

LEARNING TO LEARN

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‘Since we do not know what kind of information will be needed in the 21st century, it is senseless to teach it in advance. Instead we should be turning out people who love learning so much and learn so well that they will be able to learn whatever needs to be learnt.’

John Holt, 1964



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Economic challenges: Wealth inequalities, structural unemployment

Polarisation of workforce - 'global elite' and 'the rest'

Casualisation of professional roles

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What needs to be learned?

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- Working and living together – across class, wealth, age, ethnic, race and religious divides;
- How to take advantage of social networking, connectivity, merging of physical and digital (augmented bodies);
- How to reshape economies and communities through global ‘localism’;
- How to live sustainably and be resilient.



5 By 2035 50% of population of Western Europe over 50,
In many countries the post-war generation have enjoyed
economic benefits for which younger people are now paying.



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Which policeman might have some problems with teamwork?

A stitch in time: tackling educational disengagement (Demos 2009, Sonia Sodha & Silvia Guglielmi)

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- Almost 10% 16—18 year-olds were not in education, employment or training (NEET) in late 2007 — this 10% cost society much money and often have very broken lives.

A stitch in time

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- England has some of *the poorest attitudes towards learning* and enjoyment of learning and 40% of children partly or mostly agreeing with the statement ‘I hate school/college’.

Assessment and motivation

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- Current assessment practice generally reduces motivation and resilience;
- Strongest impact on low achieving students – ‘I am stupid’;
- Encourages surface learning and a desire for ‘spoon feeding’;
- Does not encourage L2L;

8 key competences outlined in the European Reference Framework (2006)

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- Communication in mother tongue;
- Communication in foreign languages;
- Competence in maths, science and technology;
- Digital competence;
- Learning to learn (L2L);
- Social and civic competence;
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship and
- Cultural awareness and expression.
- All 'emphasise critical thinking, creativity, initiative, problem solving, risk assessment, decision making, and constructive management of feelings' but in official documentation the ability to learn was seen as paramount.

Key competences

Transversal competences –
don't map onto subjects

Hoskins & Deakin Crick (2011)

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- Describe the internal structures of a competence as including dimensions of:
‘knowledge, cognitive skills, practical skills, attitudes, emotions, values, ethics and motivation’.
- If you are serious about L2L & competence, you need ‘real’ contexts, enquiry based experiential learning and very different assessment.

An opinion line

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Harmony 1

Tension

1



2



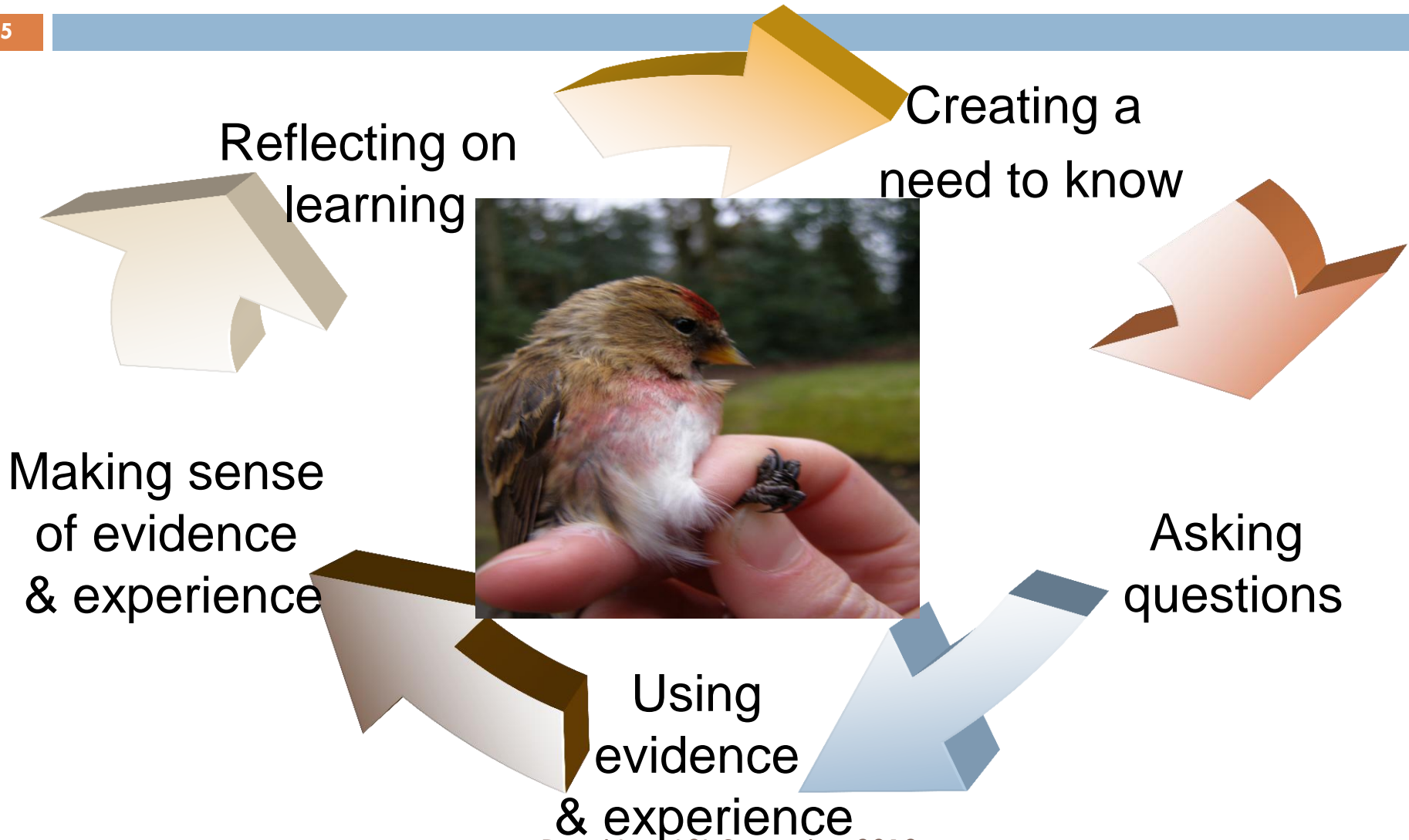
So what is enquiry?

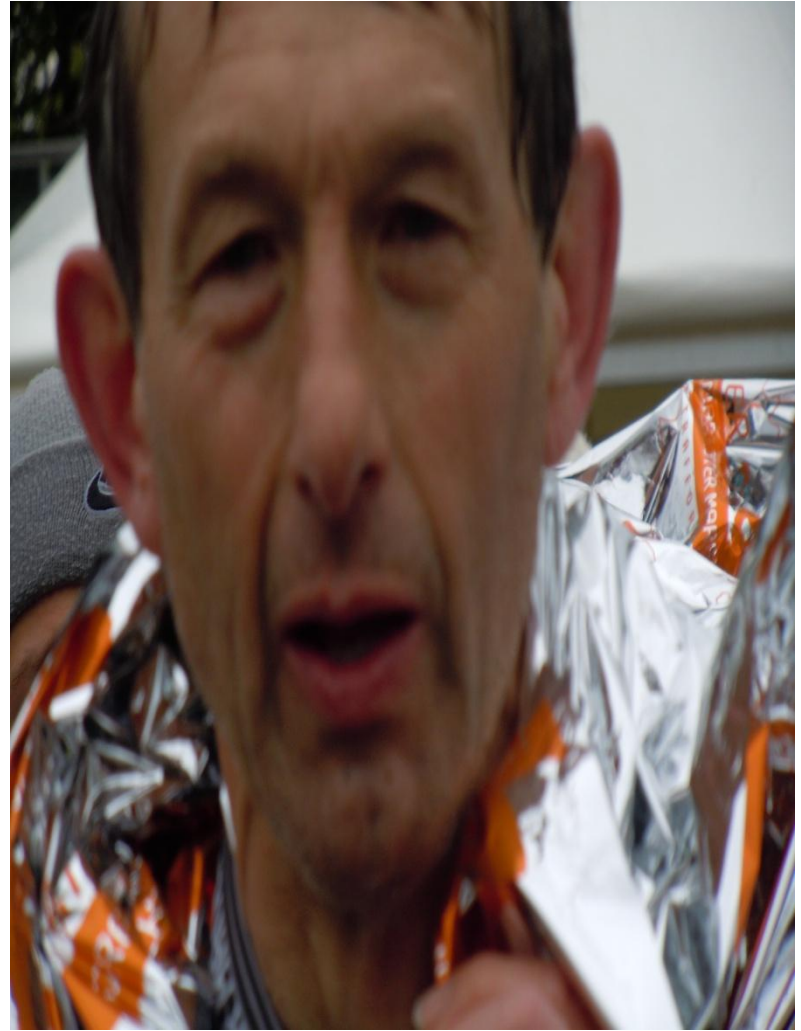
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- It is a process of doing and thinking driven **by curiosity and questions** (it is not routine);
- It can be **independent or supported, formal or informal, individual or collaborative**;
- It listens to other perspectives or voices, and **opens us to being changed** (self enhancing/correcting);
- It may involve the making of new products, produce, performances, art, services, endeavours or decisions;
- Learners assume as **much responsibility as possible**;
- Any assessment has to **interested in the whole person**;
- It may well be 'troublesome'.

A simple enquiry model

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The enterprise given to 10 year olds

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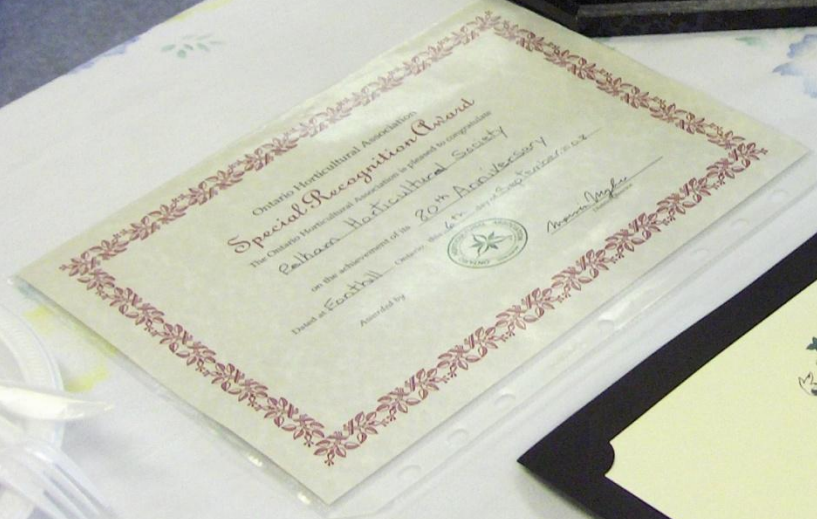
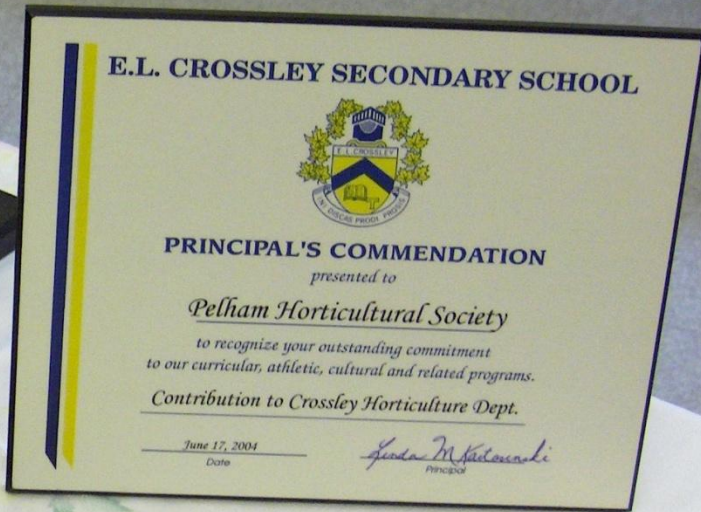
- They had to organise the Flower and Vegetable Show;
- They were guided by the leader of the local council;
- They had to plan and run the show – deciding on the ‘classes’, the entry rules, the judging criteria, the timing, venue, the publicity, the budget ... Everything!

The Vegetable & Produce Show

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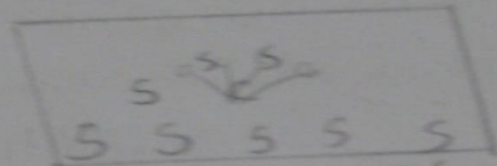


May 28th May

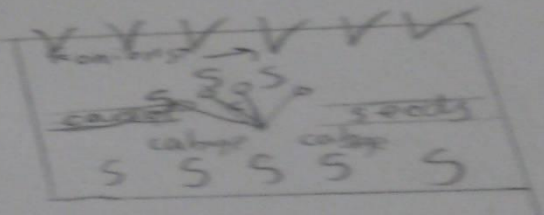
Planting

We planted our garden. Our bed already had
it. I planted 6 onions and a row of carrot
and 2 cabbage plants. I was the only one of my
here today.

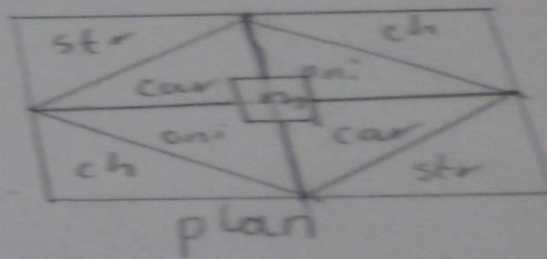
I'd to plant some mints if we
plant every thing on our plan.
think we may need to take
of our strawberries plants
because they are indanger of
eating the other plants and taking
the bed.



before S = Strawberry
C = chives



may need to make a new design because
other things already in our bed
wasn't room to follow our plan.



bed will properly need netting when the straw
fruit because last years group said the birds
the strawberries

Armathawaite First School (4-8 years old)

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- School used a grant to appoint a part time community development officer;
- She found and developed 'enquiry' partners in the community;
- The pupils researched, designed and made new sandwiches at the village bakery, weekend packages at the local dog hotel, and a wedding and reception at the local church.

Student voices from NE England

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You get to choose what experiments you do, as long as it is safe;

You got to see things from different people and how they see it, so they made different sense;

I always think I am right but when I listened ... I realised I wasn't.

I never knew learning was like this;

Student voices from NE England

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If you are working off the board all the time you are not really learning anything. If you are actually doing it you learn a lot more.

I really thought about me as a person. I like it when everyone in the year group is working together and they actually want to do something together because it's fun and it's real life scenarios not just in school.

Yeah we've learnt how to work in a team, working together ... and how we can take one thing and it can be connected with every subject.

(Teachers) were more like ... they would talk to you more as a friend.

The effect of 'high stakes' exams

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- Student: *The teacher will say get your text books and find out about this subject and even though he does tell you if you are right or wrong, I still don't feel as if I am (right) because I found it out myself and you are still unsure ...*
- Student: *We're still all in the middle of our GCSEs and we just want you to give us the right answers so we can learn it and I think that's what is stressful for a lot of people. We just want the correct answers so we can go and learn them instead of having to go and find it.*
- Student: *That's what worries me the most, that I am getting information that I don't need and I'm skimming the patches that I do need.*

Teachers: Issues we will need to address

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- Teacher Identity
 - ▣ What does the ‘teacher’ look like if we want them to use knowledge and expertise beyond the school walls and ‘follow’ some of students’ questions, using ICT?
- Epistemology and reliability of new knowledge sources;
- Flexible planning – ‘going with the flow’;
- Assessment – more about the ‘whole person’;
- School – ‘community’ relationships.

The big issue: Teacher 'knots'

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- A lot of teaching is governed by unthinking routine behaviour, (book exercises, question and answer, narrow learning objectives) they are deeply internalised.
- These behaviours can often clash with values, policies, ideas, theory, even learning etc.
- They are sometimes referred to as 'knots'.

Some of the effects of enquiry on teachers

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- *I have always been quite in control of what I do, and I have released some of that control. Yes I do need to be well organised, but I am standing back, not controlling things quite so much ... As a result of the project the students now see me as a bit more approachable ... I can still have awful times with them, but I have far more good times ..*
- *It has opened my eyes to the abilities of the students that I hadn't recognised and to value other skills, not just linguistic skills. I love seeing the light bulbs going off in the student researchers;*

More evidence

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- *I think people see me as someone who will help them out and I am more open than I was.*
- *When my Year 8 did that enquiry project – they asked their peers who were taking the lesson when they needed help and not me, that's when I started to think yes this could work really well.*

‘A stitch in time’ on policy makers

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- “Second, politicians and policy makers have over the last decade failed to recognise the limited power of top-down levers such as curriculum reform and centrally directed initiatives.”
- Educational engagement is in the hands of schools (the community) and local employers

Problems reported from Poland, Hungary, Spain, France, England etc.

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- Weak political commitment;
- Lack of teacher training;
- Desire to do well in PISA;
- Resistance from ‘subjects’;
- No reform of assessment;
- Lack of systemic change – textbooks, school culture;
- ‘Epistemological fog’!

Curriculum questions (Dillon 2009)

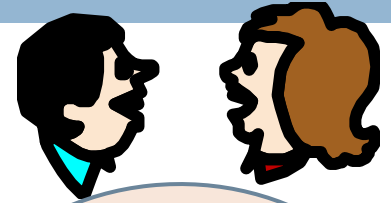
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1. Nature of curriculum – **what is it, what is it for?** (for citizenship, for moral development, for delivery of vocational skills, for preparation for HE, for healthy lives, to pass exams!)
2. Elements of the curriculum – what is it composed of?
 - ***Who teaches it?***
 - ***What is taught?***
 - ***Where and when?***
 - ***Why?***
 - ***How?***
 - ***What are the outcomes? Who learns what?***
 - ***How is it assessed?***

REMAKING L2L CURRICULUM

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ENQUIRY



Dialogue - where different voices are heard and listened to. Meaning is not given but contested and explored.

SUBJECTS

COMMUNITY

Working Space – for teachers

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TO START

- Permission to experiment and think differently;
- Ideas to excite and stimulate and practical help;
- Collaboration;

TO DEVELOP (Through Leadership)

- Structured opportunities for safe dialogue;
- Resources and networks;
- Access to decision making;
- Some protection round the borders.

Did that innovation go well?

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Learning to Learn is ...

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- Creating conditions that allow learners to think and act creatively, wisely and differently from the ‘normal’ or ‘routine’;
- Those conditions, we have termed ‘working space’.

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