the words ‘art’ and ‘artist’, which I have collected so far.

I unfold them and re-fold.

I inscribe my idea of art and artist into this page. An artist in this thesis is one who approaches life in a certain way, in a poetic way, full of reverie, and who purposefully creates through one or more of many modes of expression (words, graphics, paint, dance, sculpture), and as such speaks with a language unique to the medium employed to create with. An artist seeks for their work to be harmonious, in an artistic manner, and to express meaning through making, living in a manner open to possibility.

This work of art is also an experience of art where object, subject, focus and experience can be viewed as artistic when presented in this manuscript object. The object and experience of this piece of art is an expressive form constructed from living, interpreting, observing and records my quest.

Dewey (2005) writes that “Science states meanings; art expresses them” (p. 87). This conversational disclosure begins my dialogue about what ‘science’ is within the context of this thesis.

Bohm’s essay *On Creativity* (2004a) talks of science as an expression and process of creativity. He discloses that art and science have a great deal in common and that both the artist and the scientist feel a fundamental need “to discover and create something new that is whole and total, harmonious and beautiful” (p. 3). I embrace Bohm’s words. He goes on to say that,

...the scientist emphasises the aspect of discovering oneness and totality in nature. For this reason, the fact that his work can also be creative is often overlooked. But in order to discover oneness and totality, the scientist has to create the new overall structures of ideas, which are needed to express the harmony and beauty that can be found in nature. Likewise he has to create the sensitive instruments which aid perception and thus make possible both the testing of new ideas for their truth or falsity, and the disclosure of new and unexpected kinds of facts. (Bohm, 2004a, p. 3)

I see that there is science in this thesis and in web projects, as this work is an act of discovery, as are the web projects. By science I mean questioning, inquiring and searching for meaning, which is framed by a process bound by rigor and scholarship. In this thesis science is present in the technology used and the processes of communication and information gathering which frame and scaffold it. To set forth into a web project, scientific spirit is required. I view this thesis and the web projects in it as science, and also as an experience of science.

Having dug down into the words ‘science’ and ‘art’ I am now able to clarify what I mean by the art and science of web projects.

The art and science of web projects speaks of a way of being which is open to imagination and creativity as rightful in teaching. The design of web project experiences is deliberate and purposeful in the conditions it creates for teaching to take place in, and for learning to occur. A web project that is designed and managed in a manner that is mindful of what children are experiencing, as opposed to what teachers would like them to do, or think they are experiencing, speaks of an encounter filled with a magical essence which accompanies something that can be said to be beautiful, or good in its design and being.

For me, the essence of teaching is moral purpose—a desire to do good, to nurture and bring forth creative, artful imaginings which have grown out of curiosity, perplexity, and a thirst to learn and wonder upon.

In the moment of this writing I am in Stewart’s Bay, in Tasmania. I am in dialogue with my philosopher group – aPIERon, I am listening to Biesta, our guest in dialogue. Biesta (2013) talks of alchemy—that ‘magic something’ that is difficult to define and confine. I believe that observing work, game and play in web projects is an experience of alchemy, and of enchantment—of teaching alchemy, and enchanting learning.

I believe a well-designed and managed web project—one that deliberately assembles into its being imagining, creating and active relationship building, allows children to live in, across and through life-worlds within and life-worlds outwith, and is mindful of and situates itself at the intersection of being in work, game and play in a Zone of Proximal Engagement—can culminate in an experience of teaching and learning alchemy. It promises an experience filled with enchantment. Maxine Greene (1995) says, “Not only

do teachers and learners together need to tell and choose; they have to look toward untapped possibility – to light the fuse, to explore what it might mean to transform possibility”(p. 42).

So what can I suggest for re-enchanting web projects?

That we are offering a possible way to re-enchant web projects, and even web-based experiences that have become dis-encharnted, requires imagining and standing in possibility. Again I am moving in circularity, swinging as an attractor, through thought and through the landscapes of this quest.

Being Mindful as Re-enchantment of Possibility

As teachers, if we are being mindful we are acting from a place of virtue, that is from a place of goodness, morality, ethicalness, honourability, nobility, veracity and trustworthiness. I propose, in the last pages of my quest, to offer mindfulness expressed as virtues, each of which teachers might honour in their pedagogical being, thinking and practice. These mindfulness virtues, caught microscopically in a world of web projects, are transcendent—one can inscribe their patterns, earned within this thesis, onto possible canvases in the future. They re-trace passion on palettes of possibility. And so I invoke a language of virtuous mindfulness like this:

Being mindful of language as a centi-culture: All that we do is in language, and it is through language that we learn and teach. Being mindful in language requires us to acknowledge that there are one hundred languages to speak with, and valuing these and creating conditions for these is evidence of being mindful of language as a centi-culture.

Being mindful in conversation: Teaching and learning can be seen as transmission, participation and engagement—all of which can be ambiguous in their living. We can

never be sure of how much has been transmitted, how full participation has been or the degree of engagement. Being mindful in conversation recognises, enfolds and precipitates the active nature of dialogue and the powerful promise it holds and lives up to in the teaching and learning processes. Both teaching and learning can be seen as active, mindful conversation provided that conditions, which expect purposeful reflection, purposeful curiosity and purposeful wonder, are nurtured.

Being mindful of purpose: Teaching is an act that requires creating conditions that are purposeful and intentional. In creating a teaching experience such as web projects, being mindful of purpose means being purposeful in the creation and design of the experience. Being mindful of purpose requires that as teachers we ensure that the purpose of the experience is visible to the learners. If a particular word is used to describe a web project then being mindful of purpose ensures that a web project label (descriptor) matches the described experience.

Being mindful of design and harmony in teaching: Design and harmony in experience and in objects are noble pursuits in teaching. A space, be it in the world within or in a world outwith, and structured on the principles of harmony, acknowledges the deeper truths within the world.

Being mindful of children's lived experience as opposed to desired experience: In web projects being aware of children's lived experiences requires that we listen with sensitivity to children's speaking, and have an acuity for the patterns of their lived experience. This can be seen as living hermeneutically, as it requires us to attend to experience and interpret it within the scope of our traditions as teacher and learner.

Being mindful of the rightful place of imagination and creativity in learning: Our current teaching traditions limit opportunities for children to be in imagination and creativity.

Mindfulness of imagination and creativity in learning offers a threshold to richness in teaching.

Being mindful in forming conditions for children to live within, across and through worlds within, and worlds outwith: Being mindful with children and their ability to move between their lived world (a world outwith), their world within and the cyber world, acknowledges that a sense of autonomy is important and necessary for children to embrace when they are participating in web projects, and in other learning experiences.

Being mindful of a Zone of Proximal Engagement: By listening intently to the conversations about proximity and whether web projects are work, game or play, children reveal a close relationship between their perception of proximity to a task, and their engagement as a description of work, game and play. In their speaking the children disclose that a place of learning enchantment, and (I infer), possibly teaching enchantment, is a task or experience that is situated at an intersection of being in work, game and play. From the children's conversation I imagine that being in learning can be described as being in a Zone of Proximal Engagement. A noble goal then in teaching is to be mindful not just of the Zone of Proximal Development but also, that for work to be engaging and enchanting, it must also be in a Zone of Proximal Engagement.

Being mindful of soft, hard, softer and harder approaches to being in tasks: Being mindful of soft and hard styles to task approach and completion has implications for how we design learning experiences. The children speak of their approaches to task completion in different ways with the red conversation cards in my-pack-of-cards. Tasks within the web projects which state what the end product needs to be allows the children to work in a way which suited their way of being in learning. Teachers, who are mindful of soft and hard approaches to being in a task, can empower learners to be open to teaching.

Being mindful of proximity: Proximity has disclosed to us that it is possible for children to reveal their degree of engagement if we interpret engagement as a sense of proximity to a task, object, subject or focus. Being mindful of proximity brings forth the possibility that children can share with us the degree of engagement they feel. If we think of this as an opportunity to ask questions and clarify a child's perception of proximity when they are in learning then we have an opportunity to reflect upon and act as *bricoleur*. We can be a teacher who tinkers with the creation of conditions, and takes action to facilitate teaching, and bring children closer to the means of their learning, be it a object, subject, focus or experience in learning.

Being mindful of the power and magnetism of evocative object-subject-focus-experiences. Dewey (1934/2005), Greene (1995), Papert (1993), Turkle, (1993, 2007, 2011) and Keats (2009) all speak of the power that objects in the guise of artefacts, objects, subjects, foci and experiences can have in facilitating the building of knowledge and understanding. Attentive listening to children, and noticing the relationships children have in learning to the things they love, may lead to new ways of thinking, language and ideas—to life long passions for science, art, language and a plethora of other interests, and fields of learning.

Being mindful of Alethia: As teachers we must reveal, disclose and navigate with a leaning toward the truth of things (Sokolowski, 2008, p.20) that portrays and enacts moral purpose in teaching. Within web projects and in the context of this thesis truth is interpreted (and shared here as Lawn (2006) interpreting, Gadamer,) “as experience” and as “wisdom grounded in openness to experience” (Gadamer in Lawn, 2006, p. 64). As teachers we are navigators of wisdom and experience—we may ourselves become Alethia personified, leading children into being in learning, and through learning.

Being mindful that we are teachers and we teach: We are teachers and our way of being with children when we are in the role of teacher is to teach. The creation and participation by children in web projects is an intentional act of teaching, as it is done with the purpose of teaching with, within and through digital tools. As teachers, we ought to make the active aspect of teaching visible, fill it with imagination and create conditions that enable teaching.

We might well call teachers into such mindfulness virtues. As Pugh (2000) writes, “We might therefore appeal to them (the virtues) to inhabit our designing” (p. 261) and, I add, to inhabit our being when we are active in teaching.

Being in mindfulness requires designers, managers, and participants (teachers or children) to navigate through web project experiences in ways that engender autonomy and lead to being in the Zone of Proximal Engagement—a place that is enchanting and full of mystery imagined as teaching and learning alchemy.

It becomes wondrous for me to believe that, immersed and transformed in moments of teaching alchemy, teachers experience and understand their own Zone of Proximal Engagement, and that an intentional act of teaching that sings and dances through its unfolding is an active expression of a teacher being in work, game and play—their Zone of Proximal Engagement.

This quest has gathered within its circle of dialogue an eclectic interlacing of ideas and traditions. It is filled with the familiar, and is brought forth, and set forth in a manner original in its unfolding and enfolding of lived life-world narratives. This thesis is both an experience of, and an object of art and speaks of re-shaping intentional efforts to see the world with unusual sensitivity. It represents my deliberate placement of myself in different positions to illuminate the phenomena I study.

I inhabit this work artistically and imaginatively. I have come to know myself as a philosopher who lives within, across and through a life-world with philosophical sensibility. I arrive in understanding of Gadamer through Lawn's (2006) interpretation that "meaning can never be complete" (in Lawn, 2006, p. 3).

I swing back to Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass* and think of the poem at the beginning of this quest in Chapter 1, pages 41-42. I pick out these words, "The love-gift of a fairy-tale."

This work is a love-gift.

A quest-narrative love-gift.

This love gift of "poetic imagining", is a love-gift-quest-narrative life-world of my making, which proposes possibility and is never brought forth as a prescription, method or methodological approach to web projects. This thesis of Bunyips, monsters and Flat Stanley, children, web projects, literature, teaching and learning is a love-gift to children and teachers, and pulls you, my reader as outlander, into my world within.

Recalling Carroll's (1872/1994) poem it occurs to me that I could be within my Zone of Proximal Engagement – I am being in work, game and play. I saunter back to the beginning of my thesis. I am pulled up short. I recognise my research experience in Lawn's (2006) words, "In genuine hermeneutic encounters one is surprised, pulled up short, in novel and unique ways ... truth is revelation, what is opened up in the encounter between the familiar and unfamiliar" (p. 62).

I read Carroll's poem gaining deeper understandings of his narratives. He reflects upon the distance between childhood and adult (as spoken of earlier), and of the stories being love gifts. Musing upon Alice and her creator, I linger in the idea of poetry—poetic response, poetic creativity.

Poems paint pictures with words and use text to speak creatively, they beat a rhythm that is built on speech and resonates at a cognitive and sensory level (Richardson L. , 1997, p. 143). Ricci (2003) talks of inquiry and of what it shares with poetry, he says “Poetry and qualitative research share in their goals of providing meaning, density, aestheticism, and reflexivity. They are also evocative” (2003). The idea of making a passage of text that echoes with evocative rhythms and pauses, harmonises with earlier objects. I do not consider myself a literary poet, I do, however, believe that I live poetically. Representing my lived experience through a “self reflexive and transformational process of self-creation” (Richardson L. , 1997, p. 143) that takes form in my embracing of *Di Cento* speaking through poetic drawing and text, I decide to make a poem in the closing pages of my thesis, emphasising a poetic arc and poetic sensibility that my expressive self abides within as I swing through the living of my thesis. As Richardson (1993) says,

By settling words together into new configurations, the relations created through echo, repetition, rhythm, rhyme let us see and hear the world in a new dimension. Poetry is thus a practical and powerful means for reconstitution of worlds (p.705)

I am drawn to Jackie Wiggins’ (2011) in *Feeling is how I understand it: Found poetry as analysis*, and use her approach to ‘found poetry’ to ‘step through’ into poem making. Wiggins removed words from interview transcripts and arrived in poetic stanzas. My approach to found poetry differs, I emphasise words in my narrative by making them bold within the text, and then pull them out to create a poem. My ‘found poem’ can be read in free form separately within the coming text using the bold words before it. The emphasised words have been chosen with care underscoring the “narrative echoing” (Conle, 2000, p. 202) I hear my evocative object-subject-focus-experience whispering

from my quest-journey and quest-narrative-thesis. My poem is graphic speaking of another form that I recognise as another language within *Di Cento*, a centi-culture of language

Love Gift Essences

Web project essences are found, in acts of stepping through metaphorical wardrobes, and portals into **life-worlds** that transcend worlds within, worlds outwith, and the cyber world. Web project essences **are** seen in the ways children work through web project tasks, they value **eclectic** approaches, to doing, and being, they build scope for a range of task style-mastery approaches (Re-call the red card conversations based on Turkle's (2005), "styles of mastery" (p. 101) and her earlier work with Papert (Turkle & Papert, 1991) regarding soft and hard approaches to computer programming tasks). The essences of web projects are **acts** of inviting, and **embracing**, experiences of being in, arriving in, and moving through **work, game, play, and a Zone of Proximal Engagement**. Essences make themselves visible through **a centi-culture of speaking**, brought forth, through, and with, **relationships** with another, and others, as object-subject-focus-experiences.

Essences of web projects and narrative quests are **held** within my collection of quest objects (my-pack-of-cards, activity cards, alethiometer, tre-foil knot, spiral, Lorenz attractor, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPE)) (Figure 83), which, as Alethia personified, I hold **in** a box of **teaching possibilities** (Figure 84).



Figure 83 My collection of artefacts



Figure 84 A box of teaching possibilities

My box of teaching possibilities, and the **journey** of their making, **shows** my disposition to re-trace passion on possibility, of applying my art and science in my lived experience of a web project “**micro-world**” (Papert, 1993). My quest has mapped out a journey **of** transformation, from temporal **imagining** to an objectified and applied set

of objects within a teaching and learning context — a web project “micro-world”. At this **twinkling** of time, I believe I am the only person to transform, develop and test the objects in my box of teaching **possibilities** in the forms they are made in. My **narration** is the only evidence and claim to the success of my quest objects.

I am still.

My questing has **led me** to this moment, a marking of time transforming alethiometer number four into alethiometer number five.

My heart rate increases, my sensory alertness heightens.

There is more thinking, doing and making to be done. Stepping **through an ephemeral threshold**, I imagine teachers using alethiometer number five (Figure 85) and my sets of cards in classrooms to measure experience, in a range of teaching situations—guided reading, maths, writing, art, inquiry teaching, spelling, book studies, drama, music, sport, history, geography, play, and more. **I** imagine children using them as well—both teachers, and children using my box of teaching possibilities as tools to reflect with and value lived **experience**. I imagine children and teachers measuring experiences of **teacher present** learning in their daily schooling, **and** perhaps **child presence in learning**.

I draw alethiometer number five, colours are given to the outer rim edge, colours are added to the symbols on the outer dial, five coloured hands are added, they are fine and elegant. The new hands show what has been sitting just behind my gauzy veil — quintessence.

I use the word ‘*quintessence*’ purposefully. In classical and medieval philosophy it is “a fifth substance in addition to the four elements, thought to **compose** the heavenly bodies and to be latent in all things,” it also describes “the purest, most typical or most

perfect form, manifestation or embodiment of some quality or class” (Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 2439). There are now five (quin) clear essences that **combine** to make alethiometer number five, how **serendipitous** that this alethiometer is my fifth variant. There are five sections on this alethiometer — the dials, the section showing portals, the section showing a world within and a world outwith, the three metallic hands that point to the portals and **life-worlds of experience**, and now the coloured set of hands. Alethiometer number five (Figure 85) holds within it an ability to show experiences spoken of with **my-pack-of-cards**. This alethiometer measures, **and** values, using hands coloured to match the coloured suites of symbols originating on my-pack-of-cards and, **now**, shared with **my alethiometer**. These symbols (glyphs) are placed on the outer dial.

I imagine the colourful hands spinning, hurling and whizzing, then slowing and stopping on particular coloured symbols aligning coloured hands and symbols.



Figure 85 Alethiometer number five

I cut out my drawing of alethiometer number five and **rest** it on my palm (Figure 86).



Figure 86 Alethiometer in the palm of my hand

A new object. New **ideas happen**.

I recognise myself moving into my Zone of Proximal Engagement.

Circling 360°, through, and into my Zone of Proximal Engagement

Both my-pack-of-cards and alethiometer number five are **shifting** and **transforming** again becoming finely **crafted** and **bespoke** objects that may sit across and through worlds **within and outwith** and intersected dimensions of being in **work, game and play**. One imagining coming from this space is of a tangible object, the other a digital object of some sort. I sense there is scope for smart phone and tablet applications, and the like (Figure 87).



Figure 87 Alethiometer number five imagined in digital form

In both forms alethiometer number five can be held in one's hands (Figure 88) when **in teaching and learning**. Both forms may act as measurers of a child or adult's experience of **stepping around, through, and into** a Zone of Proximal Engagement—that magic space of being 'in the zone' — a space of creativity, of being in relationship with an object-subject-focus-experience, within sequences of teaching and learning tasks. I imagine my digital alethiometer in my hand as I teach, and work with children (Figure 88).

I am excited by the potential that has moved from **temporal imagining**, to an object ready to use, try, play with, apply, work with **and** evaluate.



Figure 88 My hand holding digital alethiometer number five

I have circled through my phenomenon of scholarship. On this page I imagine that I am sitting on a number of circular significance, 360, and if I step into another page I continue **circling**, living an infinity spiral—stepping into possibility beyond this quest's scope.

A blueprint **unconceals** itself for more making and doing beyond this moment and the scope of **this quest**.

I pause, and **linger** momentarily.

I ready myself for **stepping** beyond my web project micro-world **into** a liminal moment, signalling potential research-narrative-quests yet to be experienced and written.

The infinite spiralling journey of my lived-web-project-experience speaks of the hermeneutical and phenomenological nature of my **evocative scholarship**, and the power of new things to lead to new thinking. **I** can now **move** beyond this quest and narrative inquiry, into a new tracing of passion on possibility — a new quest — applying my alethiometer, and my sets of cards to teaching and learning **beyond a web project micro-world**.

A Love Gift of a Poem

Web project life-worlds are eclectic acts
embracing,
work, game, play, and a Zone of Proximal Engagement
a centi-culture of speaking relationships
held
in
teaching possibilities

My journey shows a micro-world of
Imagining, twinkling possibilities,
narration led me through an ephemeral threshold
I experience teacher present,
and child presence in learning.

I compose serendipitous life-worlds of experience,

my-pack-of-cards and now, my alethiometer rest,

ideas happen.

Shifting,

transforming

crafted

bespoke

within and outwith, work, game and play

in teaching and learning stepping around, through, and into
temporal imagining

circling, unconceals this quest.

I linger

stepping into evocative scholarship

I move beyond a web project micro-world.

Final Words

I step back onto the threshold that led me here, my two questions—

What is a web project?

What is a web project for?

Reflecting upon, and pausing within my poem, my life-world within shifts, and my
questions become –

What have web projects set in motion?

I see that my thesis narrates a quest set in motion by web projects.

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