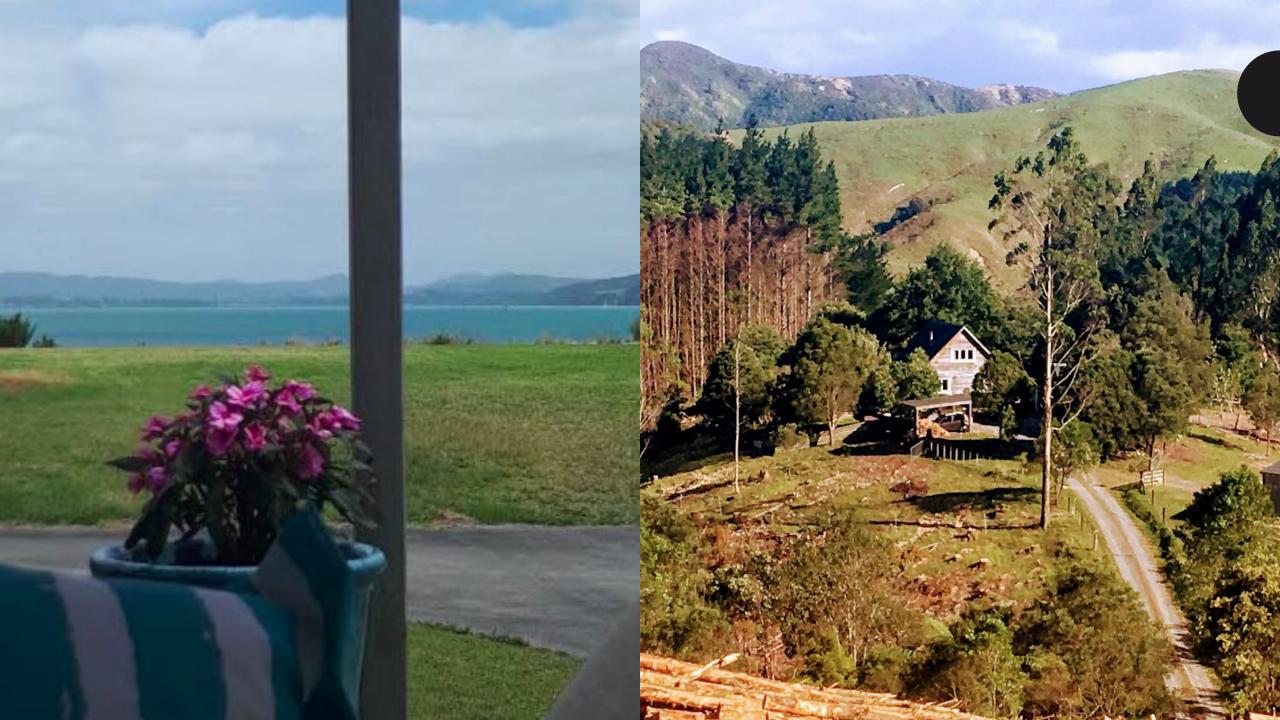
### "Because it actually means something to me"

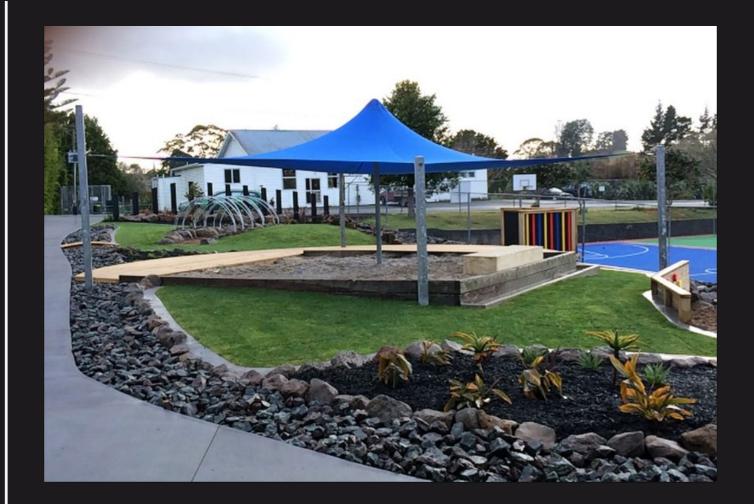
Outcomes of an 18-month study into Dramatic Inquiry and writing within a culturally responsive frame

Drama NZ conference 2019 Paper presentation - Viv Aitken & Renee Downey



## OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION

- School context / project focus
- Theoretical framework
- Literature
- Inquiry/ research questions
- Methods
- Findings
- Unexpected findings
- Discussion / implications
- Opportunities for further research
- References



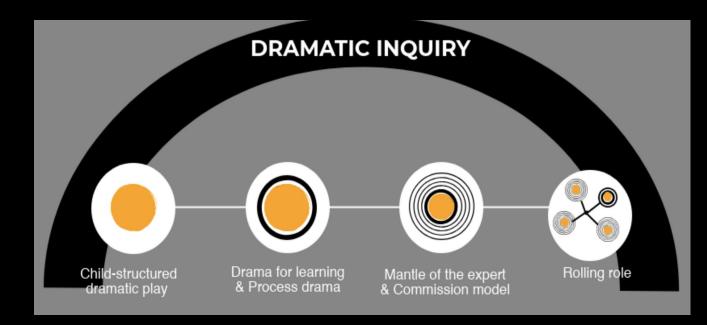
## School context

**Otaika Valley School** Semi-rural

Project Team Renee Downey Heidi Grove / Nieddu Courtney deBoer Hayley Alchin Terry Brock - Principal

# Project focus

- DRAMATIC INQUIRY
- CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY -Understandings of Kaupapa Māori / Te Ao Māori
- FOCUS ON WRITING



## Theoretical framework

- Social constructivist view of learning
- Non deficit thinking about learners
- Appreciative inquiry approach with teachers
- Researcher involved in reflective conversations
- Bias acknowledged

### Literature on Dramatic inquiry

"Arguments for the kinds of learning outcomes that drama education can support in New Zealand mirror those in the international literature, including enhancement of language and literacy development, where literacy is viewed in broad terms as well as a range of personal and social development outcomes for students." (Bolstad, 2011 p.28)

### Literature on culturally responsive pedagogy

"Culture Counts" Bishop and Berryman (2009)

"Whakapiringatanga – (Culturally responsive teachers) are able to create a secure, well-managed learning environment by incorporating routine pedagogical knowledge with pedagogical imagination" *Kotahitanga Effective Teacher profile* – Bishop, Berryman et al (2009)

"Establishing an effective ensemble culture bears strong resemblance to the establishment of whānaungatanga in the classroom, a core dimension in culturally responsive teaching practice" Cody (2016)

## Inquiry / Research questions

1. What writing outcomes and attitudes to writing are observed and reported among year 1-6 Maori students engaged in a dramatic inquiry approach within one rural NZ primary school?

2. What do a group of 5 Pākeha teaching practitioners in one rural NZ primary school identify as key to their personal understandings of culturally responsive teaching when working to support learning through dramatic inquiry within the writing classroom?

3. What do five teachers working in collaboration with each other and with outside experts in a TLIF inquiry, report to be the benefits, limitations and learnings from this experience?

## Methods

#### Data Generation

- Assessments of student writing
- Focus groups
- Researcher in role
- Teacher reflective conversations / interviews
- Teacher reflective journals
- Teacher planning

### TLIF:

#### Data Analysis

- Assessment of student writing
- Transcription of focus group interviews
- Surface level analysis of teacher notes and journals
   PROJECT
- Three data sets
- Full transcription of teacher interviews
- Inductive and deductive coding
- Thematic analysis
- Open to non confirming and unexpected findings

## FINDINGS - TLIF

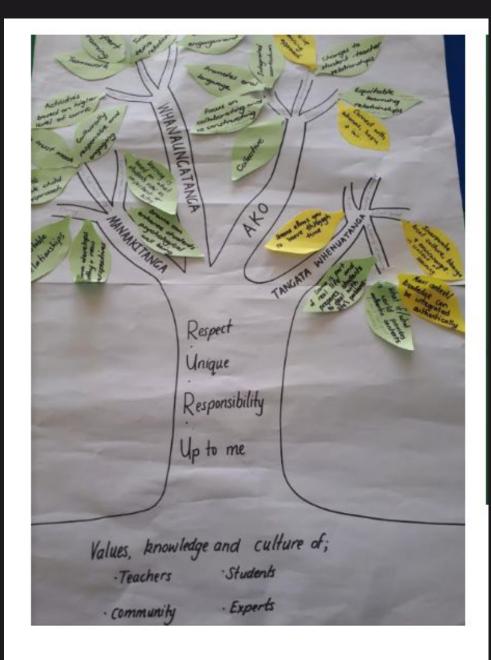
#### Students

- 9/12 in focus group maintained 1 years progress in National Standards
- 3/12 accelerated progress
- Students talked about writing in more positive terms. Saw themselves as writers.
- Clearer sense of the purpose of writing and stronger sense of audience
- Teachers reported increased ownership and engagement

#### Teachers

- Distinct strengthening of professional knowledge in dramatic inquiry and Te Ao Māori
- Increased technical confidence in planning and implementing.
- More confidence in understandings of Te Ao Māori
- Identified areas of existing success in CRP and areas for improvement
- Now whole school commitment

### Poster



Q1 What writing outcomes and attitudes to writing are observed and reported among year 1-6 Maori students engaged in a dramatic inquiry approach within one rural NZ primary school?

- Benefits for student's writing noted from the beginning of the project, beginning with increased engagement and perspective taking
- Multiple additional benefits were reported in later stages (35 overall)
- Key themes: perspective taking, Increased engagement, Increased motivation, increased purpose, improved questioning.

#### Sub question: What other benefits for students, beyond writing were noted?

• Multiple benefits for students (approx 50) were noted beyond writing - in key competences and learning dispositions. Key themes were: making real world connections, retention and recall of information, positive engagement in learning, sense of safety & improved social skills. These came through more strongly as the project went on.

#### Benefits for students' writing – reported by teachers

#### 1<sup>st</sup> data set

Increased engagement Perspective taking 2<sup>nd</sup> data set

Purpose x<sub>4</sub> Motivation x<sub>4</sub> Increased engagement x 3 Perspective taking x3 Increased personal voice x2 More empathy and compassion x 2 Selecting appropriate tone x 2 Improved questioning x 2 Struggling writers accessing information orally x 2 Peer-peer communication and collaboration x2 Exploring ethical issues Improved vocabulary Spontaneous thought Increased use of direct speech Improved attitude Increased passion and drive Use of multiple sources Less cut and paste Accelerated progress Improved quality and quantity

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> data set

Motivation x 3 More willingness x 2 Improved questioning x 2 Perspective taking x 2 Improved oral language Deeper research through interviewing TIR Improved attitude Increased independence Improved length Better sentence structure More creative language Richer vocabulary More emphasis on process More detail and interest in text Deeper understanding Writing in role – getting easier Increased use of direct speech Increased self esteem

#### Benefits for students beyond writing – reported by teachers

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> data set

Better social skills x 3 Learning as authentic real world tasks x 2 More empathy x 2 Taking care of visitors x 2 Retention and transfer More open to wondering Enhanced teacher expectation / Willingness Excited about learning Deeper understanding Yearning to know Learning about emotions Taking TIR more seriously Communication Collaboration Purpose Standards **Experiential learning** Self directed differentiation Enjoyment of spelling and maths Higher order thinking in reading Making links to real world

3<sup>rd</sup> data set

Making real world connections x 5 Safety x 4 Positive engagement x4 Retention / recall of information x 4 Confidence x 3 Working in flow x 2 Motivated x 2 Self-direction  $x_2$ Leadership x 2 Overcoming resistence to role x 2 Progress in reading - including struggling readers x 2 Ownership Taking control over leanring Collaboration Resilience Shifted power relationship with teacher Being more sensible Holistic – changes them as a person Richer learning, deeper understanding More complex thinking Critical thinking Advantages for child with SEN

Emotional health Increased group cohesion Acknowledging different perspectives Less need for classroom management Flow on effects for families Moving beyond gendered responses Sense of freedom Growing acceptance of working in metaxis Pride Commitment to imaginary context

O2 What do a group of (4) Pākeha teaching practitioners in one rural NZ primary school identify as key to their personal understandings of culturally responsive teaching when working to support learning through dramatic inquiry within the writing classroom?

- Teachers felt growing confidence and commitment to the idea of CRP.
- Sense of identity as culturally responsive practitioners developed slowly at first.
- By the end of the project huge learnings and acknowledgement of need to continue the journey.
- Concern expressed about accessing ongoing support from local experts without overloading them.

Key understandings of CRP included:

- recognising their own eurocentricity
- acknowledging the importance of using local references and stories in planning.

Specific Learnings about the synergies between DI and CRP consolidated on the 'tree' poster. Some principles of CRP pedagogy seen as intrinsic to DI pedagogy (e.g. collaboration) while other aspects took more conscious effort to achieve (e.g. using Maori contexts in planning).

Q3 What do (four) teachers working in collaboration with each other and with outside experts in a TLIF inquiry, report to be the benefits, limitations and learnings from this experience?

- Relationship, trust, honesty and collaboration crucial within team, with parents, with experts, with children, between children, with rest of school and with other schools and institutions (particularly at start of project)
- Importance of careful communication within all relationships. Communication with whanau / parents acknowledged as an area to be revisited and enhanced.
- Developing understandings of DI and CRP required significant shifts in mindset and perspectives not comfortable or easy process required conscious effort and practice
- TLIF worthwhile despite pressures on time and impacts on wellbeing especially for TLIF leader priority for future applications should be budgeting time for release

Q3 What do (four) teachers working in collaboration with each other and with outside experts in a TLIF inquiry, report to be the benefits, limitations and learnings from this experience?

- Increased confidence, engagement, and eventually a sense of ownership and leadership within DI (teachers and students)
- Strong commitment to DI teachers, students and school leaders- manifested in poster and changes to programming and documentation.
- Continued tension between dramatic inquiry and "normal" / "traditional" teaching and assessment practices (teachers, students and parents)
- Ako everyone learning and trying lots of new things learning through trial and error (this included children, teachers, researchers, school leaders, other teachers in school)
- Valuable opportunities for connection with experts, other schools and a university group visits and PLD

## Non confirming data / limitations

- Can't claim cause effect
- Some children (2-3) still uncertain / resistant to working in role
- Some evidence of confusion when moving from one Mantle of the Expert to another
- Ongoing challenges aligning DI to traditional assessment
- Challenges of time, stress, workload especially for project leader
- Challenges of explaining DI to parents
- Challenges of adapting Mantle of the Expert to junior classrooms
- Sense of obligation to do "normal" teaching to get "core stuff" covered
- Need to make learning explicit doing not the same as learning
- Lots still to learn in DI and CRP need for ongoing support and input how to access?

1. High number of innovations trialled by teachers over 18 months (see next slide)

40+ new drama strategies, 30+ shifts in pedagogy, 12 digital innovations, 14 'other'

2. Shifts in engagement observed in children parallel teacher's own progress.

ATTRACTION -> ATTENTION -> INTEREST -> EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION -> CONCERN -> INVESTMENT -> OBSESSION (Heathcote's continuum of engagement)

3. 'Noise' from real life serving as reminders of the deeper purposes

Road trip, Election of Trump, interruptions during interviews, builders on site, scam caller, baby in a life jacket

4. Usefulness of metaphors to explain complex things

Project leadership as taking a huge bite of cake DI and Te Ao Maori as tree TLIF as Mantle: Project team as "Imposters Inc"

÷		New things the teachers tried during the project					
8	PHASE	DRAMA STRATEGIES	SHIFTS IN PEDAGOGY	DIGITAL TOOLS	OTHER		
	1 (Aug 2016- end 2016)	<ul> <li>Playing drama games</li> <li>Reading stories and acting out different points of view</li> <li>Using stories to create process dramas</li> <li>Creating soundscapes</li> <li>Drawing the 'Favourite part of office'</li> <li>Writing in role</li> <li>Creating Mini Mantles – subject specific</li> <li>Hotseating</li> <li>Using teacher in role</li> <li>Creating freeze frames</li> <li>Exploring Heathcote's role conventions</li> <li>Creating a new convention 'The OVA echo'</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Letting students lead conversations and activities</li> <li>Using genuine questions</li> <li>Using 'what if?'</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Using 'Virtual reality' app</li> <li>Using pictograms</li> <li>Incorporating video</li> <li>Experimenting with 'Explain everything' app</li> <li>Using Seesaw posts to parents</li> <li>Updating Facebook posts to parents</li> <li>Storing professional readings and reflections in Google Drive</li> <li>Videoing their own teaching for review and reflection</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Creating new planning templates</li> <li>Collaborating in planning</li> <li>Modelling and team teaching</li> <li>Creating a 'teaching tips' sheet</li> </ul>		
20 21	2 (Jan — May 2017)	<ul> <li>Thinking about use of space and connections to design-led thinking</li> <li>Exploring shifts in power positioning</li> <li>Facilitating exploratory, open ended dramatic play with juniors</li> <li>Thinking about the purpose (and limits) of building belief in the imagined world</li> <li>Representing a role through signing</li> <li>Using a mini commission to develop skills</li> <li>Flashing back in time</li> <li>Conscience alley</li> <li>Voices in the head</li> <li>Hotseating the expert</li> <li>Using new ideas for reflection (objects speaking reflectively)</li> <li>Writing in multiple roles to taking different perspectives</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Using teacher in role as assessment (and research) tool</li> <li>Using new strategies for meaningful questioning</li> <li>Identifying the "big questions"</li> <li>Moving away from 'front loading / preteaching'</li> <li>Thinking of new uses for 'donut circle'</li> <li>Including use of 'we' voice in planning</li> <li>Increasing confidence – feeling less embarrassed</li> <li>Using new strategies for assessment (leaving instructions for interns)</li> <li>Adapting existing planning</li> <li>Considering shifts in routine</li> <li>Starting to emphasise process over product</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Using seesaw (weekly updates to parents)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Adding a new circle to circle model for planning</li> <li>Hosting cluster meetings and visits from other schools</li> </ul>		

	<ul> <li>Framing the explicit teaching of skills as "PD" for the responsible team</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Getting more comfortable with unfinished / provisional work</li> <li>Designing more activities designed to support experiential learning / through the body</li> <li>Relying on students more</li> <li>Making expectations clearer</li> <li>Allowing learning to go in unexpected directions more</li> <li>Holding back more – not giving as much information</li> <li>Planning Mantle of the Expert experiences to target particular skills</li> </ul>		
3 June 2017- Oct 2017	<ul> <li>Playing around with 'time' - going forward / backwards</li> <li>Using conventions more fluidly and in combination</li> <li>Exploring different status positions with teacher in role</li> <li>Using drama conventions outside imagined world (e.g. for reflection)</li> <li>Exploring ways to 'close' the mantle of the expert experience</li> <li>Being explicit with signalling</li> <li>Using positive language e.g. "with the power of our imagination"</li> <li>Exploring the difference between role and frame</li> <li>Planning for added frame distance from difficult material</li> <li>Giving students opportunities to take on high status roles and explore leadership</li> <li>Using drama across the whole programme</li> <li>Exploring new strategies for catchup /</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Revising planning to consciously draw on content from Te Ao Maori</li> <li>Confronting own eurocentrism</li> <li>Allowing feelings of discomfort as part of shifting towards more culturally responsive practice</li> <li>Being explicit with children about the learning purpose of tasks</li> <li>Using responsive planning including responding to children's 'offers'</li> <li>Supporting children with resistance / uncertainty</li> <li>Giving children extended time to do self-directed tasks</li> <li>Using the "we" voice and referring to the values of the company as a behaviour management strategy</li> <li>Valuing 'incidental' learning – the unintended tangents</li> <li>Realising how engagement of children (and teachers) drops if drama is not used Adapting planning for Special Educational Needs</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Creating a wiki</li> <li>Children creating video explanations of their work for seesaw</li> <li>Developing digital planning formats</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Restructuring daily and weekly timetables to prioritise Mantle of the Expert</li> <li>Going straight from one mantle of the expert experience to another</li> <li>"throwing a lot of the traditional programme out"</li> <li>Developing a poster bringing together understandings of Te Ao Māori and dramatic inquiry pedagogy</li> <li>Embedding dramatic inquiry into school curriculum documentation</li> <li>Supporting other teachers in school and across wider region</li> <li>Applying to undertake further research into questions emerging from the project (2 teachers)</li> <li>Acknowledging how far we've come – and how far there is still to gol</li> </ul>

## Implications / Discussion

- For field evidence of benefits of DI for literacy / drama and culturally responsive pedagogy
- For research practice usefulness of metaphor to express complex ideas including this as research method?
- For teachers involved strong sense of commitment how to maintain momentum?
- For school leadership developing local curriculum with DI and CRP embedded how to bring on rest of staff?
- For researcher revisit analysis methods how to balance role as researcher and PLD provider in future?
- For others considering TLIF learnings re budget, data analysis, nesting TLIF within wider project how to balance workload?
- For other schools useful picture of journey into DI how to adapt for different age levels?
- For assessment & appraisal with departure of National Standards and tensions between DI and CRP and traditional assessment models how to assess what we value and recognise this in teacher appraisals?

### Opportunities for future research

- How well does long term experience of Mantle prepare students for Intermediate schooling? (Renee's masters)
- Are increases in engagement and achievement observed in other areas e.g. reading? (recent TLIF application KNS, Drama NZ literacy project)
- What does dramatic inquiry look like as a school wide programme? (2020 symposium)
- How can teachers be supported to develop Dramatic inquiry in a culturally responsive frame, including using culturally appropriate contexts? (recent TLIF application KNS)
- How can classroom teachers be supported to develop funding applications and factor in what's required to ensure their well being?
- What assessment and appraisal models are appropriate for DI in NZ? (work in schools)

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