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**Hikoitanga tapuwae o te hunga ke
To Take a Walk in Another's Shoes
Using Process Drama to Teach the Underlying
Principles of Restorative Practice**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements
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By

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Abstract

Hikoitanga tapuwae o te hunga ke To take a walk in another's shoes

Using process drama to teach the underlying principles of restorative practice.

An increasing number of schools in New Zealand are changing the way they work with at risk students by adopting a restorative approach to anti- social behaviour. Challenges are on-going for schools and educational leaders who wish to implement restorative practice in their schools, since this requires on –going education for students, teachers and parents in this more democratic way of working.

This study looks at the impact on student understandings of restorative principles during five weeks of teaching process drama in a New Zealand Middle school. The teaching described in this short term intervention occurred within this school's on –going programme of professional development and teaching in restorative practice. Prior to the study, whole staff professional development in restorative practice had occurred and a restorative drama programme had been piloted with a group of year 8 students. For this study, the programme was repeated with a class that reflected the cultural socio-economic and ability levels of the school as a whole. The purpose of this small scale study was to produce findings to inform the on-going development and enhancement of the programme, which is to be implemented school wide in 2012.

The teacher researcher in this study worked closely with the classroom teacher who acted as a critical friend and mentee. Data was collected through mixed methods and a critical ethnographic lens was applied. After the five week drama intervention findings indicated that levels of anti-social behaviour had decreased especially around swearing and name calling. Students and teachers reported shifts in their understandings of what it must be like to be another. As relationships developed within the drama, data indicated high levels of student engagement, inclusion of marginalised students and academic achievement via quality writing developed.

It was noted that students wrote for longer and their writing demonstrated depth of quality particularly those students who were often reluctant or disengaged during formal writing sessions.

Further and perhaps most significant of all, findings showed that both the classroom teacher and teacher researcher were prompted to reflect on their own restorative and pedagogical practices.

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To my parents, my gratitude, love and thanks, you brought me up with a strong sense of social justice and advocacy for those who have no "voice".

To my family and friends thank you for your outstanding humour, love and support. I have returned!

Arohamai, aroha atu

Love received, love returned.

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Chapter One : Introduction

*He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata! He tangata! He tangata!
What is the most important thing in the world?
It is people! It is people! It is people!*

International research in curriculum development in the last twenty years has undergone huge philosophical change. Reynolds (2003) believes we have moved from “what to dream to what to teach”. He claims that schools have created climates where children are

disengaged, desensitised and alienated to such an extent that the logical outcome is for some children is to have the ability to act in cruel and inhumane ways towards each other and even commit mass murder within the school setting(p.2).

He argues that by focusing on the winner takes all approach to education we create people who lack empathy and compassion.

To attempt to insist on the modernist scientific, logical, technical, rational answers to problems of curriculum education have done nothing but exacerbate the problem.....developing a hierarchical education befitting the corporate order.... students leave school with full heads and empty hearts. .education produces people capable of accepting racism, sexism and classism. These continue to permeate our society. We place children in a controlled and competitive system, a system where winning is everything. Not allowed to show compassion or feel sorry for the loser as they are our competitor (pg 43).

He declares that we need to develop curricula based on compassion where schools have core values based on the ethic of care. This criticism of narrow curriculum content in schools in Western countries is at the core of understanding how people become capable of committing cruel and inhumane acts towards each other. In societies where groups of people become marginalised and often extreme in their view of the world there is a need for curriculum to become transformative.

According to Clark (2005) there needs to be a very clear aim, “ If teachers aim to educate their pupils, then as teachers we need to be very clear what we are aiming at. The aim of education is not some extrinsic goal, like getting a job. Rather, the aim is intrinsic to education. One candidate for the aim of education is the development of good person (cited in Adams, et al 2005, p151).

Clarke argues that there are seven key features in a broad based education and these are “Moral knowledge and how to live the good life- what is right and wrong, individual rights, emotional knowledge – development of appropriate emotional responses, aesthetic knowledge –essential for making judgments- natural and social, development of critical reflection and thinking skills, enquiring attitude ... nothing is beyond criticism, emancipation freedom to hold views... rights of others to also hold own views, life -long love of learning” (p152-153).

Bolstad points out that “Educationalists argue that schooling systems of the past were not designed to educate for such a complex and changing world. They argue that we need to rethink not only what people need to *know*, but also what kind of people they will need to *be* in order to have meaningful, productive, healthy and fulfilling lives” (2011,p.v).

This chapter firstly outlines the background to the study which was the development of a programme designed to teach students about restorative practices in an attempt to bring together the *knowing* and the *being*. Secondly it includes a description of my experience as a teacher which led me to use process drama as pedagogy for engaging students. Finally this chapter describes the circumstances that caused a school to examine the dominant culture of power, punishment and exclusion in order to move towards a culture based on respectful relationships empowerment and inclusion.

1.2. Education of the good citizen

Aroha-ki-te-tangata

Respect/a regard for others; empathy

The aim of our education system has involved constant, critical debate and often controversy as we seek to create schools that meet the needs of our children, their parents, families and the society in which we live. As teachers, and leaders in education, review and reflect on the policies and practices that guide the implementation of the curriculum in their schools, we are faced with these questions. Are we in fact preparing our students to be successful and caring citizens for a world that is different to the one we live in? Are our teaching styles

and pedagogical practices innovative and challenging enough to develop lifelong learners?

While we understand how schools are involved in the transmission of knowledge it is at the deeper level or the moral development of the child, that broader education and how we develop the good and caring citizen that has been problematic for all educators. The development of good citizens living in caring societies is not new, and has figured prominently in both Western and Eastern moral philosophies from Aristotle to Confucius. Komter (1995) and Li (1994) both make links by summarising “common to both is the elements of morally virtuous action and emphasis on the prime virtue of benevolence and consideration of others”(cited in Walker, 2009,p. 12).

Western countries have recognised the enormous need to develop compassion in our children in order to create humane and caring societies. It is through our values in society and our education systems that reflect our values, that we need to develop curricula that focus on compassion.

John Dewey (1964), said “Education is a regulation of the process of coming to share in the social consciousness; and the adjustment of individual activity on the basis of this social consciousness is the only sure method of social reconstruction” (p364).

According to Freire (2005), teachers need to “practice a pedagogy in which both teacher and student become agents committed to the study of daily life as opposed to memorization” (p.153). Openshaw, Clark, Hamer, Wiatere-Ange (2005) claim that here in New Zealand we have also left the development of morality to chance and the subjects of the head and not the affairs of the heart dominate and *the hidden or null curriculum* has gone further underground (p. 215-216).

Reynolds in his view of the current climate in schools says “ Schooling at all levels is reduced to testing, standards ,and accountability, preparing good consumers for the global market place”(Ibid). When in fact we have to change the atmosphere in schools and develop curricula based on developing morally ethical people. “Schools need to be developed not as garrisoned outposts, where

efficiency and control reign, but as loving, caring environments, filled with compassion” (p.50.).

Following in the wake of the fanatical behaviour that led to the Twin Towers tragedy of 9/11, Neelands (2001), says it was almost inevitable as this inhuman act of cruelty clearly demonstrated the inability to view the world through the eyes of another or walk in another’s shoes. He quotes Ian McEwan’s article from the Guardian as he along with others struggled to make sense of and understand how this could be.

If hijackers had been able to imagine themselves into the thoughts and feelings of the passengers they would have been unable to proceed . It is hard to be cruel once you permit yourself to enter the mind of your victim. Imagining what it is like to be someone other than yourself is at the core of our humanity. It is the essence of compassion, and it is the beginning of morality (p.1).

O’Connor (2006) agrees with Neelands as he too believes that empathy sits at the core of morality and it is the most important competency for a world living under threats of terrorism. (p.2).

In New Zealand we have a curriculum document that outlines the capabilities needed for living and lifelong learning. These are identified as the five key competencies. They are, thinking, using language, symbols and texts, managing self, relating to others and participating and contributing. The competency relating to others includes the ability to.... “Recognise different points of view, negotiate among other things to take different roles in different situations...are aware of how their words and actions affect others.... By working effectively together, they can come up with new approaches, ideas, and ways of thinking” (New Zealand Curriculum 2007, p.12).

One would have to agree that in the articulation of the key competencies in the New Zealand curriculum (2007) we have also recognised how important it is to have an education system that not only delivers in the key subject areas but seeks to develop “good citizens”. The key competencies as described in the curriculum document are designed to be “both an end and a means. They are a focus for learning- they enable learning” (p.38). As Steven Maharey the then Minister of

Education in his introductory letter accompanying the curriculum declares “We need to become a nation of achievers – capable, knowledgeable, caring, active, and open to opportunity.” He continues to state that the New Zealand curriculum sets the direction and emphasises not only the importance of literacy and numeracy but the aspects of a broad education as described by the key competencies, “ The key competencies the students need in order to live, learn, work and contribute as active members of our communities....” (2007, letter in NZC).

New Zealand schools are currently charged with the task of implementing the key competencies in to their curriculum. Again this raises questions, such as how do we teach these key competencies and how do we assess them? What does relating to others look like at the different curriculum levels? How does the teacher create authentic learning environments where children develop insights into what it must like to be another?

It is vitally important that schools have authentic programmes that engage children in activities and discussions involving moral decision making in order to have children developing understandings of what it must be like to be another or empathetic knowing. Edmiston (2000), believes that “society through education and schools has a responsibility to bring an ethical dimension to education”(p.63). Friere (2005) says the teacher’s role is pivotal in working alongside the child in order to “construct a vision of a humanizing society by helping children to become themselves”(p.160). O’Connor (2006) concurs as he argues that “*Education for now* recognises that education isn’t about giving information for what teachers of today consider the future might be, but is helping young people to sort through the conflicting, confusing ambiguities that threaten our present” (p.2). He considers that drama as a pedagogy can assist young people in dealing with the inhumane aspects of human conflict. “Drama and education, when it deals with the now, can help give sense and meaning to living when at times such a task for many of our young seems increasingly senseless and meaning less”(Ibid).

1.3. Wanting to make a difference

*Kātahi anō te kapa ka taka!
And then, the penny dropped!*

Throughout my teaching I have struggled to find an authentic way of working with children that would get them to understand their positioning in the dominant discourses that have shaped their lives, to realise that their words and actions can have a significant impact on the lives of others. In other words how do I teach relating to others? To get the students in my class to understand and appreciate that not everyone in their world sees things the way they do.

For the start of every year with a new class I would feel a sense of dissatisfaction at the artificiality of my task, as I continued to write the units of work based around self-esteem, friendships and developing caring relationships. Coupled with concern when colleagues asked to borrow my work or as a leader I modelled this by sharing the planning and the practice. How did I make a difference in my teaching with children and in my leadership of teachers and continue to develop engaging programmes and that teach compassion, respect and conflict resolution?

Belonging to a school that was making a shift away from a punishment model to a restorative model of working with students added another layer of complexity and complication. Whole school development in restorative practises saw significant shifts in teacher thinking and behaviour and the next step was to include the students into this paradigm shift.

How did I become one of those educators who could shift thinking and co-construct respectful and ethical ways of working with both students and teachers within a classroom setting that would eventually spill over into the playground and the general school environment? What deliberate strategies or pedagogies existed to teach these values and necessary behaviours? How did I get both students and teachers to understand the *other*, to not make judgements and escalate conflicts and further punish already *at risk* students from disengaging from school. During et al (2010) argue that the middle school years are crucial for establishing future engagement or non-engagement.

It was an opportunity to complete my post graduate qualifications and the research around those requirements alongside my obligations as a deputy principal responsible for curriculum and pastoral care that caused the penny to drop. I wanted to create authentic opportunities for students to understand the key principles around restorative practices. Early work with Ralph McAllistair (1979) using drama to explore discourses around marginalised groups in borstals and mental institutions along with subsequent drama development with Peter O'Connor (1992-4) led me to turn to process drama as a pedagogical way of engaging students and simultaneously meeting my need to be an authentic teacher.

There is considerable literature around the use of drama as a way to develop pro-social behaviour. It is the careful use of the dramatic conventions such as *role taking* that creates opportunities for students to engage in social perspective taking in a drama context. Heathcote (2002) described drama as a “way to explore people”, and get “collaboration from classes “, by using ” subtle and honest strategies, which forge bonds rather than confrontation”. (NATD conference notes). While also heeding O'Connor's (2008 p.139) description of the “power of process drama”, the “missionary zeal” that teachers of drama proffer as a pedagogy of hope. I wanted to “test” out previous work in process drama around restorative practices to see if what I thought was happening in terms of cognitive and behavioural shifts was actually happening.

Previously I had recognised how both process drama and restorative conversations and in particular restorative conferences had similar goals and outcomes. Process drama and restorative practices recognised the need for stories to be told by the disempowered and disengaged in classrooms and created democratic spaces for new stories to be told based around empathic understandings. O'Connor describes the notion of creating new stories as part of the essential reflective characteristic of process drama and makes links to Bishop and Glynn's work in inclusive education in New Zealand (1999, p188). They call for a pedagogy that “creates interaction patterns that position teachers and students within co-joint reflections on shared experiences (the narrative as stimulus)and co-joint constructions of meanings about these experiences (narrative as meaning constructors)” (Cited by O'Connor,2008,p.144).

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to find ways of teaching the key principles around restorative practices for several reasons. Firstly my school had been involved in considerable professional development around restorative practices but had yet to invite the key stakeholders, the children into understanding what this paradigm was about. Secondly in my role as a deputy principal I was constantly working with the same students over and over in terms of resolving conflicts. These students were becoming part of the demographic that was in danger of disengaging and dropping out of school.

Thirdly, how did I stop the collusion of the so called “good” kids in the storiying of the *others* or the bystander mentality. The bystander is significant because as “Salmivalli asserts that peer bystanders are powerful moderators of behaviour and that peer group power could be utilised positively in classrooms to end bullying and thus influence the outcomes in other school violence situations” (cited by Baer and Glasgow,2008, p.80).Often the students who could stop an incident walked away because they too believed that this had nothing to do with them and it was the “bad” kids fighting each other. There was a wall between groups of students in the school based around who was *in* and who was *out*. Teachers also colluded in the maintenance of this wall. Once students felt they were excluded and had no sense of belonging did the incidents escalate and the students were further punished by being excluded from school. Because not everyone in the school community gets to experience the democratic or humane process that culminates in a restorative conference when the so called “bad” kid gets to put it right and tell his story I needed to find a way to get students to “feel” that experience in an authentic teaching and learning sequence.

Finally, I wanted to test out my implicit belief that drama was an effective and engaging pedagogy. Therefore my underlying thesis was if students feel included and engaged in our school system then perhaps the possibility of violence towards others is diminished as we get to know each other The corollary being if we are empathic then perhaps the chances are higher that we will be kind to each other

rather than cruel and school will become a peaceful place where *we can get on with it...*¹ teaching students and lifting educational achievement.

1.4.1 The drama programme

This study was a drama based intervention that involved a year 8 class of students in a New Zealand middle school over the course of five weeks. As it was part of a long term programme involving teacher development in restorative practices it was an action research project. Noffke (1997) describes action research as a group of ideas emerging from various contexts (p.307) that includes the professional, personal and political dimension. This was part of a “school reform initiative” (Ibid) that was based around problem solving at the local level that sought to make changes to the way things were being done at my school in terms of student exclusion. This action research falls within the critical ethnographic paradigm which will be further described in chapter three and used a mixed methods approach to data gathering. Triangulation of data in order to achieve rigor, reliability and validity is documented in chapter three and four.

1.4.2 Definition of terms

A brief definition of the terms for process drama and restorative practices will be given here with a detailed description given in chapter two as part of the literature review.

Process drama

Process drama is a term used to describe an approach to learning in, through and about drama (O'Connor,2003). While it borrows significantly from theatre there is not a performance at the end of process drama (Heathcote,1985). The difference being, the students are both actors and audience because the power of this pedagogy is that students work both in role and reflect out of role. The teacher and students work collaboratively to solve problems. It is this reflection out of role that has the potential to explore social issues and assist in the development of pro-social behaviour. Drama is about understanding the complexity of relationships.

¹ Reference to Smith and Laslett cited by MacFarlane that teaching is about “Getting them in, getting on with them, getting on with it and moving them on”.

Restorative practices

Restorative practices in much the same way that drama has drawn from the theatre tradition has drawn from the restorative justice system (Drewery,2003, 2007). The point of difference being restorative practices in schools is seen as way to work with students who were indulging in antisocial behaviours in a more humane and caring manner. The school community works collaboratively with parents, teachers and significant others to help the student put things right or repair the harm that has occurred. Restorative practice is about restoring, rebuilding or repairing relationships. Buckley and Maxwell sum this up as a “school environment based on core restorative principles of inclusion, the repair of harm, and reintegration, reinforced by strong networks of support” (2007,p.7).

1.4.3 Significance of study

According to Sharpe (2003), schools that are truly restorative “invite students/adults to learn about restorative values and participate in developing restorative practices” (p.18). This study goes someway in establishing how through process drama it might be possible to develop both student and teacher understandings around respectful relationships and restorative practices and begin to make shifts in terms of inclusive behaviours in a school community.

1.5 Summary and transition to Chapter Two

This chapter outlines the ideas and previous work involved when a school is determined to work differently with at risk students and discusses some of the key philosophical arguments to do with the purpose of education in the 21st century that underpin a restorative way of working. Literature is presented to support drama as a curriculum area positioned to “teach” these core ideas to a class of middle school students.

Chapter two will locate and review the literature around process drama as a pedagogy positioned to teach the underlying concepts of restorative practice. The review also includes the literature around restorative practices currently being implemented in New Zealand schools. Finally the chapter explores the connections between both process drama and restorative practice and seeks to

locate the possibility of any other research interventions similarly focussed and designed.

Chapter three presents the research background and methodology that was employed in this intervention. The qualitative and quantitative data collection tools are described and how triangulation of the data was used to establish validity and reliability.

Chapter four is a presentation of the data collected from the surveys, questionnaires, student, teacher written and recorded reflections and in role writing. This chapter reports the themes or common threads that emerged from this intervention and any shifts in thinking or behaviour that occurred as a result of this intervention.

Chapter five discusses the findings in light of the research literature and both research questions.

Chapter six presents some conclusions resulting from the intervention, describes possible next steps in the action research cycle and suggests future research implications.

Chapter Two: A review of the literature

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature in order to survey the fields of process drama and restorative practice. The chapter will also address the literature on student engagement as both a background to process drama as pedagogy and to restorative practice as a paradigm that underpins student inclusion and achievement. In doing so I will be able to approach an answer to my first research question:

What are the intersections to be found between the key concepts of process drama and restorative practice?

There are four sections to this chapter. The first is to establish the background and the key concepts around the pedagogy known as process drama. The second section is to establish the key factors involved in student engagement in schools. The third section is to outline the key principles of restorative practice as documented in practice in New Zealand schools. The final section is to describe the intersections or common threads weaving through process drama and restorative practice.

2.1 Drama in Education

2.1.1 Foundations

O'Neill describes the term process drama as being almost synonymous with the term drama in education (Taylor and Warner, 2006, p.3). The development of process drama as a pedagogy emerged from the drama in education movement in particular the work of Heathcote and Bolton (1984, 1985,). This movement in turn grew out of classical philosophical thought, a complicated mix of traditional and modern theatre traditions and developmental psychological theory around child development, which saw a shift in the view of how children learnt and how they were taught in schools from 1870 onwards (Bolton, Weltsek-Medina 2006, 2008). The following *figure 1* briefly presents the key personalities, philosophies, and paradigms that gave birth to the notion of drama as pedagogy.

The influence and interplay of key paradigms and personalities on the development of Drama as Pedagogy

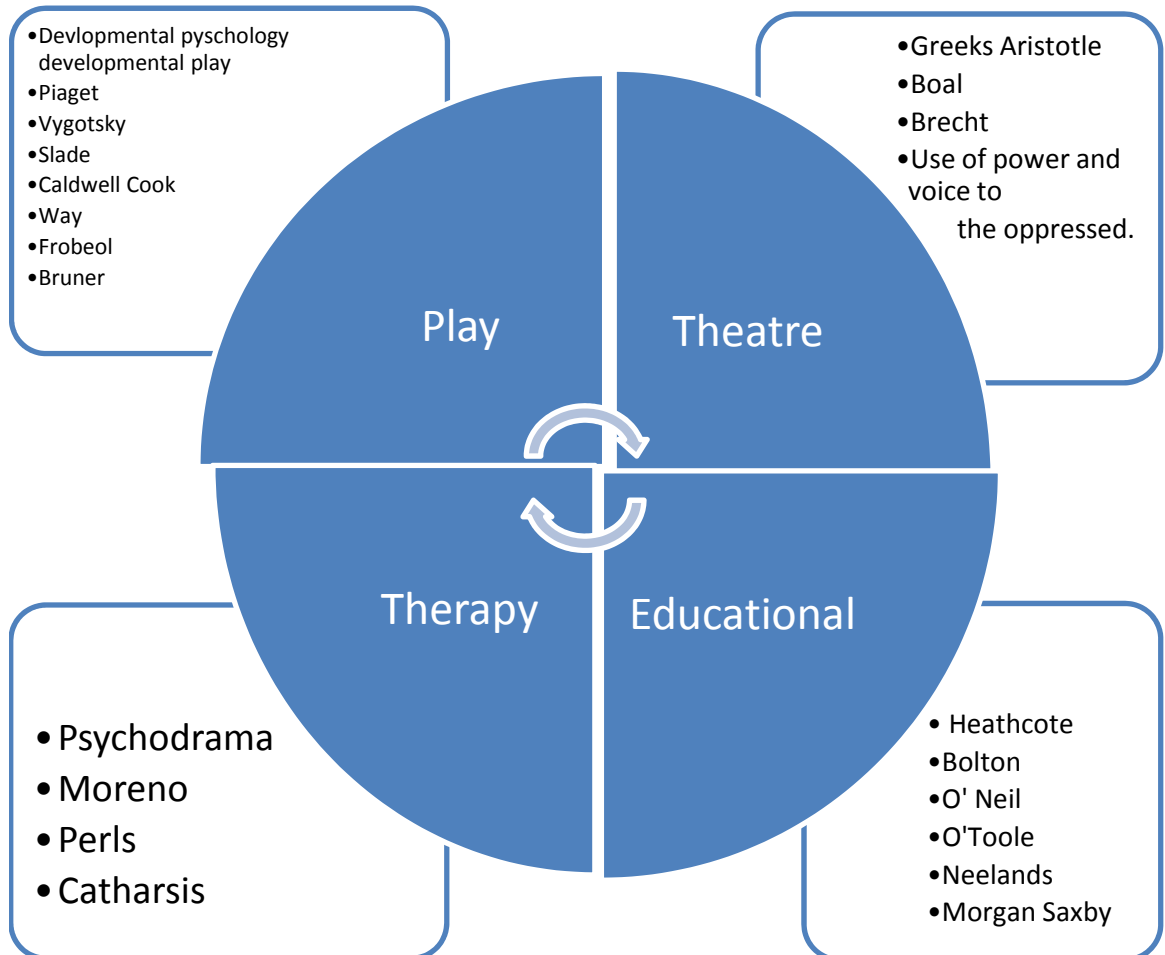


Figure 1 Influences on and in the development of drama

Let us briefly consider each of the four quadrants on this diagram.

As Schechner (1993), suggests that the “four great spheres of performance-entertainment, healing, education and ritualising are in play with each other” (p.20, cited by O’Connor 2003,p.195).

Drama is embedded in all cultures along with, song, dance and visual art, and as Papas and Jordan (2006) describe its educational potential has long been

acknowledged “the recognition of the educational power and potential of drama goes back as far as schooling itself. Drama and education have been formally associated since the Renaissance, when training in language, literature, oratory and moral virtues were among educational goals” (Cited in Taylor and Warner, p31).

2.1.2 Child play

In ancient Greek times Aristotle described the child as a blank slate or *tabula rasa* and through education his/her potential could be realised (Weltsek-Medina ,2008). The role of the teacher was clear; he or she was seen as the filler of the empty vessel on the writer on the slate. This description of the child dominated western educational practice for centuries and impacted on the way children were taught in schools and consequently the role of the teacher in practice.

The early part of the 20th century saw a change in understanding around child development linked to the work of Rousseau who advocated a more natural approach to childrearing. This was seen in the child education practices of Froebel and Montessori who advocated play and child centred experience as a way of learning about the world (Bolton,1985). The metaphors of the garden were part of these educational philosophies as children were described as “seeds” needing a “fertile garden” to develop, the garden being the education around the child. Dewey (1921) described the child as a sun around which the education system needed to revolve (cited by Bolton, 1985 p152). The teacher had moved from sage on the stage to the guide on the side.

While Weltsek-Medina (2008) note the use of drama across the curriculum being used by Jane Adams as early as the 1890s it was the work of Harriet Finlay-Johnson who along with Caldwell Cook promoted the idea that children learnt through dramatic play. Bolton (1985) describes her work in drama not about free expression and play but as a “vehicle for the acquisition of knowledge” (p.152)

Bolton (1985),explains that this way of working in drama was hijacked to a certain degree by the speech and drama movement, as teachers moved towards a skills based understanding of drama teaching and the *how* of expression became important not the *what* of expression. This schism existed for a long time as the

school production became the dominant drama genre in schools until the work of Peter Slade in the 1950s. According to O'Hara (1984), Slade's work had a direct influence on the evolution of the "process model of drama" (p.314). Slade's work coupled with the work of Bruner, Piaget and Vygotsky declared the importance of socio dramatic play on the linguistic, cognitive and emotional development of the child, moved the drama back into the classroom and away from the stage (Bolton,1985, Ohara,1984). As O'Toole notes:

"The twentieth century's two most renowned and influential educational psychologists, Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky, both acknowledged and wrote extensively about learning and dramatic play, the first exploring its role in the understanding of symbols, rules and social structures, and the second asserting its importance in the development of language (e.g., Piaget 1962 & Vygotsky 1933/1976) and as one of the building blocks of his philosophy of the socially constructed nature of learning" (2009,p.12).

Slade's influence was pivotal (Bolton,1985) on the development of drama teachers in in the United Kingdom in the late 1960s. Slade's (1954) basic argument was that child drama is an art form, and that drama processes begin the "spontaneous, ego centric creations of the child in sound and movement and develop into the spontaneous creation of play, produced and acted by children" (O'Hara, 1984). O'Hara claims that Slade based his approach on a "humanising vision of the child and seeing drama as a practice for living through which children are permitted opportunities to develop their full potentialities" (p.315).

Bolton (1985), notes that Brian Way (1967), a British educationalist "espoused Slade's philosophy" and he set out to train teachers in drama to work with the philosophy of "child self- expression" that underpinned child play. "Way also saw drama in education as having a dual function in curriculum, both as 'method as well as art,' but he insisted that drama could only be seen as a tool for teaching other subjects when it existed in the curriculum as a subject in its own right" (O'Hara, Ibid). This was the beginning of an understanding within drama education that drama could work both as an arts subject with a specific place in the curriculum but also as a cross curricula pedagogy.

2.1.3 Psychodrama

Bailey (2006) claims “That the arts have been connected to healing and meaning-making since their origins, shows how vitally important they are to health and to civilization. Drama and therapy have been natural partners for at least the last 350 centuries” (cited in Weltsek-Medina). There is, as Aristotle noted, an element of *catharsis* in drama, a sense of emotional release as the unspoken and disowned emotions are re-admitted into consciousness (Blatner, 2006 Ibid). Katz (2000) declares that “Much earlier Slade (1954), came to use the term ‘Dramatherapy’ to describe Dramatic activity in education that leads to ‘confidence, hope, feeling of security, discovery of sympathy and concentration’.

Jacob Moreno the founder of psychodrama (1920) recognised the power of *role* in terms of therapy (O’Connor, 2003,p.36). Moreno understood that the context and devices of theatre served as natural vehicles for psycho-social explorations, experiments, and learning (Weltsek-Medina, 2006). O’Connor (2003) explains it is the use of *role* and recognition of the multiple roles that we have throughout our lives taken from the sociological perspective that has become the central tenet of psychodrama.

The understanding of role taking in process drama builds not only from social psychology but also from the use of role in theatre and performance. Role denotes the process of simultaneously ‘being yourself’ and ‘acting as if you are someone else’. In psychodrama these sociological roles are often re-played in fictional settings for analysis and healing (O’Connor,2003,p.35).

Johnson (2009) described Boal’s contribution to psychodrama as the social application of the work he was doing as part of Theatre of the Oppressed. The overlap between theatre and therapy was seen in the primary organisation around group activities, the setting up of an imaginary, yet safe play space, the use of role, distancing and games (p.25).

2.1.4 Theatre

O’Toole (1992) declares that “The first recorded book on drama, Aristotle’s Poetics, attempted to define what drama is” (,p.5). In Greek times theatre was used for both cultural and political purposes and that Aristotle himself had already

made the links between drama and education (O'Connor,2003,p.37).O'Connor says according to Boal during this early time the theatre was used to repress and coerce people through the role of the Greek tragic hero (Ibid).

In modern times Murphy and O'Keeffe (2006) explain the parallel shifts in both theatre and education in the twentieth century as moving away from the passive audience response to one of audience empowerment and engagement in a historical move away from repression to liberation of thought and feeling.

The theatre practices of Bertolt Brecht, Augusto Boal and Jerzy Grotowski are examples of what evolved from a serious concern, particularly in the second half of the twentieth century, with the potential of theatre to manipulate and reinforce passivity among audiences. In their works such directors sought to re-examine the political, artistic and pedagogical relationship that exists between the theatre and the society within which it operates, due to its unparalleled capacity to engage participants on an emotional and intellectual level simultaneously. In their practical attempts to empower audiences, they recognised that 'the difference between whether the theatre represents a vehicle for liberation or for oppression depends largely on the extent to which the audience in question is permitted to participate in and own the event'. (Murphy and O'Keeffe,2006,p.4 cited by Murphy,2007 in Downes and Gilligan).

This shift was also seen in the innovative work of Heathcote (1950s) and Bolton as they moved away from the role of the child as either actor or audience in product or performance drama to process drama where “children could own or control their dramatic experience further” (Murphy,2007,p.309).

2.1.5 Educational

Dorothy Heathcote and later Gavin Bolton developed a way of working in drama that combined the two paradigms that had hitherto been polarised. From the 1950s to the present day drama was firmly back in the classroom and the pioneering work of “Heathcote grounded her early teaching in the practice of theatre innovators and reminded educators that drama was always contextual, richly layered with resonant meanings” (Taylor and Warner 2006, p.4).

In her pioneering work from the 1950s, through to her death in 2011,Heathcote brought to the classroom a subtle and complex way of working that serves to

teach the elements of theatre (product) with the child centred practice of drama (process) whereby children explore authentic learning contexts attempting to resolve problems “as if” they were real. Heathcote likened her approach to “students being caught up in tension –driven ‘messy’ situations where they endeavoured to resolve a challenge they were facing” (Ibid). Murphy (2007) summarises the subtle way that Heathcote was able to bring the traditions of theatre into the classroom.

“Process drama, as radical theatrical and educational medium, embodies many of the most fundamental elements of the traditional play. Drawing on the artistic imagination of all its participants, it focuses on a person or group of people in a particular fictional context, who we gradually come to empathise with through a series of key episodes or moments. A human theme or philosophical question is usually explored through this fiction....” (p.309).

From an educational perspective Bowell and Heap (2010) link this teaching to Bruner’s description of learning “The learner needs to actively participate in the learning process, the child’s feelings, fantasies and values need to be incorporated into lessons so that knowledge is personalised” (p.2).

2.2 Drama in Education in New Zealand

2.2.1 Background

Prior to the arrival of Europeans to New Zealand drama existed as part of Nga Toi, which blended performing arts, visual arts ,crafts ,storytelling and oratory explored through the metaphors of the Maori language Te Reo (Greenwood,2009). Following European settlement the history of drama in New Zealand was influenced to a huge degree by the forces that shaped and continue to shape drama in education in the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia in particular. Bowell and Heap (2002) describe drama as having had a “ roller coaster existence” in those countries and perhaps to some degree this has also been seen in New Zealand (p.1). Greenwood (2009) writing about New Zealand’s positioning on the stage in the light of the European tradition declares that in fact drama took place in New Zealand schools from the 1940s up until the 1980s when the work of British drama educationalist Dorothy Heathcote began to exert a considerable influence on drama education in New Zealand.

Middleton's biography (2006) of Sylvia Ashton –Warner an innovative New Zealand educationalist, describes at length a teaching style that promoted dramatic play as part of rich pedagogy of practice in the 1940s and 1950s. Ashton Warner referred to the work of Caldwell Cook in her book *Teacher* (Middleton, Ibid).

Greenwood (2009) also notes the seminal work of Elwyn Richardson who evolved a whole school scheme around the arts in the 1960s (p.248). During this time, drama was often improvisational in the classroom full of free expression or based around the ubiquitous school play. This drama genre was further reinforced by the Ministry of Education publishing school journals that contained school plays to be acted out in class, often as part of a reading programme .²

The work of drama educationalist, Dorothy Heathcote had an enormous impact on drama in education in New Zealand and following her visits to this country in the 1980s there was a surge in interest and in drama activity in classrooms as well as courses offered at various Teachers' Colleges around the country (Greenwood 2009). Workshops held throughout the country during and following Dorothy Heathcote's visits demonstrated a way of taking drama that made links between the child play drama of Slade and Way and the product drama commonly seen in New Zealand classrooms. While these workshops contained the elements of theatre they had the potential to be both cross curricular and pedagogical in nature. This drama in education had an enthusiastic following and when drama was included as part of the arts learning in the curriculum document drafted in 1999 there was a cause to celebrate. As Greenwood declares "On the whole drama teachers were celebratory that drama finally promised a place in the curriculum throughout the whole of schooling" (p.254).

2.2.2 The New Zealand Curriculum

With a history in New Zealand of liberal and progressive curriculum linking back to The Red Book (1929) which included five works of Dewey, various Montessori methods and perhaps significantly Caldwell Cook's *The Playway in Education* teachers were expected to develop cross curricula ways of working that included

² The New Zealand School Journals were first published in 1907 and plays from the 1960s onwards.

the arts (Middleton,2006,p.44). The significant contributions of such teachers and teacher educators as Sylvia Aston Warner, Alwyn Richardson and Jack Shallcrass who promoted the arts in classrooms, had an impact on teaching practice in New Zealand in the 1960s and 1970s. When the New Zealand national curriculum document mandated drama as an arts subject and described process drama as a modality in 2000 as part of the arts, it recognised drama as a key learning area and ‘important for a broad general education’ (p.16 the New Zealand Curriculum). Drama has also been mandated as a subject for NCEA (National Certificate for Educational Achievement) at the secondary level and for university entrance. (cited in Aitken et al 2007,p.2)

Drama educationalist O’Toole (2009), congratulated New Zealand for achieving “at least a notional place among the standard subjects offered within a school curriculum, through all the years of schooling” (p.24).

The New Zealand curriculum document states “Drama encourages students to identify with people and situations that may be unfamiliar to them or outside their own experience. It enables them to use their imagination to reshape their own experiences, and to accommodate those of others. It can be a powerful tool to develop students' creative and expressive confidence and ability, and to articulate feelings” (NZCD, 2000, p.2).

Currently in New Zealand all pre service teaching programmes in New Zealand offer drama as a part of teacher training, many early childhood, primary schools take drama as part of a balanced class programme and a significant number of secondary schools have flourishing drama departments. Today many New Zealand universities offer graduate and post graduate qualifications in drama and or theatre studies.

2.3 What is process drama?

Although the term process drama was not coined until the late 1980s or early 1990s the description of using drama for learning came under the umbrella term *drama in education*. While Bolton credits O’Neill as having introduced the term into the *drama in education* vocabulary, O’Toole cites Brad Haseman as first using it in 1991 and O’Neill in 1995 (Weltsek-Medina,2006).

However, they all agree that it grew out of the work of Heathcote and subsequently Bolton's innovative way of working with students. O'Connor (2003) describes process drama as an "umbrella term that embraces an approach to learning in, through and about drama. At the centre of process drama is improvised role play designed to create meaning for the participants rather than for an external audience" (p.35). Process drama uses the full arsenal of the theatre to explore issues of concerns to participants rather than in preparing a performance for others to view". Process drama and product drama or theatre work share key elements, O'Neill explains the difference as this. "Unlike working in theatre, one is teaching not *for* the aesthetic experience, but *through* it" (1981). While there are differences between process drama and theatre, Heathcote drew upon many of the similarities to create rich pedagogies of practice. Howell and Heap(2009) note that it is essential that we as educators in this field recognise what they do have in common., " What is important here, is that we understand that *all* these forms of drama experience share the same common elements of theatre: focus, metaphor, tension, symbol, contrast, role, time, space; and when we come to plan the drama experiences for children.... We need to bear these elements in mind" (p.1).According to O'Neill "process drama is a complex dramatic encounter that proceeds without a script, its outcome is unpredictable, it lacks a separate audience, and the experience is impossible to replicate exactly" (1995,p.xiii).

Process drama is pedagogical in that working within a drama context the teacher helps to create imagined worlds whereby children begin to understand what it must be like to be another. They are both actor and audience in this *as if* world/space. As experts and students they are crossing over all the time from the story to reflecting, as the teacher goes in and out of role creating curriculum tasks and questioning *what if* and *what next*. The students are similarly in and out of role as they seek to solve the problems that arise in this imagined world.

Howell and Heap (2010) define process drama as having these core elements *the willingness to suspend disbelief, fictional circumstances, taking of roles, use of tension, skilful use of signing through voice, gesture, and the use of objects, sounds and artefacts to establish a clear focus, a point of view, and a sense of place. The juxtapositions inherent in the recognition*

of the opportunities for meaning generated by the binaries of sound and silence, movement and stillness, light and darkness, all contained within time and space. P.588.

The Arts in the New Zealand curriculum (2000) explains “In process drama, which is not intended for an audience, participants build belief in roles and situations and explore them together, negotiating, interpreting and reflecting on role and meaning” (p.36). The curriculum resource books that accompany the NZC (2000) support this description by stating that drama has the elements, of time and space, action, tension, focus and role, the techniques of voice, gesture, movement and facial expression, and involves countless conventions that create tension and move the drama on. The core aspect of process drama includes role, perspective taking, questioning, problems and problem solving, collaborative ways of working, conventions, fictional contexts, tension, frames and frame distance.

2.3.1 Role taking

Central to process drama is the drama convention of *role*. O’Toole (1992) lists the sociological and psychological influence of Goffman, Laing and Berne as having an impact on teachers and drama in education especially around the core notion of *role*. He claims that as the sociologists defined people as having multiple roles in real life so too can children and teachers take up fictional roles in a drama context.

O’Connor (2006 p.1) describes process drama as an art form that is “improvised whole group drama, often taking a role with students or participants. In the Heathcote and Bolton way of working, the students are not reading a script to create a performance or play for an invited audience but are creating their own script and story in response to a given problem or dilemma. At the heart of process drama is the creation of fictitious situations whereby the teacher often through “role” presents problems to the students. “Morgan and Saxton (1987) suggest that when the teacher takes on a role...he/she will be working as performer, director and playwright, but from *inside* the work” (cited in Taylor and Warner 2006). Papas and Jordan (2006) say that process drama is an “active identification with and exploration of fictional roles and situations are key

characteristics, and there is less emphasis on personal growth, theatrical skills, or the recreation and enactment of an existing story” (p.36).

2.3.2 Empathy and perspective taking

Heathcote (1967), described the drama she used in the classroom as improvisational and she went on to explain that it wasn't just stories retold in action but about human beings confronted by situations that change them because of what they must face in dealing with those challenges. “ Very simply it means putting yourself into other people's shoes and, by using personal experience to help you to understand their point of view, you may discover more than you knew when you started,” (p.17). Chew (2011) states that “Heathcote’s vision was to build on the students’ past experiences and to invite them to dwell on and develop a deeper knowledge, not just of themselves but also of what it means to be human; as well as to obtain an investigated understanding of the society they live in” (p.43) . Bowell and Heap (2010) claim that it is the students working in groups collaboratively finding solutions to the problems presented in the fictional context and through the *currency* of talk forge relationships and begin to understand a different perspective other than their own.

Drama is another way to study and teach about human behavior—it recognizes the more artistic way of communicating about what psychology studies in a more academic fashion. Drama actively analyzes and presents the thoughts, emotions and behavior of characters for an audience to see and understand. In addition, drama addresses the wider psychological, social, and cultural conditions of humanity and, thus, serves as a natural vehicle for actually helping real people with problems more consciously address their problems. (Bailey,2006 in Weltsek-Medina)

According to Papas and Jordon (2006) “The goal is the development of students’ insight and understanding about themselves and the world they live in through the exploration of significant dramatic contexts” (p.36). O’Toole (2006) says it is through astute and higher order questions that children come to understand and feel what it must be like to be another. “ Empathy, not just sympathy, is one of the vital ingredients of that sensibility, helping students to step into others’ shoes and questioning how others feel and why they act that way, discovering multiple

perspectives and view- points that raise further questions, and helping us to see the complexity of our lives as humans” (p.7 in Morgan and Saxton,2006).

2.3.3 Dialogic encounters

Learning discussions are an essential component of the process drama intervention where constant opportunities were planned for reflection so that the students have opportunities to reflect in and out of role as different characters in the drama. Process drama is a dialectic method of teaching, it is about dialogue with each other, with ourselves and the world. This is based on the Socratic principle that describes the influence of the significant adult who mediates and attempts to co create a lens through which the child views and makes sense of his/her world. Learning discussions are an essential component of the process drama where constant opportunities were planned for reflection so that the students have opportunities to reflect in and out of role as different characters.

As part of this dialectic approach drama teachers use questions as a powerful tool to skilfully get the child to analyse their position in relation to another, to reflect and move towards feeling as if another in an **as if** world. The use of questions is essential in the development of empathy for what is sought is compassion to understand another point of view. *It is the questions that are important, because in questions there is hope, rather than in the modernist notion that the answers to questions – the solution addressed with technical scientific answers –will save humankind.* (Reynolds, 2003 p. 50). O’Connor (2004) states the importance of teachers in planning drama to use questions to get to the core of the problem, conflict or moral dilemma because he believes these questions ‘provide the impetus for both aesthetic and artistic learning’(p.8). Similarly O’Connor says it is the questions that bring children to discuss the big ideas of “who and what we are and also what we might become” (Ibid,p.7) Morgan and Saxon (2006) similarly argue that the ability to ask the right questions is a democratic skill (p.9).

2.3.4 Reflection and metacognition

Drama is positioned to encourage meta cognition as it operates in two frames, described as the expressive frame (the outer manifestation) and the meaning frame

(the inner understanding), (1987,Morgan and Saxton,p.21). “The significance of drama as an expression form of thinking and feeling lies in its concern with the process of personal engagement with the objective world” (1979,Bolton,p.20). Any activities that create scenarios for “real” life discussions encourage meta - cognition (Taylor, 2007).This ability to work simultaneously in the real and fictitious world is known in drama as *metaxis* (Bolton 1984) and indicates cognitive engagement on behalf of the students involved in this intervention. This reflection in role and out of role is aligned to Friere’s notion of praxis and accords with meta cognitive processes whereby students and teachers make sense of the world through discourse with each other. “ Men educate each other through the mediation of the world” (1974, Friere p. 12) and create emancipatory moments in the classroom through engaging and often emotionally charged conversations. Littlelyke (1996), echoes the need for the curriculum to be organised around multiple intelligences and he suggests that drama is ideally positioned to do this because it is he believes a “multifaceted learning medium, can cater for all of these modes, offering opportunities for a wide and holistic education as well as providing for children with different preferred learning styles” (p.170).

2.3.5 Problems, problem solving and tension

Heathcote (2010) says “ Drama for learning which involves student groups of varying sizes and ages, works by creating micro-worlds which allow human events and motivations and outcomes to be explored thus widening our experience of capacities of human beings to learn, endure, overcome, accommodate to and emphasise with others”(p.9). Students are presented with real life problems often through moral dilemmas and working together they begin to see a way out of the problem. Throughout the drama the teacher introduces tensions to ensure this learning is deep and authentic. O’Toole (1992) describes tension as “the gap between the characters and the fulfilment of their purposes” (p.27). Heathcote (2010) has listed up to 24 productive tensions that can be used subtly by the teacher as she believes this “Is the key to deepening the exploration of motive influencing action and therefore the journey” (p.10).

2.3.6 Collective Collaborative involvement

O'Neill declares quite simply that "Process drama is a group process" (1995, P.64). Nicholson concurs and writing about relationships in the drama says "It has long been recognised that drama, as an interactive and dialogic art form, depends on collaboration and positive group dynamics". Nicholson further elaborates by stating that it has long been acknowledged that "one of the positive attributes of drama education lies in its emphasis on co-operation and collaboration rather than individualised learning practices" (2010,p.82). Drama is an interactive group activity involving the careful introduction of conventions to deepen and move the drama along.

2.3.7 Conventions

The use of conventions and other drama activities that make up the drama tool box, as well as being interactive deepen the drama and create more problems for the students to solve in and out of role. Neelands (1990) explains that conventions taken from theatre tradition are used as "indicators of the way in which *time, space* and *presence* can interact and be imaginatively shaped to create different kinds of meanings in theatre" (p.4). He lists about fifty conventions and he organises them into groups which he believes represent four varieties of dramatic action. They are context building action where the conventions either 'set the scene', or add information to the context of the drama as it unfolds. Narrative action where the conventions tend to emphasise the 'story' or what happens- next dimension of the drama. Poetic action, which emphasizes the symbolic potential of the drama through highly selective use of language and gesture. The fourth group that of reflective action which emphasizes 'soliloquy or 'inner thinking' in the drama, or allow groups to review the drama from within the dramatic context (p.6).

2.3.8 Frame distance and safety

Heathcote (2010) explains that in the drama processes there is a shift in relationship, the teacher is no longer the fount of knowledge. "Within drama processes teacher and students can explain what it is to be human to each other; within the frame work that teachers can provide of security for individuals in the group, and protection from revelations regarding private matters" (P.9). By

entering the fictional world or agreeing to the what Heathcote describes as the “big lie” children are protected from the real life consequences of their actions in the dramatic frame (O’Toole,1994,p.27).Often role distance is used to provide this safety as seen in the *Everyday Theatre* work of drama practitioners O’Toole (Australia) and O’Connor (New Zealand) where the students are not asked to enact a tragedy but might have found an artefact from a tragedy that evokes similar feelings of loss or anger. Or they might as museum curators have to set up a museum display around a national disaster and need to explain the significance of the artefacts to visitors, for example.

2.4. Empirical Research in Drama

Littlelyke (1996) claims drama has much to offer in the sphere of personal, social and moral education.“ In that it can create a deeper understanding of the issues by engaging both feeling and intellect and by creating meaningful contexts in which moral understanding becomes moral action” (p.2). Wagner (1988) also noted that using drama had a positive effect on self- concept, self- confidence and self - actualisation. (cited by Conrad and Asher ,2000, p.78). McLaughlan (1990) claimed that using drama had a similar positive result on cross cultural understandings, by assisting in the reduction of ethnic and racial tensions (cited by Conrad and Asher). “Kardash and Wright (1987) concluded from a meta -analysis of 16 studies that creative drama appeared to have a positive effect on self -esteem, oral language, and moral reasoning. They further reported that creative drama generally reported higher levels of achievement in these grades, but appeared to have no consistent effect on reading achievement” (Ibid). Conrad and Asher (2000) declare that the paucity of empirical studies that use quantitative data in the field of qualitative drama research creates a problem. Their meta-analysis of 16 such studies failed to find a positive effect on self –esteem and self –concept. However more recent studies particularly in drama and literacy teaching have demonstrated a positive effect.

2.4.1 Drama and literacy

There is considerable research around drama and literacy particularly in the use of picture books and achievement in writing. Wagner (1985) noticed the elevation of the written work of students during her work as a director of the Chicago writing

project. She traced it back to the use of process drama in the classroom (p.166). Ewing, Miller and Saxton (2008) cite Heath(2000) and Fisk (1999) who claim that drama used in conjunction with learning strategies has a positive effect on engagement and learning and at the same time enhances language and literacy development in imaginative and creative ways (p.122,in Anderson, Hughes and Manuel). Ewing et al say that many picture books were consciously created to share experiences, thoughts, ideas or dilemmas with children, adolescents and adults alike (P.124,Ibid). They claim the non -verbal nature of picture books draws on multiple understandings and this non –verbal processing has neurobiology implications in terms of broadening neural circuitry in the brain (P.123). Shaun Tan (2006) who is a noted writer of sophisticated picture books said that they are “metaphors for life issues, dilemmas and feelings” (p.125 in Anderson, et al). Lankshear (1994) states that picture books are “opportunities to story, challenge, and question and interpret from multiple perspectives build students’ capacity for deep understanding and so enable them to become more critically literate” (p.125,Ibid).

Winston (2004) makes the claim that children are able to discuss and engage with more complex moral and social issues as a result of taking part in a drama experience based around books for three reasons.

First of all, the imaginative experience of fiction through drama is more immediate than the written through a written story. Children feel they have lived through or actually witnessed the experience. As a result, their talk can be situated within the experience as well as being reflective of the experience under discussion. Second, because language of drama is more sensorial than mere words, making use of visual and other aural signals, it offers more of what we might call ‘avenues of engagement’ for children to access human issues within a story. Some children may read a facial expression or a physical gesture more readily than they understand printed or spoken words. Third, drama does not spell things out as clearly as a written text does, since the narrative commentary, which often provides access to a character’s inner life, is generally absent . (p.21)

Murphy claims that using teacher in role the students not only work at a different level but the relationships change and in terms of student academic achievement there is a shift and elevation of talk and writing (2007). When describing the

impact of using teacher in role Murphy argues that it “ can move the children very effectively from functioning as *learners* to functioning as *experts* which is one of the characteristic features of process drama activity and, in my view, one of the most fundamental goals of education” (20 p.13) . Murphy cites both Heathcote and Bolton when describing what happens when students work in this way. “Because of the teacher’s apparent lack of knowledge in such situations and her expectation of their significant expertise in relation to the same, the children’s self-esteem is raised during the encounter as is their capacity to work often well beyond their expected levels of ability, to work in what Vygotsky termed the zone of proximal development “(1995,p.35). This position of ‘expertness’ was expanded further by Heathcote and Bolton when they developed the pedagogy known as Mantle of the Expert. This sustained learning system draws on drama positioning and inquiry learning to teach right across the curriculum. Within process drama a flavour of this can be achieved through what Hughes (2004,p.64) describes as ‘*enactment of the expert*’. “In role, acting as if they are experts, students cease being spectators, cease to operate from a deficit position, and act with what Hughes describes as *an expanded sense of self*” (cited by O’Connor, p.144 in Anderson et al).

O’Neill cites Greene who claims that teaching through the arts especially drama gives form to new ways *of being* in education.

It signifies for her (Greene) the nurture of a special kind of reflectiveness and expressiveness, reaching out for new meanings, a learning to learn. Greene insists that in order to test out new forms of social order and reflect on their moral implications ,young people need opportunities to project themselves into rich hypothetical worlds (2006,x in Schneider et al).

Various studies in literacy have concluded that students during and following participation in process drama in speaking, listening, reading and writing have performed at a higher rate when compared to the more conventional or traditional methods of teaching (Winston,2004, Cremin,2006,).

Cremin et al (2006) compared the difference in student writing as a result of writing in role to that of the writing composed from a specific genre writing

session. They concluded that while both writing sessions appeared to motivate the students “it was clear that the genre specific approach produced much less effective writing” (p.5). They went on to explain that while the writing was structurally sound, it frequently lacked a sense of perspective, a clear authorial intention and/or a sense of voice.

They concluded that their pilot study ‘revealed unequivocally that ‘seize the moment’ drama and writing, was not only more engaging for both the children and their teacher, but it also enabled more effective compositions to be produced” P.5 Ibid). Crumpler and Schneider (2002) also “found that children’s writing composed in drama had more depth and detail” (cited in Cremin et al,2006,p.2).

2.5 Empathy and Ethics: To walk in another’s shoes

Heathcote in her 1984 New Zealand lecture series talks about the need to understand *symbiosis* or how we are all dependent on each other in our society. A necessity for the emotional and spiritual health of every community, country and essential for human and global survival. The belief that the ability to walk in another’s shoes is quintessentially human, and has been at the core of the process drama approach.

Bolton (1981), who worked alongside Heathcote, believes that. “One cannot teach concentration, trust, patience, tolerance, social concern, one can only hope that education brings them about over a long term... the achievement of these admirable qualities is not intrinsic to drama; it is an important by-product of the dramatic experience”(p186).Edmiston (2002) has made the connection between drama and ethics when he talks about drama being an ethical education. “Thus, being and becoming ethical is a social project not an individual journey. Values are not acquired from outside us, they are forged in dialogue among people and texts” (p. 64). He also describes the internal dialogue as a result of the intrapersonal conversations as being part of the ethical journey. Hornbrook (1989), discussing the work of Heathcote and Bolton makes links to the meaning making of existential philosophy “ drama in particular, seems to have a special ability to engage with our apparent sense of presence, to illuminate for us that momentary consciousness of existential insight which for Heidegger was the key

to understanding the complex relationship we have with our experience in it's immediate aftermath," (p.70).

Nicholson (2002) makes the links between the role of drama in the curriculum and the development of morally responsive children when she discusses the very nature of the dramatic process. "It has long been recognised that drama as an interactive dialogic art form, depends on collaboration and positive group dynamics and there are clear implications that working within this educational environment has social and moral benefits" (p.83). Noddings (2007)also states that "Dialogue is also essential in learning how to create and maintain caring relations with intimate others. There must be a time in every child's day for sustained conversation and mutual exploration with an adult" (p.53).

The realisation that conflict is not between individuals *but between the discourses out of which different people are operating.* (Edmiston 2000,pg50) posed dilemmas are safe as they are contained within a **frame** and they need to be because *cognitive illumination occurs through the emotions experienced in fictional encounters.* (Edmiston 2000,pg74). The *ah ha* moment or cognitive insight (Kohler 1925 pg 187) when there is an emotional connection to another human being. A common understanding of loss or the potential to lose something is experienced not at an individual level but within the group. Drama is a group process that by the very action of working together is inclusive. When using process drama to address social, cultural and ethical issues children work together to solve problems in role and reflection out of role.

Social capacities are strengthened as students encounter one another in new roles, situations, and groupings. Though individual challenges and successes will arise, students are encouraged to think of themselves as people who might be able to work together to bring about justice and tolerance in their personal lives and in society.(o'Neill,2006,p.xi in Schneider et al).

Gervais quotes Edmiston when he claims that the child can develop moral reasoning or thought through the drama process.

*Not only can students engage in **talk** about action –moral reasoning about what they **might** do if they were people in particular circumstances –in drama students*

take action and in imagination do that which in discussion they might sketchily contemplate. (Edmiston,1998,p59)

The teacher can of course shift the frame using time or tension to explore different curriculum areas or different ways of working but always at the heart is *knowing* that every human decision has an impact on the life of another, that we are symbiotic in our dealings with each other.

It is critical to get the child to examine the effects of their own lives on the lives of others for as Noddings argues it is pivotal “in developing caring relationships and caring schools” (2007, p. 55).

Heathcote (1984) has always maintained that “*School was a rehearsal room for the future*”. Believing if we could get it right in the classroom then there is hope of getting it right in society outside the classroom.

2.6 Student Engagement

Student engagement is linked to both student self -esteem, achievement and a sense of belonging at school and the wider community. A review of the literature is pertinent here firstly as a background to why restorative practice has become a way of working with “at risk” students, secondly as an argument for using process drama as a pedagogical way to teach the underlying principles of restorative practice. Finally the factors around engagement and the indicators of effective pedagogy will be discussed. Gibbs and Poskitt (2010) produced a comprehensive review of the literature describing what is meant by the term student engagement and outlined eight factors that contribute to engagement particularly at the middle school level, years 7-10.

These factors are:

1. Relationships with teachers and other students.
2. Motivation and interest in learning.
3. Goal orientation.
4. Academic self -regulation
5. Self- efficacy.
6. Relational learning.
7. Personal agency.
8. Dispositions. (p.14, Gibbs and Poskitt)

In the pedagogical approaches outlined by Gibb and Poskitt (P.25), described as supporting students' engagement for improved learning and achievement, they list nine approaches that appear to have a positive impact.

They are:

1. Making learning fun.
2. Teacher viewing from a student perspective.
3. Learning discussions.
4. Co-operative learning.
5. Peer tutoring.
6. Problem-based learning.
7. Hands on work.
8. Demonstrations.
9. The use of video games and technology.

The two lists above, factors for engagement and features of effective practice provide a useful reference for this study and will be referred to throughout.

2.4.1 Learning discussions

Teachers who use learning discussions aimed to challenge the students and make links to the world outside the classroom are modelling another engaging strategy particularly useful at the middle school level. Gibbs and Poskitt cite Carrington (2006) who “argues that middle-school students need opportunities to engage with others in substantive conversation, linking the classroom so that students are intellectually challenged in a meaningful and supportive environment” (p.27).

2.4.3 Interactive activities and meta- cognition

Taylor (2009) suggests several activities that promote reflection and higher order thinking. All involve students interacting with each other in a variety of hands on activities. (p.27 in Gibbs and Poskitt). Research by Durling, Ng and Bishop (2010) with New Zealand teachers indicated that teachers of middle school students recognised the need for interactive activities and subsequent opportunities to be involved in reflecting and assessing their own learning as being effective teaching practices.

Group work and hands – on activities were most often mentioned as being particularly effective activities for students in the middle years. Another effective classroom practice for this age group was allowing students to have a say in what they learn, and to take control over their

own learning, for example by becoming involved in planning, assessing and evaluating. Finally, some teachers found that teaching activities that promote higher order thinking skills, including inquiry learning, were very effective with this age group (Durling, Ng and Bishop, P.45).

2.4.4 Cooperative and inclusive learning

The review of the literature around group work or cooperative learning indicates that working co-operatively “meets students’ social needs of belonging, peer acceptance and demonstration of competence” (Gibbs and Poskitt p.28). The need for belonging, acceptance by peers, having opportunities to demonstrate competence, and opportunities for autonomy are characteristic developmental needs of middle school students (Walter, Lambie & Ngazimbo,2008 cited in Gibbs and Poskitt, p.25).

If students learn to collaborate and work in groups this has long term effects on a sense of belonging and academic achievement. Research by Nuthall (2000) with New Zealand students connects the impact of working in groups inclusively, as important, because of the links made between the emotional response engendered in positive group work and the retention of long term concepts being studied. The need for children in these age groups to feel that they have peers around them is critical as it means they are more likely to focus on learning the subject involved and to achieve academically (Cushman and Rogers 2008,p.15 cited in Gibb and Poskitt, p.25) . “Where students had participated in classroom activities that encouraged them to work together, there was significant evidence to indicate that these students remained engaged in their learning up to a year later” (Akey,2006) cited in (Gibbs and Poskitt 2010,p.18). Durling et al (2010) also support this finding in their research with teachers at the middle school level.

2.6 Student engagement: A background to Restorative practice.

Research, both international and local, suggests that students’ engagement in school and learning decreases during the middle years of schooling. In New Zealand, disengagement with school is evident in truancy, stand-down, suspension and expulsion rates, which increase rapidly from age 11 (Ng,2006). Students’ attitudes towards reading, writing and mathematics decline as they move through the middle years and they become more critical about some of the teaching they experience (Cox & Kennedy, 2008). Further evidence from the Competent Learners at 14 study (Wylie et al. 2006) indicates that a third

of the 14 year old participants did not find school engaging and a fifth wanted to leave school as soon as they could. (cited by Gibbs and Poskitt, 2010,p.5).

Student engagement in New Zealand schooling is a contentious issue. Findings from comparative international studies over the last ten years indicate that as a country we are failing a significant body of students, predominantly male and Māori and Pasifika students. (Mc Naughton, et al.2000, Alton-Lee,2003, Mac Farlane, 2004, Bishop et al,2003, Wylie et al, 2005,2006, 2007).This group of students were not only failing academically but were being suspended and excluded from schools in disproportionate numbers and this number was growing at an exponential rate (Adams et al). “ International comparisons show that although New Zealand children are high achievers on average compared with other OECD countries, there remains a proportion of students who significantly underachieve (Kovacs,1998;PISA,2004). Māori in particular remain over-represented in school failure rates (Ministry of Education,2004)” (cited in Buckley and Maxwell ,p.5,2007).While disengagement appears to escalate at the year 9 and 10 level there is evidence to suggest that for some Maori students it begins at the year 7 to 8 level. The Ka Hikitia report³ which notes this escalation coincides with emerging adolescence and the transition to high school (p.23,2008).

It seemed that as a country and an educational system we were not meeting the educational vision of what we wanted our young people to be and become. A vision of “good” citizens who would lead “meaningful, productive, healthy and fulfilling lives (Bolstad,2010, p. v). Thorsborne and Vinegrad (2004) say it is crucial that students feel they belong and feel connected.

Research has shown us that the process of alienation and stigmatisation of wrongdoers risks the formation of a subculture within and beyond the school, intent on rejecting the norms of acceptable behaviour as these young people strive to have their needs met. These outcomes, although never intended, work against the promotion of wellbeing, resilience and connectedness in all students.(p.6).

³ A Ministry of Education Strategy that outlines strategies to lead change in the education for and with Māori learners.

Following Ka Hikatia, the question became how to engage these young people and encourage them to stay at school in order to gain the necessary qualifications and become good citizens? The New Zealand Ministry of Education developed several initiatives around reducing the exclusion of students and engaging them in schooling especially at the high school level. One such initiative was the Suspension Reduction Initiative (SRI) which had the aim of reducing “the numbers of Māori students being suspended from mainstream secondary schools to at least the same levels as those of non- Māori students” (2003, Restorative Practices For Schools,p.2). This initiative was later renamed Student Engagement Initiative (SEI) and included a raft of other support initiatives that included Te Kotahitanga⁴ and Restorative Practices. Understanding the complex variables underpinning student engagement was central to the success of these initiatives being implemented into schools. It was also crucial in meeting focus two in the Ka Hikatia strategy in identifying what works for Maori students in terms of engagement and success in educational achievement.

In Australia, Blood and Thorsborne (2005) say that schools practising a restorative philosophy “have a continuum of practices (Watchel,1999) which range from formal (e.g. conferencing) to informal responses (e.g classroom and corridor conferences, peer mediation etc)” (p.2).However they make the point while these ways of working are effective they are also reactive and what is needed is an engaging curriculum and productive pedagogies. They also make the case for whole school cultures based around respectful relationships. Schools need to critically examine existing pedagogies and ask themselves what pedagogies could schools and teachers put in place to engage students?

2.7 Restorative practice

2.7.1 Doing things differently: Change of paradigm

The publication of New Zealand’s statistics on literacy and numeracy in comparison to other OECD countries revealed a “tail” of underachievement based on gender and ethnicity (Ka Hikatia, p.23, Wylie et al, ibid). What was of major

⁴ Te Kotahitanga a project implemented in secondary schools aimed at improving Māori student achievement and inclusion in mainstream schools.

concern, was that specific groups of students who were in this tail of under achievement, were Māori boys. This was also the demographic over represented in the suspension and exclusion figures.

As part of the Ministry of Education's initiatives around reducing suspensions (SRI) and building student engagement (SEI) research was carried out into the teacher's role. (Alton-Lee,2003, Bishop,2003,Bishop and Berryman,2007, Hattie, 2002,2003,McFarlane 2007, 2010) These studies established both from a cultural and academic perspective, that teachers make a difference. Hattie (2003) claims that teachers can have a significant impact on the achievement of students. He says " teachers can account for 30% of the variance. It is what teachers know, do, and care about which is very powerful in this learning equation"(p.2).

The research also indicated that the relationship the student has with the teacher and vice versa is pivotal in engaging students and developing resilience and academic success.

These teachers were very clear that their ability to teach and interact effectively with Māori students in their classrooms was closely tied to their having positive, non-judgemental relationships with Māori students as being self -determining, culturally located individuals and seeing themselves as being an inextricable part of the learning conversations; not as only speaker but as participant (Bishop et al 2006 cited Ka Hikatia,p.28)..

What was needed was a set of respectful practices that seeks to build relationships with schools and their wider communities in response to the significant set of students who by definition are marginalised and leave school lacking the necessary qualifications to succeed in life.

A pilot project (the project was called Te Hui Whakatika, Adams et al ,2003,p.2) funded by the Ministry of Education and carried out by the University of Waikato from 1999 onwards has had an enormous impact in challenging schools to change the nature of the way they do things with regard to engaging students and stemming the tide of suspension and exclusions. The work came out of the research completed by Judges M. Brown, McElrea and Carruthers who had expressed concern and the increasing number of youth appearing in the court

system. (Cited in Restorative practises in Schools Pg 2). “The project picked up on their ideas about the probable value of using restorative justice principles for young people in schools”. The team established their intention and the key underpinnings of the project which was later to become the process named Te Hui Whakatika (MacFarlane 2007).

“The intention of the project was to try to keep students in schools, rather than suspending them”. The team melded ideas from the justice model of family group conferencing “with some ideas from Māori hui making, and also with ideas about narrative therapy and respectful ways of speaking” (p.2).

2.7.2 Restorative Practice v Restorative Justice

Restorative practice in New Zealand schools has evolved from the restorative justice model used in the justice system as a way to work differently with antisocial behaviour in school communities. In both the education and legal arena, the restorative paradigm was a response to systems that were failing significant groups within both schools and society at large. Scott (2010) describes that to move away from the crime and punishment model that dominated both the legal and education system there was a need to view what was happening with a new lens. He describes Zehr (2004) as providing both the language and the lens to begin to understand the new paradigm.

The restorative paradigm views crime as harm done to real people and the only meaningful social response is to draw a circle around those who have been affected and assist them to acknowledge and repair the brokenness. It is a vision of a person-centred justice embedded in a philosophy and principles which treat people and their relationships as if they really mattered (p.2).

Zehr (2002) “explained that restorative justice is defined as a response to wrongdoing and conflict that focuses on healing the resulting harm to relationships” (cited by Cavanah,2007,p.31).

In some ways there are pertinent parallels between restorative justice of the legal system and restorative practice in schools.

Thorsborne and Vinegrad (2006) compare the links between the justice model to the school practice as the same in that they are participatory and democratic. They describe the crime or misconduct as harming relationships and creating liabilities and obligations and the need in this relational approach for it to work. There is a need for the wrong to be addressed and made right and for the harm to be healed in the relationship. “It is an approach to harmful behaviour and community conflict that sees wrong doing as essentially a violation of people and relationships” (p.7). However the common element is that the crime or antisocial, defiant, non-compliant behaviour creates harm through damaged relationships between people and communities. “Crime is not first an offence against the state or the school; it is an offence against people. The central goal of restorative justice is therefore the healing of the relationships damaged by the crime” (2003, p.4 Adams et al).

On the other hand, as Drewery (2007) points out the use of the term “restorative practices” in the school context has some important distinction from the legal context: that while common to both are quite different.

The restorative practices approach has at its heart those principles embedded in the restorative justice model, the point of difference being justice is about determining whether a crime has been committed and who is responsible. Education is about trying to produce young people who will be good citizens. Restorative practices in schools include less confrontational discipline, and a focus on relational practices earlier in the chain of command, for example in the classroom, between students and teachers, between students in the playground, and in the dean’s or principal’s office. (p199)

Drewery explains that, in the educational context, restorative practice also actually involves the whole school culture or ethos rather than a system of discipline and student management.

Drewery (2007) goes on “The context of justice is crime and punishment, where the context of education is development and learning. The starting point of the education system is that all children are there to be cared for and supported to grow and develop. I doubt that this is the primary stance of the legal system” (p.11).

The value of a restorative approach in education is the way it is in the way it is a relational tool. “A restorative process is transformative of relationships, builds identity and community, and is therefore profoundly educational,”(Drewery, 2007, p.205). Similarly described by Thorsborne and Blood (2005), “Restorative practices focus our attention on the quality of the relationships between all members of the school community,” (p.3).”it teaches us the value of relationships in achieving quality outcomes for students,”(Cameron & Thorsborne, 1999,p.13).And an even wider view is that it is a “ science of building community in an ever increasingly disconnected world”. “Restorative practices is the science of building social capital and achieving social discipline through participatory learning and decision making” (IRP website,2010,p.1).

2.7.4 Why restorative practice?

Thorsborne and Vinegard (2006) make the claim that the punishment model used in the wider society and mirrored in our schools violates the need to belong and only serves to further alienate our young people from society.

the process of alienation and stigmatisation of wrongdoers risks the formation of a subculture within and beyond school, intent on rejecting the norms of acceptable behaviour as these young people strive to have their needs for belonging and affiliation meet. These outcomes, although never intended, work against the promotion of wellbeing, resilience and connectedness in all students (p.6)

Morrison et al (2006) also argue that the punishment model also serves to isolate individuals from and breaks down the *social capital* of a community (p336).

Retribution is about matching a punishment to the crime and the perpetrator has no voice or agency. The relational model explores and focuses on the harmful effects the crime has had on the victim and seeks to redress these harms. This model involves significant others in the telling of stories, giving voice to key stake holders and making things right in terms of restoring the relationships.

Cavanagh (2007) argues that using a relational way of working driven by a restorative approach will create a school culture of safety (p.31). He believes that both students and teachers need to build their capacity to respond to conflict in a peaceful manner and list those skills that both need to have in order for this to

occur. For students especially at the middle school level he states they need to be able to be involved in peace making circles and to engage in restorative conversations. Teachers need to build relationships with students and their families from the first day and to also deliver a more interactive and reciprocal teaching and learning programme. Thorsborne (2004,2006) claims that the majority of “problems” school face are relational. MacFarlane, Hendy and MacFarlane (2010) claim that the use of a restorative practice model will assist the national strategy Ka Hikitia and begin to inform practice. They cite the work of MacFarlane, Margrain and Thorsborne as providing ways of working in schools with at risk students. “This group considers restorative practices are responses to behaviour, within the philosophy of restorative justice, which are based upon social reciprocity and the universal human ethic of respect” (Brantlinger,2003,p.13).

2.8 Restorative practice in the New Zealand context

As Drewery (2007) states restorative ways of working are not new to New Zealand they are bound up in indigenous protocols of solving conflict through hui and the kaupapa (philosophy) of collective responsibility. “In Maori custom and law ,tikanga o nga hara, the law of wrongdoing, was based on notions that responsibility was collective rather than individual and that redress was due not to any victim but to also the victim’s family. Understanding why an individual has offended was also linked to this notion of collective responsibility” (Maxwell and Morris,p.239).

What is significant here is the notion of the community responsibility in the raising of the child and therefore the community supports that child when conflict occurs. Central to the Te hui Whakatika model of restorative practice is the philosophy of sovereignty a belief that all individuals have the ability to take responsibility for themselves (2003,p.4. Restorative practices team). When those times occur when this has not happened then there is a community of care around the young people who work together to help the young person make the appropriate decisions and heal the harm they have created. This philosophy grounded in the traditional New Zealand context is also the core value of restorative practices in other settings particularly indigenous communities in

Canada and Australia, whereby communities collaboratively work to “grow” respectful and responsible young adults.

Drewery (2003) notes that this way of working is about finding “answers to complex situations (which) can be better achieved when people of goodwill work together to come to common understandings” (p.5).

2.8.1 What is restorative practice in schools?

When interviewing 15 schools who had embarked on the implementation of restorative practices into their school, Buckley and Maxwell (2007, p18-19) found four core values that emerged consistently from all the schools they interviewed. They were respect, inclusion, achievement and a celebration of diversity. Respect had to be modelled in behaviour, voice and gesture, all parties seeking to resolve a conflict needed to be listened to effectively and actively. When working with students there needed to be inclusive practices whereby all those members part of the students’ family and wider support group needed to be invited in to any processes that involved the students as part of feeling they belonged to the school community. Creating respectful schools enabled schools to get on with the work of achievement and those schools that had implemented restorative practices began to feel greater student responsibility (Ibid).

Celebrating diversity goes hand in hand with belonging and students who felt their cultural backgrounds were celebrated and affirmed within their school setting was a significant value underpinning the success of implementing restorative practices into schools. Introduction of restorative practices into schools involves considerable professional development not only about the specific processes but the core values to do with this relational way of working with students.

2.8.2 Role taking in restorative practice

The notion of role /position taking is crucial in restorative practice, not in the sense of fictional roles (as in drama) but rather social or functional roles within the group process. In the restorative conference there are often clear roles ascribed to the participants. They are described as the ‘victim’, ‘wrongdoer’, ‘supporters’ and ‘facilitator’ or ‘mediator’(Thorsborne and Vinegrad,2004,Sharp 2003). Sharp (2003) discusses the importance of the teacher when facilitating a restorative

conversation or circle time to differentiate between the roles they assume. “Circle facilitators need to differentiate between their role as a class teacher and as a circle facilitator. A class teacher might benefit from neutrality and impartiality at times, but a Circle facilitator must be very conscious of their responsibility to allow the whole group to own the restorative process” (p.13). While in a school setting he facilitator might also be the teacher, the principal, the sports coach, for example however Sharp maintains that there needs to be a high degree of neutrality in the role. “In theory, conference facilitators should play no other role in an incident. As this is not always possible in a school setting, facilitators need to be aware of the other roles they have in or out of school” (p.13).

2.8.3 Dialogic encounters

Schools who have implemented restorative practices into their culture use a variety of strategies, these might range from restorative conversations or chats between individuals and groups often involving an adult/teacher, through to such strategies as circle time in classrooms and finally a full formal restorative conference or hui whakatika. Drewery (2007) discusses the importance of what and how language is used in a restorative conversation or conference, “because it is primarily“ through language that new meanings, new relationships and new personal identities are produced” (p.8). The restorative practitioner or facilitator works from a stance of respectful curiosity. Drewery (2005) comments that this way of speaking comes from the work of White (1991) a narrative therapist (p.319) .According to White from this stance “the practitioner can often learn about alternative storylines that offer a completely different positioning to the person being worked with, often a positioning that is incompatible with the problem that may have initiated the current encounter” (Ibid). Through language new narratives are socially constructed by the group or the community.

2.8.4 Restorative conversations

These are informal conversations with an adult to do with minor issues to do with anti -social behaviour. Buckley and Maxwell (2007) note how it is often occurs in a school setting. “ One staff member and a student (sometimes the victim) discuss what can be done to repair the harm and resolve the problem” (p.7).Usually the adult has to help unravel the stories and relationships issues that have led to this

harm, through questioning that seeks to understand and not blame any of the students involved in the incident (Thorsborne et al 2004,2006).

2.8.5 Circle time

According to Braithwaite (2004) the notion of a circle comes from criminal justice and is based around the offender who has people around him or her that they respect and believe care for them. The problems are discussed and the circle, representative of the community helps provide solutions. He makes connections to the African proverb that it takes a village to raise a child (p.90) and the North American ritual of healing circles. “The circle is a very old, traditional approach to problem- solving in most cultures and remains intact in some indigenous communities” (Thorsborne & Vinegrad,2004,p.14).Sharp (2003) describes circle time “A process, which encourages the use of many restorative skills and values – mutual respect, empathy, active listening, impartiality, non-judgemental acceptance and win-win problem solving” (p.22).

Circle time has been adopted into classrooms as a democratic way to solve class problems. Circle time can be an informal class discussion around conflict, with clear rules of how it is conducted and the part or roles that all play are clearly scripted. It has also been a way to describe a formal conference. The problem is discussed as the problem for example teasing and not the person or persons who have been teasing. It is deconstructed or reframed. Class solutions are sought to solve the problem and seek a way forward in developing a more caring culture in the classroom. The students are positioned as experts who can solve their own problems.

2.8.6 Restorative conference

Braithwaite (2004, p.96) describes the use of youth development circles or a formal conference where by the significant members of the victim and offender’s circle of friends and family attend to tell the story of harm and create a new story of healing. He says such conferences have significance on many levels because they are a ritual in a modern world where we have little rituals and they are an opportunity for the “community” around the young person to say they are loved. “ Moderns must create new rituals of love and care that are meaningful in a

modern setting and that can transmit modern endowments for success in life” (p.96).

These concepts of care, concern and ritual are seen clearly in the hui whakatika (MacFarlane et al 2007). This restorative conference, seen in most New Zealand schools is conducted in a formal manner where all members of the community to have a vested interest in helping the young person gather together to find a way forward out of the conflict or troublesome behaviour.

“Restorative conferences are a way of responding to serious problems by bringing together all those who are involved to find a way of acknowledging wrongdoing, attempting to repair any harm that was done and finding a way of reintegrating the wrongdoer back into the community. The use of restorative conferences in schools is modelled on the use of the family group conference in youth justice and the restorative conference for adults” (Buckley and Maxwell,2007,p.7).

2.8.7 Empathy and Perspective taking

Rifkin (2009)develops the idea that empathetic extension is true equality when we recognise the struggle and vulnerabilities of others as of our own (P.159). As Sharp (2003) maintains, the skill of the facilitator is needed to create a novel situation based on a “level playing field” (p.15) in which all people are treated the same –with respect. The purpose of all restorative outcomes is for all parties to respond empathically to both victim and offender and for the supporters to begin to accept their responsibility in supporting both to repair and rebuild their relationship and decide on reparation. The purpose is for all to understand what it is like to be another as stories are shared and different perspectives are presented. All involved work collaboratively to do the right thing. According to Rifkin“*The maturation of empathy and the development of a moral sense are one and the same thing*” (119).

2.8.8 Responsibility, Shame and Forgiveness

“Genuine accountability, Zehr argues, is much more complex and demanding; it includes an opportunity to understand the human consequences of one’s actions, to face up to what one has done and to whom one has done it. It means taking responsibility for the results of one’s behaviour. And, where traditional practice

fails us so completely, *to be allowed and encouraged to help decide* how to make things right, and then to be supported to take those steps” (cited in Thorsborne and Vingrad ,2004, p.9). Jenkins (2006) believes that facing shame is crucial to restorative action. He makes the distinction from shaming and facing shame. “When a man faces shame, he comes to his own realisations through recognising a contradiction between his ethics and his actions” (p.159). He states that the subsequent move to put it right or restitution “requires realisations and actions that reach out towards the experiences of others” (p.161).

When we work towards enabling restorative action and supporting our client’s journeys towards atonement, we are brought face to face with the paradox of forgiveness; forgiving the unforgivable, whilst maintaining the notion that forgiveness is exceptional and extraordinary and never something that can be involved as a means to an end.(p.162).

McCullough (2010,p.53) describes the human desire for forgiveness as a fundamental human need, one that is essential for survival.

*The desire for forgiveness isn't a disease that afflicts a few unfortunate people; rather it's a universal trait of human nature, crafted by natural selection, that exists today because it helped our ancestors adapt to their environment.
Forgive and reconcile is part of the hypothesis to do with "valuable relationships" (p.53).*

If the desire to forgive and be forgiven is as innate and important as McCullough suggests this would seem to bode well for the usefulness of restorative practice for all humans including young people in schools.

2.9 Research in New Zealand around restorative practice

Adams et al (2003) as part of the University of Waikato restorative practices development team piloted a project called te Hui Whakatika in 2000-2001. This was an action research project that involved 34 schools where schools were offered training in restorative practices.

The schools participating in the Northland project showed up to a 25% reduction in suspensions in the first months of that project. Nevertheless, it was unclear to what extent this success was the result of putting those

schools' practices under such close scrutiny, and to what extent it was due to their commitment to the conferencing process (Adams et al,p.1)

A summary report by Buckley and Maxwell (2007) using a case study approach of four schools who had introduced restorative practice successfully into their schools said this. "Evidence on the effectiveness of introducing restorative practices comes from a small number of quality research and evaluation studies that were commissioned in relation to some of the Ministry of education initiatives (Hill and Hawk,2000; Adair and Dixon,2000). These studies have drawn favourable conclusions" (p.24,). Their study came to similar conclusions. *The schools found that they needed to introduce changes across the whole school if they were to improve all children's involvement and commitment to schooling. The schools in this study developed their approach around the values that emphasised respect, inclusion, achievement and the affirmation of cultural diversity. An examination of NCEA results for the case study schools showed gains but even more important for those we spoke to, was the improved atmosphere within the schools (p.25).*

There is as Buckley and Maxwell, very real need for further research in this area if schools to be conducted if schools are to confidently introduce restorative practice into their school communities.

2.10 Empathy as background to Restorative practice and Drama

Empathy comes in many colours. Often we think of our ability to see from another person's perspective as the essence of social intelligence. This cognitive form of empathy reveals how we make maps of others' minds to understand how they feel, what they think, even imagine ourselves walking in their mental shoes (2009, Daniel Siegel xiv, in Gordon).

When describing empathy the common definition seems to be the ability to feel what another person feels "Empathy can be thought of as feeling with someone, or for them" (p.152, Oatley in Keltner et al). In making the case for the importance of drama O'Connor (2010) and Neelands (2002) echoed Mc Ewan's words following the September 11 attack on the Twin towers, " that empathy, the ability to think and feel what it might be like to be other than yourself, sits at the centre

of morality and is the most important competency for a world living under the threats of terrorism and its response” (p.2, 2010).

We think therefore we feel for others. Mencius a follower of Confucius said that empathy was part of human nature ...that everyone was born with a mind that cannot bear to see the suffering of others. (cited by De Waal,2009, P.220).

In more recent times a significant body of science has emerged to challenge the assumption that as a species we are naturally self-centred, aggressive and “driven” to survive at all costs. The Darwinian notion of survival of the fittest has come under fire with the revelation that as a species we are in fact “soft wired” to be empathic to our fellow man. Rifkin (2009), social commentator and author goes as far as to describe this stage as homo empathicus and says that we are “unique among the social animals in our ability to empathise with one another and fellow creatures” (p.80). He argues that if we were in fact “hard wired” to be aggressive and competitive we would have “maintained ourselves in far smaller numbers in a Paleolithic mode”. He believes that “there is something deeper at work. If we are by nature an affectionate species that continuously seeks to broaden and deepen our relationships, and connections to others, in effect to transcend ourselves by participating in more expansive communities of meaning, then our increasingly complex social structures provide the vehicles for our journey” (p.39). Empathy is a complex mix of the cognitive, the affective and the behavioural working together to ensure successful group relationships and ultimately survival of the species. The human ability to be empathic or understand what it must be like to be another and act compassionately has been identified as a crucial aspect of human survival. Neelands (2001), describes empathy as the ability “to imagine oneself as the other. To try and find oneself in the other and in so doing recognise the other in oneself.”

The ability to feel what it must be like to be another is explained by the presence of the mirror genes in neuro science as Neelands (2009), also identifies the fact that our minds mirror that of the other when we see or hear another in distress. He uses the example of a room full of babies when one starts to cry they all begin to cry. Seigal (xv, 2009, in Gordon), explains this at the neural level as follows

We literally feel in our lower neural circuits what we see in someone else. Driven initially by "mirror neurons" that permit us to enact behavioural imitation and emotional simulation, we move and feel in ways that reflect what we see in someone else. It is this openness to our own embodied response that creates the foundation for feeling another's feelings. Moving upward into our awareness - creating prefrontal cortex, we begin to sense our internal world and attribute what we feel to what we may perceive inside of someone else

De Waal (2009) defines empathy as a set of layers “Empathy is multi-layered, like a Russian doll, with at its core the ancient tendency to match another's emotional state. Around this core, evolution has built ever more sophisticated capacities, such as feeling concern for others and adopting their viewpoint”. (P.209). According to Rifkin, “Mimicking, conditioning, and direct association are all involuntary and rather primitive forms of empathetic arousal. But they demonstrate, very dramatically, the deep biological roots of empathetic expression in the human animal. We are built to experience another’s emotion as if it were our own”(p.119). He explains that “The maturation of empathy and the development of a moral sense are one and the same thing” (Ibid.). Kohn (2010) describes empathy as one of the most complex abilities that humans possess “..... to step outside one’s own viewpoint and consider how the world looks to another person is one of the most remarkable capabilities of the human mind. Psychologists call this skill *perspective taking* and it offers a foundation for morality” (p.157, in Keltner et al).

In terms of how empathy is learned, commentators have a range of opinions. Rifkin argues that “one can become more empathic both by internalizing another’s emotional state as well as by comparing another’s emotional states to one’s own past emotional experiences “ (p.114. He seems to suggest that it is the grappling with emotional states of self and the other that the individual learns social behaviour and develops a conscience. Bendtro et al (2008) in their training programme put respect of others as the top rung on the development of a conscience. They describe respect as “Just and caring, concerned with others, sticks to inner values even if challenged, feels appropriate guilt, and tries to redress wrongs” (p.31). This links to Friere’s notion of “conscienziation” where in the dialogue within the real and fictitious situation there is a social construction of

meaning and understanding of what it must be like to be another. Mature empathy occurs when language and cognitive development enters into the equation.

Morgan and Saxton (2006) sum up both the importance and difficulty of being able to be empathic towards each other.

We need to place ourselves in each other's shoes and know from our own experience what another could be feeling and thinking. It is an essential characteristic of the human condition, demanding a generosity of imagination. It is also often very painful because it means mediating personal needs for the good of others.P.10

2.11 The Intersections between Process Drama and Restorative practice

2.11.1 Introduction

Before undertaking this study, when working to change practices at my school, where I had a hunch that there were several intersections between restorative practices and process drama. Having conducted a review of the literature (just outlined) the theoretical and practical intersections have become clearer. This section will discuss the intersections that seem to be present between the restorative paradigm and process drama as pedagogy. Firstly there appears to be common philosophies based around shared notions of empathy and care. Secondly, the strategies common to restorative practice and process drama will be identified in particular, ways of working such as, role, ritual, rules as well as the significant role the teacher/facilitator takes as a mediator within these dialogic encounters. Figure 2, represents the overlap of philosophy and practice around process drama and restorative practice.

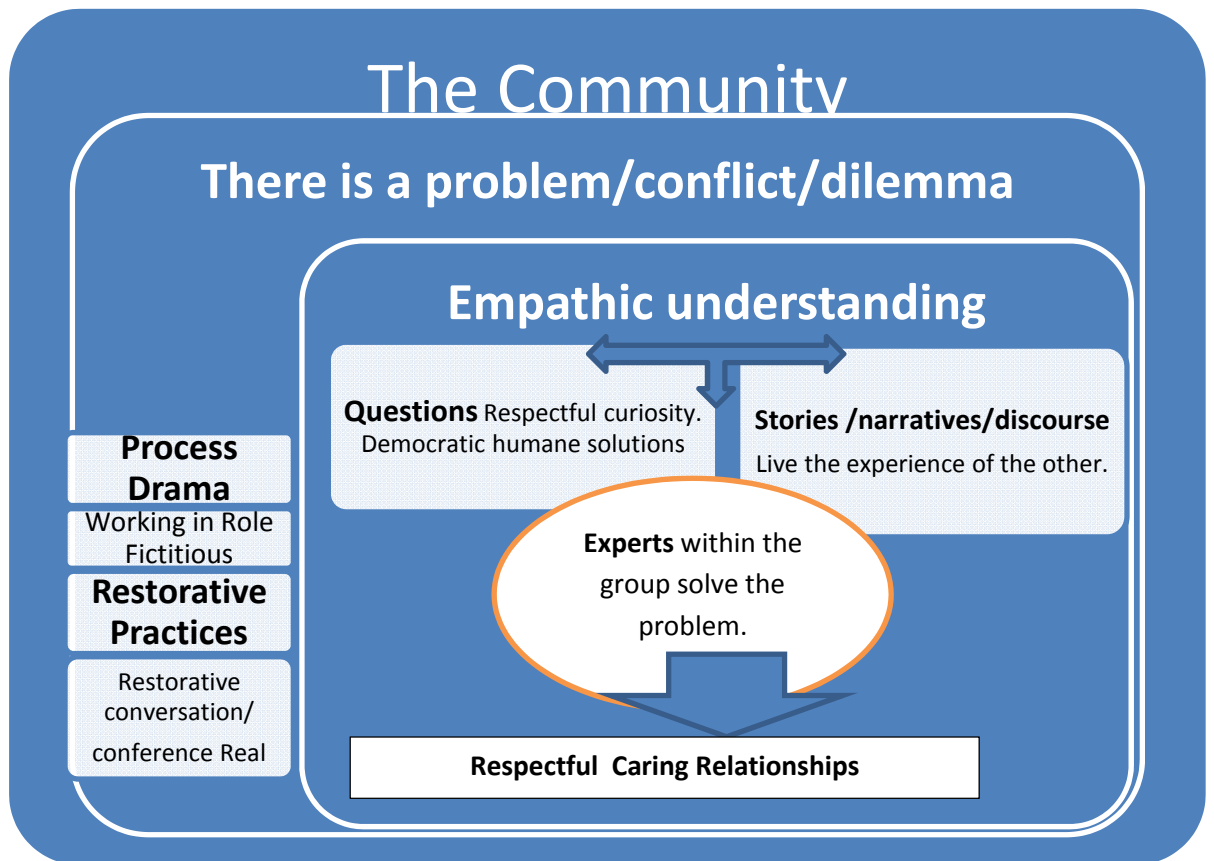


Figure 2 Intersections between process drama and restorative practice

2.11.2 The community

There are many intersections that occur when comparing the pedagogy of process drama and the relational approach that a restorative interaction brings to a problem/conflict situation. Firstly, all encounters involve a community, a group a class or at least one other person shown in figure 2 as the outer circle. There is a belief that the community can solve the problem that expertise is within the community. Secondly, both process drama and restorative practice want compassion and empathy to be the outcome. They share a belief that humans are capable of perspective taking and will create a way out of ‘the mess’ (or dramatic tension) that is respectful and dignified for all concerned. Thirdly, rules, rituals and higher order questions seek to uncover “stories” often not heard in an effort to share power, and establish agency for individuals or groups within the community. Both are dialogic encounters. Finally, ‘the mess’ or tension distance and explained as separate from the participants and any harm that has occurred from that is

repaired in the real or the fictional context. In a restorative encounter the relationship is repaired, restored or rebuilt or if in drama, reflection, verbal, or through the use of a drama conventions, students act out or articulate/reflect through speaking or writing what needs to happen to create a solution to a dramatic tension.

2.11.3 Empathic understandings

The core outcome for both teachers of process drama and facilitators problems in the process drama context or the restorative practices contexts is to invoke empathy in students. The outcome is of course that if students are empathic towards each another then it is difficult to be cruel. In the drama context and the restorative meeting the core component is to understand each other's stories. "It is only when we understand our own narrative, writes Jerome Brunner (1996,p.42), that we can truly begin to develop a responsible sense of self. Being alive to others demands the exercise, not just of sympathy but that much more difficult quality- difficult because it is active rather than passive- the act of empathy" (cited in Morgan and Saxton 2006, p.10).

2.11.4 Roles

One could argue that just as the teacher working within the process drama context is in role, so too is the teacher or the facilitator in a restorative encounter. They are both leaders and servants, liminal servants. O'Neill's notion of the liminal servant borrowed from McLaren's (1986) definition, which he explains "is a term that refers to a social state in which participants are stripped of their usual status and authority" (cited in Taylor and Warner,p.110). Victor Turner (1969), from whom McLaren borrowed the concept of liminality, writes "If liminality is regarded as a time and place of withdrawal from normal modes of social action, it can be seen as potentially a period of objective scrutinisation of the central values and axioms of the culture in which it occurs (p.167)" (P.110 Ibid).

Just as the teacher in the process drama is leading the students into a different space where the usual rules and relationships are deconstructed and reconstructed (O,Neill,p.1995,p.66) so too does the restorative facilitator lead the group into an unknown space where relationships, problems and stories are re-examined,

deconstructed and rewritten to provide a way forward. In so doing discourses of power are challenged and young people are given a new agency, it can be cathartic for all members in both process drama and in a restorative encounter. Describing from restorative practices, Drewery (2007) expresses the emotional journey of the participants, which could also be true for process drama when students confront social and moral dilemmas in reframed scenarios.

Here is an orchestrated, emotional journey, taken by a group of people who do not normally come together. It is designed to ensure that all present get to say what they need others to hear; it is also designed to keep hope alive. The separating of the problem from the person of the offender maintains the dignity of the latter as a sovereign person who can do differently. The young person has undergone a psychological process that is capable of transforming their identity as a wrongdoer to someone who has the opportunity to retrieve a status that carries respect. The space given to the voices of those affected, the new, alternative perceptions of the young person and their family, inevitably change their demeanour towards the offender. The parties learn about the weaknesses and humanness of those who have previously been seen only as offenders, opponents or competitors, there is often a kind of catharsis (P.11).

It is interesting that Drewery adopts the theatrical term ‘catharsis’ to describe what participants in a restorative conference go through. Similarly the experience of participating in process drama is sometimes described in terms that echo restorative practice. For example Dorothy Heathcote’s famous words ‘man in a mess’ describes the reasons why students, teachers and parents/community members come together to sort out the mess. Tension underlies both the restorative conference and drama encounter. It is critical in process drama but critically drama offers the chance to view the problem ‘frozen in time’ and examined and re-storied as the students go through a process of change (Heathcote,1995,p.115).

2.11.5 Ways of working: The rules of the game

O’Neil describes how there are clearly defined rules in the dramatic world and all have to agree to be complicit in the creation of that world. She explains that “the leader must first of all engage the participants in the events, and then encourage them to contribute to the development of the dramatic world so that it becomes a group creation articulated through the growth of an imaginative consensus”

(1995,p.57)(cited in .Miller and Saxton (2006). Heathcote describes drama as creating a safe place to try out situations in a penalty free zone where the participants can stand back and view the problem (1995).

The facilitator of a restorative conversation or conference similarly needs to clearly define the rules of encounter with the group and an agreement made that the group will assist in the problem solving and support the students present who are the reason for the conference being held in the first place. There is a scripted set of questions designed to hear stories from all present and establish a picture of what happened to lead up to the conflict or harmful event (Thorsborne,2000, p39-42) Though the questions are scripted as in a restorative encounter there is a clear expectation that there are no right or given answers. As Drewery describes it (2007), the facilitator works from a stance of respectful curiosity. There is a genuine desire to hear and understand what has happened, to reflect on the differing stories. Respectful questioning here is a crucial strategy in both process drama and restorative practice. Morgan and Saxton (2006) quote Jerome Brunner (1996,p.42) about the importance of questioning, because it is when we begin to answer those questions that we begin to understand what it must be like to be another. “Respectful curiosity rather than expertise on the life of another, the practitioner can often learn about alternative storylines that offer a completely different positioning to the person being worked with” Drewery (2004,p.319).

Thorsborne and Vinegrad (2006) similarly claim that questioning during a restorative conversation, in circle time, or in a conference, creates participatory and democratic interactions.

2.11.6. Reframing the problem

In a restorative meeting the problem is separated from the person, the problem is the problem not the student (Sharp,2003, Drewery 2004,2007, White 1991). The problem essentially has been distanced from the person in much the same way as in drama the problem is reframed. The impact of the problem on others is gradually revealed through the skilful questioning of the restorative practitioner and the drama teacher. (Bowell and Heap,2010).The facilitator and teacher move the group forward in understanding the nature of the problem and their role in it and also their part to play or responsibility in finding a solution to the problem.

2.11.7 Expertise within the group

Both restorative practice and drama acknowledge the collective wisdom of the group or community to find solutions to the problem. However the difference between process drama and restorative practice is seen perhaps in Heathcote's notion that the classroom is a rehearsal for life. In restorative practice it is recognised that the classroom is 'life' with all the realities of "man in a mess".

The core notion of the students as experts with the ability to solve their own problems underpins both the fictional context in drama and the real context in restorative practice. This is social construction at work. Drewery (2004) suggests that using the constructivist theory "is interpreted as suggesting that all people are potential actors in their worlds, and in particular, they are experts on their own lives". In this way, drama and restorative practice in the classroom are models of the democratic process at work.

2.11.8 Relational Pedagogies

Considerable literature from drama and restorative practice paradigms identifies the significance of relationships as underlying the success of students in terms of achievement and engagement in education. As Drewery argues we are socially constructed beings and that to have a voice and agency we need relationships with others. "Persons cannot be agentive on their own their own, but only in relationships with others. Thus to be positioned agentively is to be an actor in a web of relationship with others who are also engaged in co-producing the conditions of their lives" (p 315). "All that agentive positioning can do is afford us the opportunity to negotiate meaning, and thus such positioning offers the opportunity to collaborate with others in the production of the future conditions of our lives" (p. 316).

Cavanagh (2009) speaking from a restorative platform could so easily be reading a script written by the drama educationalists Neelands, O'Toole and Edmiston when he declares "If we want our children to have the capacity as adults to solve problems related to wrongdoing and conflict non-violently then we have to encourage our schools to model and teach our students how to behave in nonviolent ways" (p.79).

2.12 Summary and transition to Chapter Three

This chapter reviews the literature around process drama as an engaging pedagogy often used to teach students about moral and social issues. Strong links were found between the literature on process drama and restorative practice particularly in terms of its place in moral education and the literature around restorative practices in New Zealand schools. Both restorative practice and process drama are about developing pro- social behaviour and could be seen as social art forms (Bowel and Heap,2010,p.588).

Process drama and restorative practices intersect across processes, strategies, philosophy and the central role played by a highly skilled facilitator. They have much in common in working with students in schools. What is perhaps the most powerful common denominator is the philosophy of hope that humans can treat each other with respect through heightened awareness of what it is to be another and in order to develop higher order empathy. This carries hope for humane and democratic schools and societies. Having established a theoretical context for the study Chapter three will describe the methodology used, and how process drama was set up to teach restorative practices in a school setting.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed the literature around drama as pedagogy to teach aspects of social justice and the key concepts of restorative practice. As described, there are several significant aspects that weave through both ways of working with students, common to both is the goal of empathetic understanding of the *other*. The purpose of this study was to contribute to the literature around both process drama and restorative practices by devising a drama based intervention for a class of year eight students in a middle school, in order to develop their understanding of what restorative practices actually is. This is an action research study with elements of critical ethnographic action research methodology, using a mixed methods approach, primarily based around qualitative data gathering.

3.2 Research Paradigm

3.1.1 The background to critical ethnographic action research

I am a Deputy Principal in an inner city middle school in New Zealand and was part of the leadership team involved in changing practice around behaviour management. The school was involved in shifting from a punishment model to a restorative way of working. Prior to my research for this thesis, the school had undergone two years of intensive staff development with considerable data collection and analysis of incidents of antisocial behaviour, detentions and suspensions. With the teachers involved in the data analysis and developing alternative ways of working they began to implement changes to their practices and the way they interacted with students. The detention room ceased to exist and suspensions dropped significantly. This was noted in the school's ERO⁵ report for

⁵ The Education Review office (ERO) is the government department that evaluates and reports on the education and care of students in schools and early childhood services. ERO's reports are used by parents, teachers, early childhood education managers, school principals and trustees, and by Government policy makers.

2011⁶ “Staff have participated in on - going whole-school professional learning and development (PLD) that has resulted in the fostering of caring and respectful relationships, the school’s ability to respond to the identified needs and abilities of individual students, and a learning environment that affirms and celebrates cultural diversity” (ERO, 2011). The next step in the action research cycle was to develop areas of the curriculum in order for the students to gain understandings around restorative practices.

With the expectation of teaching all the year eight students at my school in drama and showing a personal conviction that this was an effective pedagogy for social justice I developed a series of lessons around the core principles of restorative practice. I informally trialled these with all the year eight students and was very encouraged at the discussions and writing that was generated throughout these sessions and the anecdotal evidence to suggest there was an apparent positive flow on effect in the playground.

As a teacher, and a leader, I wanted to recreate this drama programme as an intervention and formally examine what was happening when students were placed in situations that allowed them, during process drama to view the story from another perspective and critically analyse their role in certain situations. This could also be seen as an opportunity for professional development for teachers new to both drama as a pedagogy and restorative practices to work alongside another teacher in their classroom.

⁶ The purpose of ERO’s reports is to give parents and the wider school community assurance about the quality of education that schools provide and their children receive. An ERO report answers the question “How effectively is this school’s curriculum promoting student learning-engagement, progress and achievement?” Under the education and learning outcomes for children and for specific groups of children including Maori students, Pacific students and students with special needs. ERO also reports on the quality of the school’s systems for sustaining and continuing improvements.

3.1.2 Action Research as Methodology

Mutch describes the overall purpose of educational research is to enhance knowledge and understanding and to make sense of the co-existence of complex ideas that stand side by side in the field of educational endeavour. “ To find a trustworthy way of making sense of and finding truth in our world, many people turn to research as a recognised and credible process for establishing fact” (p.15).

This desire to ‘make sense and find the truth’ is very much at the heart of this research project.

Not only did I want to establish fact but I also wanted to improve the way *things were being done around here* and, in light of what had gone on before at my school in terms of teacher professional development, student education was for the senior leadership team the next step.

In this situation action research was the most appropriate methodology to adopt. As Stenhouse (2006) states it is teachers seeking to improve their practice that has given rise to the understanding of action research in education. “He proposed that research should first and foremost be useful, serving the purpose of educational improvement, of bettering practice through enhanced understanding..... teachers as the best researchers of practice, operating in localised research communities” (In Ackroyd p.42). Mutch (2005) also agrees with this, as she believes that it “focuses on one’s own practices for the improvement of teaching and learning or management purposes” (p.113).). “Action research is about change and intervention. Initially, the Research Question is usually conceptualised as a *problem to be solved*, or a *vision to be achieved*.”(O’Toole,2010p.65). Locke (2010) cites Jean McNiff’s description of action research (2002,p.15). “Action research is an enquiry by the self into the self, undertaken in company with others acting as research participants and critical learning partners”. Burns (2000) declares that action research “is potentially a grass roots approach to the solution of school problems” (p.454).

Mutch (2005) outlines at least ten reasons why teachers are called to research that relates to their everyday work. The two that would summarise my call would be “to support and idea or practice I already have, and to build a case for change or

to argue for something, such as increased funding or better access” (p.24). In summary Carr(1995) cites Winter who “argues that action research should be seen not just as a methodological device for solving the practical problem of relating research to practical change, but more importantly, as a source of fundamental theoretical problems about how this relationship is understood” (p.102). The next crucial question here is one asked by Piggot-Irvine (2009) “Paradigmatic alignments- where does action research fit?” (p.21) She cites the work of Carr and Kremmis who state that it is “classified technical, practical and emancipatory typologies that closely parallel the descriptors for positivist, interpretist and critical research paradigm” (1986, *ibid*). However she concludes that it is difficult to contain action research and she describes it as embracing and overlapping various typologies due to its eclectic nature (p.22).

As Burns (2002), states “action research usually commences with observations in the real world that raise such questions as ” (p.444). For me the question that arose was to become my research question for this thesis.

What shifts in relational attitudes are recorded and reported by year 8 students participating in process drama based around restorative practices

There are according to Noffke (1997) three dimensions to action research, the political, the professional and the personal. The political is about wanting to change ways of working within schools. The professional is about making links with research to what is currently in practice at school and thirdly personal. This view is seen as having the major benefit because for the teacher it is seen as developing “greater self- knowledge and fulfilment in one’s work a deeper understanding of one’s own practice, and the development of personal relationships through researching together” (Noffke, p.305).

Action research involves an intervention and as O’Toole and Beckett (2010) claim such research recognises a need to analyse and critically reflect on the theory and practice of the teacher (p.7).Locke describes the action research model as having a cycle of “problem definition, data collection, reflective analysis and planning, monitored action and reflection” (2010,p.48).

3.2.3 The Prar Model

The Prar model described by Piggot Irvine (2009) is the one most closely aligned to the research action I had decided to undertake as part of my research project. This model of participant researcher action research focuses on the context in which the participants or researchers work and in so doing there is a vested interest for those involved to make changes within that organisation or context (Ibid,p.15). Within the Prar model there is an emphasis on multiple perspectives based on multiple data collections in order to cross check and triangulate the data. There is considerable reflection involved in order for professional development and transformation to take place. This involves not only the reflection that takes place as part of the current research but from previous learning. It has as Piggot-Irvine argues the explicit goal of improvement in teaching and learning (P.16). It is collaborative in that it involves the support of a classroom teacher and his class. It is also accountable which in turns heightens aspects of validity. The assumption is that research findings will be shared with staff, students and principal, BOT and parents in order enhance teaching practices. (p.18). This model allows for the teacher researcher to develop research skills in order to continue with this research cycle and narrow the gap between what the literature says and in order to explain what is happening in the classroom in terms of pedagogy and improving pro-social behaviour.

3.2.4 Ethnographic and critical focus

Traditionally ethnographic research was based around long term observations of groups or societies and had its roots in the school of anthropological and sociological research personified by Margaret Mead (Cohan and Manion, 2007). In the case of my research I was already working within the class and school so there was an element of ethnographic research involved. However Burns (2000), offers another definition which argues that as teachers working long term within a class and attempting to capture the social reality of the group are also ethnographic researchers (p.395).

Neelands (2006) claims that ethnographic research is a way of life which cannot be understood through some brief episode of intense scrutiny. Therefore he argues “outsider paradigms of educational research” are inappropriate. (in Ackroyd p.18).

However researching ones practice does provide an opportunity for the teacher to explore and describe the subjective and objective realities of schooling (Bourdieu,1977 in Ackroyd).

O'Toole (2010) describes ethnographic research as having its roots in cultural anthropology. "Ethnographers describe, document and interpret human experiences *in situ* through fieldwork in a particular location, or within a community.....contemporary ethnographers view the world as socially constructed, with multiple, ever changing realities. An ethnographic fieldworker is not neutral, detached observer but an engaged co-participant who builds relationships with people within a social and political context. Collaboration dialogue and negotiation characterise the interactions between ethnographer and research participants"(p.52). He believes that the teacher has to look at practice with new eyes as if a stranger viewing what is happening inside the classroom. The job is for the teacher is to make the familiar strange and to view it from the outside in a fresh way (Ibid).

3.2.5 The researcher as critic.

Carr and Kemmis (1986) make the claim that being professional in education means to be constantly reflecting and discussing how social and political structures influence and impact on the educational practice in classrooms. As part of the leadership team who were in the process of shifting from a punishment model to a restorative model based on respectful relationships my own praxis led me to develop this drama programme. I could therefore be described as what Carr and Kemmis call as coming from a critical view. " In the critical view, educational problems and issues may arise not only as *individual* matters, but as *social* matters requiring collective or common action if they are to be satisfactorily resolved" (P.31). Carr and Kemmis also point out that the critical ethnographic research is about exploring power relationships. In this way the researcher seeks to understand who is dominant, what stories are privileged and whose voices are heard and silenced. "In critical ethnography the cultures, groups and individuals being studied are located in contexts of power and interests" (Cohen et al, 2007,p.187). I consider these kinds of concerns to have been central to my study. As the teaching staff were challenged to look at the student demographic of who

was being punished and why, so too the students were challenged about their view of the world and the marginalisation of certain groups and individuals in their class.

3.2.6 Drama as critical ethnographic research

Taylor (2006) expresses the opinion that drama researchers have been challenged to reflect on the “embedded hetero-normative values that underpin their work” perhaps because they have failed to critically examine how they might be “unconsciously reinforcing” some of the oppressive practices in society and privileging some stories over others. (p10, in Ackroyd).

Educational drama research has moved from a more general commitment to naturalistic inquiry and ethnographic approaches, to a study of action research, reflective praxis and classroom –based inquiry, to an interest in critical and emancipatory forms of scholarship, to more recent discussions of post-modern condition and how interpretive acts are often aligned to the political. The latter has seen various critical social theories emerging where researchers expose the lenses through which they are interpreting the world Critical social theory exposes how our cultural, gendered, race and queer ideologies can often reinforce the dominant hegemony (in Ackroyd p.1).

One such way to view the use of drama is through the critical ethnographic lens. Gallagher (2006) brings together the critical ethnographic approach into the area of drama research by acknowledging the statement made by the drama pioneer Dorothy Heathcote who described the way drama can be used as social education to attempt to sort out “man in a mess” by stating that “critical ethnography becomes one fascinating way to deconstruct and understand how it all came to be” (in Ackroyd,p.63). She describes it thus “ A critical epistemology for drama research is especially fitting because the activity of drama itself is about taking up positions and spaces to examine the worlds they produce” (Ibid). Gallagher continues to explain how critical ethnographic research is important because it offers the opportunity to “ask of critical ethnographic research in classrooms, the extent to which research of dramatic worlds and relationships suggest different possibilities or actions that might help us redress issues of social justice more broadly” . She elaborates by saying that “Critical ethnographic research of drama

classrooms is interested in questions of social justice, of inclusion and participation, of self- and other – understanding, of liberatory pedagogy” (p.73).

The second reason I was called to research was to build a case for change. It is this motive that leads me to position myself as viewing the world through a critical theory lens. The change I wanted was a shift from a punishment model to a restorative model and therefore the creation of a more democratic school. It was essential for the students to gain understandings around this way of working if they were to be part of the paradigm shift in the school culture. It has long been argued that drama as a pedagogy is a critical pedagogy, tapping into the ability to imagine what it is like to be another and gain knowledge around discourses that privilege some stories and groups and marginalise others. Heathcote, Bolton et al, have also argued that stories of social justice reframed in drama settings allow the student to live vicariously as Goodman (1998) describes:

Perhaps one of the most unique cognitive talents that we, humans, possess is our ability to go beyond immediate and direct experience as a source of learning. Our facility to vicariously experience life from secondary sources is a powerful tool in understanding our own lives and culture. From this perspective, the power and perhaps ultimate contribution of my study is to provide readers with an opportunity to envision the lives of the informants and then apply what they vicariously observe to their own situations.(p.57).

Neuman in Mutch (2005, p.64) describe a *critical* approach as “a process of inquiry that goes beyond surface illusions to uncover the real structures in the material world in order to help people change conditions and build a better world for themselves” (Neuman,1994,p.74). “This methodology deals with interpersonal relationships, role, power and context as central to a consideration of research outcomes” (O’Toole,2010,p.23). Lather (1992, p.87) declares that the purpose of critical research “is to get below the surface of social relations and disclose the myths and rituals of social relationships. In almost all educational research, the participants are knowing subjects within their cultural context and they can construct research narratives about the world drawn from their personal experience and imagination” (cited in O’Toole). This paradigm of critical theory is based in the transformational concepts of Friere’s belief that all men in their

conceptualisation of reality need to be constantly criticising and “acting upon and transforming their world” (1972,p.12).

Levin and Clowes cite Gibson (1986) when arguing that “critical theory is inherently not value-neutral, but instead driven by the goal of a more humane and just society” (1991,p.5) . Tripp (1992) argues that socially critical research in education is informed by principles of social justice (p.29, cited in Lichtman 2006).

3.3 Research Design

Following is a brief description of the school within which I conducted my research, the students, teacher and teacher researcher who took part in this intervention. Ethical care and consideration needs to be given to the fact that this middle school, students and teachers could easily be identified due to the small community in which it is situated and my on -going association with the school. Therefore due care is given to provide enough details to establish an understanding of the research context but not enough detail to identify the school, students and teachers.

3.3.1 School Profile

The middle school is a decile 4⁷, multi -cultural school with three main contributing primary schools and several smaller outlying rural primary schools who contribute pupils for year 7 and year 8 level of education. The ethnic composition of this middle school is New Zealand Māori 45%, NZ European/Pākehā 39%,Asian,8%,Samoan,2%,other pacific 4%,other2%. There are two classes that provide a te reo Māori focus within a digital environment. They are developing learning programmes that are aligned to the Mātauranga Māori curriculum. The aim of this is to enhance the aspirations of parents for their children to achieve and succeed as Māori.

⁷ Schools in New Zealand are given a decile rank from 1-10. Decile 1 schools draw their students from low socio-economic communities and at the other end of the range, decile 10 schools draw their students from high socio-economic communities. Deciles are used to provide funding to state and state integrated schools. The lower the school’s decile the more funding it receives. A school’s decile is in no way linked to the quality of education it provides.

The school along with other schools in the area had experienced roll decline due to the changing demographic of the area. Following a trend for the last decade several groups of parents in the contributing primary schools chose to send their students to middle schools outside the area.

Until 2010 this middle school, the drama that had been offered to students had been part of the biennial school production or as an option for once a week over a five week period. There was no specialist drama teacher at this school. In 2010 drama was placed in the technology cycle. For the first time process drama was a compulsory subject for all students at the year eight level. While there had been significant professional development around restorative practices for the teaching staff there had only been some deliberate curriculum planning and implementation for the students and this took the form of developing *circle time* in classrooms and the co -construction of codes of behaviour in classes and school wide.

3.3.2 Selection of participants

The class I selected to work with was chosen for several reasons, firstly they were an interesting mix of students, secondly the teacher had expressed an interest in my research and thirdly he was also a member of the senior management team who could validate this way of working by being a critical friend and provide another “voice” to the research dynamic and also to the professional conversations around restorative practice.

This class of year eight students were generally representative of all of the classes at this middle school, though due to the experience and skill of the teacher the class tended to have an interesting mix of students. On one hand there was a significant cluster of academically capable students and on the other hand due to his experience he also had several high needs students in terms of learning and behaviour. One student had a full time teacher aide. This class was 50% European/Pakeha, 25% Māori and 25 % Asian. Given the quantity of qualitative data I would be gathering as a result of this intervention, it was decided to select a sample group of eight that would be representative of the class in terms of ability and ethnicity.

3.3.3 Sample Group









	<p>Brian, boy, of European descent difficulty with learning, previous history at primary school and year 7 of antisocial behaviour and anger outbursts.</p>		<p>Kelly, girl of Māori descent, quiet, capable academically, close knit group of friends.</p>
	<p>Sam, boy, of Chinese descent, generally well behaved and reasonably capable academically.</p>		<p>Jade, girl, of European descent, quiet, capable academically, often on the outside.</p>
	<p>Issac, boy of Māori descent, quiet, academically capable, many incidents in previous year of antisocial behaviour.</p>		<p>Mandy, girl of Māori descent, positive, popular, reasonably capable academically.</p>
	<p>Gavin, boy of European descent, very capable academically, tended to be on the outside, eccentric. Gets offended easily by other students.</p>		<p>Lois, girl, of Chinese descent quiet, very capable academically.</p>

Figure 3 : Description of sample group

The group was selected based on teacher and teacher/researcher observation and knowledge with the criteria for inclusion ensuring there was a mix of ability, ethnicity, gender and attendance at all of the sessions. The group consisted of

three students of European descent, three students of Māori descent and two students of Chinese descent, the students were given a pseudonym. Students with high needs both in terms of learning and behaviour were not selected due to the unpredictability of their attendance and also as confidentiality was a condition of the ethics application a description could easily identify them within the research setting. However, the sample group did include three boys who previously had been described as medium to high needs but seemed to be working well in this class.

3.3.4 The teacher

The teacher Mike is an experienced teacher who has taught for over 15 years in predominantly low decile schools. He has considerable knowledge and expertise in I.C.T and has been recognised at national level for his work in this area. Mike expressed an interest in process drama after seeing and talking to students who were involved in the drama programme in the previous year. He has a leadership role in the school that includes the pastoral care of students.

3.3.5 The teacher researcher

I am an experienced teacher having taught for over thirty years in a variety of schools in a range of positions and at all levels from preschool to tertiary. My first ten years were based in special schools teaching students who were profoundly deaf and often with multiple learning and emotional needs. In all these educational areas I have used drama across the curriculum. I have a current leadership role in my present school which involves specialist teaching in the arts as well as a significant pastoral care component.

3.4 Research Ethics

In order to comply with the University of Waikato's protocols around research in schools as well as wanting to be as respectful to the school, students, teachers and parents in that school community I undertook the following steps. These are outlined as follows and copies of the letters are in the appendices.

3.4.1 Role of teacher researcher

I was granted study leave to complete this research, therefore both the Principal, staff and BOT⁸ were aware that I would be asking for permission to conduct research into drama and restorative practices. I did not formally approach the principal, staff, BOT, parents or students until I had received consent from The University of Waikato Educational Ethics committee. Once I had received this I contacted the school and spoke to the principal, teacher and upon receiving permission to work in the school I then requested an opportunity to speak to the class. The principal received all the documentation required by the ethics committee so that he was completely informed and he spoke to the BOT about the research. This was an essential step in conducting research in school for as Basit (2010) explains “At every stage, we will need to explain who we are and why we are capable of conducting this research, what our research is about, and what its likely benefits are, to seek the acceptance of the gatekeepers....” (p.59). The gatekeepers being the Board of Trustees, the principal, deputy principal, team leaders and teachers.

3.4.2 Informed consent

The teacher, students and parents received both information sheets and accompanying letters seeking permission to conduct the research and to collect data, in the form of student writing, reflections, letters, notes written in role and recordings of student reflections. The latter part of the data collection proved problematic as a majority of students “passed” on having their thoughts recorded on tape at the end of each session. O’Toole and Beckett (2010) describe this as the *silent voices*, those students who are timid or do not have the language to express themselves (p.120). Also it is salient to note the reluctance to speak could also be part of the impact of peer pressure particularly at this age, on what is said in the public domain of a classroom. We overcame this by holding an interview at the end of the intervention in small groups and the students were more forthcoming in their discussion. The only dimension that changed was the setting, instead of a

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The Board of Trustees (BOT) is a group of elected people who are responsible for the governance, control and management of the school.

classroom it was a group in an office. All students signed their forms giving consent to take part and to have their work used as part of the data set for research purposes as did their parents/caregivers.

3.4.3 Researcher reflexivity

Throughout the research I was constantly reflecting on my role as both teacher and researcher in order to develop relationships of trust and respect with all those I was involved with in this school community (Alton Lee,2001;Basit,2010;Finch,2005; Guillemin&Gilliam,2004; MacFarlane,2009;Mutch,2005). This notion of reflexivity is essential in research and goes hand in hand with sincerity, integrity and the concept of beneficence⁹.

I was also mindful of the timetable commitments and the class and school obligations, so I was careful to suggest those weeks when there appeared to be little or no timetabled class events or activities. Given the busyness of schools this was an impossible task and on several occasions the drama was disrupted, this may or may not have had an impact on the effectiveness of the intervention but generally describes the reality of teaching in 21st century schools.

3.4.4 Public Accountability

As a requirement of not only the formal ethics protocol of The University of Waikato's Education ethics committee but personal and professional moral obligations demand that the findings from this intervention will be made available for the students, teachers, principal and parents of the school in which it occurred. It will of course provide the next step in the action research cycle at this school. "Altricher, Kemmis, McTaggart, and Zuber-Skerritt (2002,cited in Piggot-Irvine, 2009,p.24)remind us that one of the three defining features of action research is that it includes practitioners making their experiences public to other people who are concerned by and interested in the practice".

⁹ The principle of beneficence, which refers to the obligation to act in ways that benefit people (Guillemin,2004,p.270).

3.5 Data collection

3.5.1 Qualitative and quantitative data

Banister et al (1994) state that “action research is multi-method research” (p.114). Typically action research has a “raft” of data collection tools and this intervention was no exception. The qualitative data took the shape of transcribed recordings and interviews, student and teacher reflections and student writing in role documents. These were written up and coded according to the emerging themes. The data was combed numerous times in order to make links to and therefore triangulate the data from various data sources. Quantitative data took the form of pre and post questionnaires prior to the intervention and following the intervention. During the intervention data was also collected and this often took the form of quantitative data, for example the teasing survey. This data was not expected but became one of the “spin off” aspects of this research.

The drama intervention was designed around an eight session programme that took its design from the work of Miller and Saxton (2004). They developed a series of practical drama lessons from stories and I used “Better than Bed Socks” based on *The Very Best of Friends* by Margaret Wild to start the drama. The other sessions were designed by myself, the design and reasons for doing each session will be outlined in detail in the discussion chapter. Following is a chart outlining the key themes the drama conventions used and the type of data gathered.

Table 1: Drama planning and data collection

Drama Session	Theme/big idea	Conventions used	Data collected
1 Introduction to drama and story drama <i>Better than Bed Socks.</i>	What is process drama? How we will work together. How we treat people.	Freeze frame Speaking in role Conscience alley Hot seating	Questionnaire Student learning log Teacher reflection Class recording
2 Continue with <i>Better than Bed Socks</i>	What is a friend? Loss changes people in unexpected ways. How you treat your friends and your pets may be reflected in their actions towards you.	Freeze frame, paired conversation in role, Conscience alley, Teacher in role.	Recorded discussion Student/teacher reflection
3 As above	As above	Freeze frame, Paired conversation in role. Conscience alley. Teacher in role. Spoken thoughts.	Writing in role recorded class discussion. Teacher reflection
4 As above also data review shared some journal entries.	As above	Spoken thoughts, freeze frame, sculpting.	Class discussion, prompts questions, recorded
5 <i>Crow Boy</i> Data review shared results from questionnaire.	What's in a name, name calling, judging others.	Teacher in role, freeze frame, spoken thoughts.	Writing in role, teacher job description, Teacher reflection
6 <i>Crow Boy</i>	Name calling, judging others, making a difference	Spoken thoughts, freeze frame, TIR, overheard conversation, role on the wall, pop up, sound tract/scape. Hot seat.	Writing in role, class programme. Teacher reflection
7 <i>The Bad Bad Wolf</i> Data feed back student writing.	Judging others. Every picture tells a story or does it? Having a bad reputation.	Freeze frame spoken thoughts.	Student and teacher written reflection
8 <i>The Bad Bad Wolf</i> Restorying the wolf	How difficult is it to lose a reputation once you get it? Restorying the wolf. Giving the wolf a chance to change his reputation and make good the harm he has done.	Teacher in role. Students in role as victims or supporters of the wolf. Writing in role.	Writing in role. Teacher reflections, group interviews and teacher interview Questionnaire revisited

3.5.2 Reliability

Mutch (2005) states that reliability is achieved when “a test by which quantitative research is shown to be replicable and able to produce consistent results”(p.224). Burns (2000) declares that, “ Reliability is based on two assumptions. The first, that the study can be repeated. Problems of uniqueness and idiosyncrasy can lead to the claim that no ethnographic study can be assessed for reliability. The second assumption is that two or more people can have similar interpretations by using these categories and procedures” (p.414). The difficulty with reliability for ethnographic or action research is that often the research cannot be duplicated due to the unique aspect of the research. It is in the nature of action research that it is a specific school problem or issue and the specific role the researcher takes in the research project means that one school’s findings cannot be replicated elsewhere. So in this study no claim is made for reliability. Issues of validity become more important.

3.5.3 Validity

“Validity refers to the *truthfulness, correctness, or accuracy* of research data” (Burton and Bartlett,2009,p.25). Establishing validity is also a way for the research work to establish educational credibility. Basit (2010) describes validity as being “connected with the functioning of concepts, which means that the researchers ought to show that their concepts can be identified and measured in the way they have claimed” (p.64). In order to establish validity in this intervention I used multiple data sources and hence triangulation as well as “peer debriefing” and “participant checks” (Carspecken, 1996,p.88-89). The peer debriefing involved the classroom teacher being asked to check notes and also my supervisor throughout the study in order check if I was paying too much attention to some students and themes and ignoring some students or emerging themes. During the study as findings emerged the students were asked to comment on these and in the final interview and questionnaire the students were also asked to revisit and check out what they thought and felt was happening as part of the “member checks” (Ibid,p.89).

3.5 4. Role of the researcher

Like a Russian doll nesting ever smaller dolls inside of it, I house an infinity of selves. Daphne Merkin- writer.

The role of the teacher researcher is a complex one especially when the role is also one of the Deputy Principal, coupled with a methodological approach that is critical ethnographical action research. However as Carspecken (1996) states the orientation we have as researchers “does not determine the *facts* we find in the field’ (p.6). In order to mitigate against this, and the Hawthorne¹⁰ and Halo¹¹ effect there was significant triangulation built into my data collection in order to validate the analysis and findings as well as the checks described previously.

I also clearly established at the outset the filter through which I designed the research and subsequently analysed the findings.

3.6 Data Analysis

There was a huge range of rich data that comprised both quantitative and qualitative dimensions. The questionnaire used a Likert¹² scale which was plotted numerically and the summary presented back to the students to discuss and this formed part of the triangulation. Just using a questionnaire in much the same way you would a pre or post-test had its weaknesses. As Burton and Bartlett state in a questionnaire the “short responses often fail to reflect the varying depth or complexity of people’s feelings” (2009,p.82). The questionnaire was not piloted prior to this intervention but was based on a model used by the school to capture student voice as part of annual curriculum review. The students review of their questionnaire at the end of the intervention was part of the “respondent validation” necessary when using a critical ethnographic approach in research design validation (Carspecken,1996, 104.,Cohen,2007,p.187).

¹⁰ The Hawthorne effect is where the student/participants react in ways to impress the researcher and this can have an impact often positive on the observed performance (Carspecken,1996,p.52).

¹¹ The halo effect is more to do with the researcher’s existing knowledge of the student/participant “colouring” the observation (Basit,2010).

¹² The Likert scale is a scale that uses a rating system in order to gauge participant response to questions (Cohen et al,2007, p.325).

3.6.1 Inductive and deductive analysis

This analysis was both deductive and inductive in that I was looking for themes or threads to do with drama as an engaging pedagogy and for students to be able to be empathic as well as scanning the emerging data for reoccurring themes. Mutch (2005) defines these as “Deductive a type of logic that moves from hypothesis or theory to data collection” (p.217), and inductive as “an approach to logic where the categories or theories arise out of the data”(p.220). The data was recorded following each drama session and was carefully transcribed word for word in the case of the recordings and coded for the following themes in the case of the written transcripts. There was a combination of looking for threads and themes emerging that occurred across several data sets. Initially the codes were about establishing indicators of engagement and if there had been shifts in the students in terms of cognitive and behaviour towards each other. Due to the large data source from both the sample group and class overall the data was combed several times to see if the themes that were emerging in both data sets were congruent.

3.7 Summary and transition to Chapter Four

This chapter described the methodology of critical ethnographic action research used to structure the research intervention. This form of methodology was used because it was based within a long term intervention currently undertaken by the school around restorative practices and drama as a curriculum subject is ideally positioned as a relational and pro-social pedagogy within a critical ethnographic paradigm. Attention was given to the methods of data collection both qualitative and quantitative and the analysis of the rich and thick descriptions that emerged were coded into themes or common threads. Permission was sought and gained not only by the University of Waikato’s education ethical committee but by all those involved in the intervention, students, class teacher, the principal, parents and B.O.T members of this school community.

Chapter four describes the threads or themes that emerged from the triangulation of the mixed data as a result of this research intervention.

Chapter Four: Research Findings

4.0 Introduction

Yes cos there will be people who you cross, like they are different from you. And um you just like have to accept them and like try to include them like be in their shoes. ...Be what it's like to be them for a day. Yeah on the outside everyone's different but you just have to try and make them feel like everyone's the same (SI).

Burton and Bartlett (2009) describe the ability of the researcher to stand back and be objective in order to make the research more powerful as part of the research journey and a necessary skill (p.165). Miller, working from a critical ethnographic view says that no teacher story is simply an unproblematized transparent linear *reality*. (2007,p.150). She says that we need to recognise the construction of *our-selves* as mediated by social, cultural forces and contexts as well as by the unconscious (p.151 Ibid). O'Toole and Beckett (2010) describe research in education as simply messy and the analysis of it involving dual reflexivity, using the Schon model both in it (amid) and on it (hindsight) (p.152). These ideas guided the subsequent analysis of my data.

This research intervention used a mixed methods approach that involved both quantitative and qualitative data that included a pre and post questionnaire (SQ) student reflective journal and *in role* writing (SRJ,SWR), transcribed student discussion (TSD), semi structured interviews with groups of students the classroom teacher(TI,SI) and teacher/researcher reflective journal (TRRJ). Throughout the drama intervention I reported back data to the students and teacher for them to respond to. As well, I took impromptu surveys on issues that arose during the sessions or as part of the previous data set. See appendix F teasing survey.

Using a grounded analysis approach I visited and revisited this data comparing the quantitative with the various qualitative results looking for links and connections in order to answer my second research question. *What shifts in relational attitudes*

are recorded and reported by year 8 students participating in process drama based around restorative practices?

This revisiting or “sifting” is summed up by Laurel Richardson’s process of *crystallisation* (2000, cited by O’Toole and Beckett, 2010, p.172). “..... *crystallisation*, like bricolage, applies to the whole data analysis process, not just the preliminary cast-through, but seeing the cognitive coherence emerging and growing like crystals from all the data sources”. During the analysis I was also conscious of what O’Toole and Beckett describe as the subtleties of working in this area by cross checking for what was below the surface, the subtexts especially of student voice and teacher observation (p.155).

Throughout the data analysis stage I was looking for common threads or emerging themes that could be supported by more than one data set. The analysis of data led to a coherence and eventually to an emergence of three key threads: engagement, inclusion and perspective taking. These key threads will be presented along with the supporting data sets from which they emerged.

This chapter will present the findings viewed from three perspectives, the classroom teacher Mike, the teacher researcher, myself and the students, largely represented by the sample group. These three “voices” primarily make up the core data sets. In order to contextualise the reported findings the chapter begins with a brief description of the teacher, teacher researcher and the students in terms of drama experience and restorative practice knowledge. This is necessary in order to indicate possible variables that might or might not impact on the resulting data.

4.1 The Participants’ Backgrounds

4.1.1 The class

The class comprised 30 students, however most sessions had 25-27 students present. Comparative data only used the same students who were present at the start and at the end of the drama intervention. For most of the class, this was their first experience in working in process drama. Some students had taken drama as an option the previous year and were familiar with some of the drama conventions and some came from a class taught by a beginning teacher who used process drama as part of her programme. The students in this class had been part of the

development of circle time¹³ in their class as a way to resolve conflict and had developed their class rules based around respect, safety and responsibility. Several had been part of restorative conversations both formally and informally but no one had been part of a formal school restorative conference. Some students had known each other since the age of five, for others since year seven and eight.

4.1.2 The sample group

As outlined and described in Chapter three the sample group comprised eight students who were selected by their teacher as being representative of the class. Only Gavin in the sample group came from the beginning teacher's class and the other students had not taken drama as an option. Brian and Gavin expressed excitement in taking part and Gavin in particular said he wanted to further his drama skills.

4.1.3 The class teacher

Mike the classroom teacher, had taught for 15 years but reported in the interview that drama was not part of his pedagogical practice nor was it part of his arts teaching. He had taken part in professional development in restorative practices at his current school for the previous two years and had been involved in restorative conversations both informally and formally. Mike had been a participant in school conferences but had not been a facilitator in the latter. He had some students from year seven and some who had been with him since the start of the year.

4.1.4 The teacher researcher

I have taught for over 30 years and have taught drama in its various forms throughout my teaching career. Since 2008 I have been involved in the professional developments offered by the Ministry of Education around restorative practice and have been a member of the senior leadership team at my school implementing this way of working. A significant part of my role as a Deputy Principal is to conduct informal and formal restorative conversations as well as facilitate formal school conferences. I was familiar to the students in Mike's class as I had taught them across various subject areas in the previous year.

¹³ Circle time is a form of a class restorative that uses Thorsborne's model.

4.2 The key threads

As described earlier there emerged from the data three key threads: engagement, inclusion and perspective taking. So closely entwined are these themes that it is difficult to completely isolate the entwining strands that formed from this data. Each data set can and could contribute information for each and all the threads and each time I revisited the original transcripts I found new meanings and interpretations were formed. The process of recognising individual threads within a whole is renescent of the process of identifying threads within a complex woven pattern. In writing this chapter I have drawn from the weaving metaphor in order to make sense of and perhaps *tidy* up the rich and complex data that arose from this intervention. The threads that were drawn together came from three perspectives, the teacher Mike, myself as the teacher researcher and the students.

4.3 Key thread: Engagement

When combing the data for evidence of engagement I first considered what indicators could be used. Using the factors described by Gibbs and Poskitt (2010) as indicators of student engagement I identified four indicators of student engagement as a guide. Firstly, the participation of students especially those with high learning and or emotional needs. Secondly, the sustained focus of students throughout the drama sessions. Thirdly, the quality writing that was produced by all students present in the drama sessions and finally the overall student enjoyment of drama. Threads or evidence of engagement were drawn from a number of sources. Evidence of engagement including observations of at risk or disengaged students emerged from Mike's interview (TI) and my reflective notes (TRRJ).

Quality writing was observed by both teachers and the students (TI,TRRJ, SWR) and student enjoyment as an indicator of engagement was drawn from student reflections and the final interview (SRJ,SI).

4.3.1 Teacher Perspective of Engagement

In his interview Mike made a number of comments related to student engagement, he noted not only engagement from his higher ability students but those students whom he described as shy and those with learning and behaviour needs.

Mike expressed surprise at how engaged his students were, in particular those students who were often off task and had difficulty getting involved. Mike said that Brian and Issac seemed “to shine” and he noticed that this seemed to have a spin off in class in terms of engaging with others. *For the drama side of it say Brian for instance as an example he did a really, really good job engaging, if it had been taught another way he wouldn't have done it* (TI). In his interview Mike talked about Brian bringing a puzzle to school for the class to complete and thought that might have been as a result of Brian's developing confidence and feeling of success in drama.

Brian for me has been one of the kids that seeing him in the drama opened my eyes to another side to him that I didn't really see in him. He brought along a jigsaw and everyone has been adding to it in class. He brought it in halfway through the sessions and I asked him about it and he said about sharing something with the class. I saw the benefits of sharing with... This might have happened otherwise but it has certainly been notable for Brian (TI).

When a change to school plans prevented drama happening one day some students expressed disappointment. Mike said, *People enjoyed it more from having experienced doing it from last week [I] thought it was excellent* (TI). This was taken as further evidence of engagement. Mike in his interview talked about his surprise at the way in which students that had high learning and emotional needs appeared to be engaged.

Yeah. I know that for Lance that was actually better than what I expected Lance is the sort of kid that doesn't engage in some things we had a couple of days where we got a couple of hours from him. That was really good for him and he grew to like it..... Betty was the other one and she has got low, low, low self-esteem in general. Those two, overall we got some input from them which was good (TI).

Mike went on to explain that he observed these students taking part when they were present. He said that drama seemed to engage those students who are shy in class and that they appeared to be focused on the tasks in the drama sessions and enjoying themselves.

....we have some quiet shy kids in there, even the shy kids seemed to involve themselves which was good..... I definitely think as a way to teach restorative practices is good because I think I was really pleased with some of the kids who don't engage as much as some of the others. I was happy for how some of them engaged (TI).

He noted how useful it was to have the opportunity to observe his students and to observe those who often have difficulty engaging in a more traditional way.

It was really good to see some of the techniques develop with the kids and that journey they were going to go through".For some students it suited them really, really well and I definitely think it in terms of engaging them it was better than a traditional way of teaching restorative practice, TI).

4.3.2 Teacher Researcher Perception of Engagement

My observations recorded in my reflective journal supported the view that the students were engaged in drama. Whilst I had taught from this drama plan before my reflections showed how often I was surprised about aspects of it. The first surprise was from a behaviour perspective. As a teacher I usually use some form of positive incentive to encourage participation but this time I didn't, as I wanted to see if the drama could sustain the students' interest. In my notes from session six I wrote *I have not used any reward system except the actual drama itself! And all the students were participating (TRRJ).*

A second expression of surprise was about the students' focus. My notes recorded how they waited during different activities that took time and exhibited intense focus on writing tasks. My notes indicated how impressed I was with the way the students waited for their turn when it was a *round robin* type activity, game or reflection. My notes also describe surprise at students' focus, respect and task completion, regardless of the interruptions.

Student focus as an indicator of engagement was noted particularly during writing in role with those students who are reluctant writers. *Respectful when I read the part where James died. All quiet and focused on my reading. When writing their journal entry not one student had difficulty writing or appeared reluctant. This was also my observation from last year also (TRRJ).*

Betty identified as an *at risk* student in terms of engagement and is a reluctant writer. When she was first asked to write she sat for most of session three not writing. This was a reflective writing session and not writing in role. When I asked her why she wasn't writing she said it was because she did not have a pen. Betty who had previously told me that drama was 'boring' and 'sucks' wrote half a page of expressive writing by the final session (recorded TRJ). She wrote an email in role as the wolf and while unfinished had a word count of 117.

Hey Jo, How are you..... Im good for your information. I've jst been staying at a very good mate's house and he has been really nice to me he's been helping me stay out of troble soo that's good. I have a job now doing meat works it is a bit of a messy sitchuation but it's alrigt is long as it's helping me pay my bills & buying me food & toilet stuff to use and eat. My blood conditions have been really good and I no longer have to use my blood doners anymore. Maybe we will catch up soon oh and hav a really nice girlfriend an we have a son & a little girl..... (SWR).

She was still writing when I called time to stop. Prior to this session during the wolf's restorative conference one of his supporters said he had donated blood to the wolf as he had a blood disorder. Betty picked up on this and included it in her writing. While all the emails had a strong personal voice, humour, and authenticity, what is of interest here is that Betty actually wrote independently and was still writing at the end of the session. Her email describes a positive new story and a theme of hope. She appeared to be focused and engaged in the task.

Within my reflective journal there is also evidence of the frustration I felt at times. Firstly about by the number of interruptions that occurred throughout the drama session and secondly because of the size of the class that caused me to change my programme. Ironically, these notes also provide evidence of engagement in that I observed how the students continued to stay on task throughout the drama sessions even though in nearly every one there were interruptions. Though not my original intention to record these as data, I described in my journal the number of times the sessions were interrupted and the nature of the interruptions. The interruptions ranged from two to up to eight times in session six and included phone calls from the office, teacher notices, music lessons, extra students due to no relieving teacher, late students and the teacher being called out of the

classroom. The teacher being called out occurred from once to up to five times over the course of the sessions for reasons such as non-compliant students in other classes, change of timetable, change of rooms and to organising of fundraising activities. As part of my reflections I asked myself was it simply the nature of schools and an overcrowded curriculum or the perceived status of drama in the curriculum? Would mathematics have been as interrupted as drama? I also contemplated the potential difficulty this would have in terms of teachers as researchers and long term research in schools?

Despite my frustrations about the interruptions they did not seem to have an impact on the students in the class, who mostly remained focused on the task at hand whether it was creating a freeze frame or reflecting in or outside the drama. *Looking around and listening to what the students said while I was thinking this is not going to plan ...because of the interruptions. I was being my own worst critical friend. Mostly all were enjoying the activities, most were actively engaged and many got the core messages (TRRJ).*

I also noted how the boys who would often be off task in other subject areas were still engaged. *The reality was that they still participated (given the interruptions). What stands out were the boys Issac, Brian, Dennis, and even Lance until 10 o'clock (participating).*

Previously I had taken drama with classes of up to 22 and now I was challenged by a class of 30. While I chose to work with this reality I realised it had a significant impact on aspects of the teaching. The activities with an extra ten or more students began to cut into the reflection time which was crucial to the development of higher order thinking that can result from using drama as a relational tool. I had to change the programme and not include the follow up recordings of student discussions. I noted in my journal my need to change the programme and realisation that not every student would get an opportunity to speak.

I was shifted to room 3 and so did not have enough chairs so I had to play a different game. I felt frustrated at the time it took to go round the circle. I did not factor this in. When working last year....now nearly double and I need to build in the time to reflect (TRRJ).

Throughout this intervention another strand that emerged were the many opportunities for humour that occurred within the drama space. The fact that these were appropriate and respectful were taken as a sign of engagement. There were numerous opportunities for students to laugh with and alongside their peers and not at them during class, as the different drama conventions were explored and stories were told in role and out of role.

They took their roles seriously but like all drama sessions there was laughter especially when Braden said he was a supporter of the wolf because he donated blood to him, as the wolf had a serious illness. This theme was picked up by at least two students in their writing and also in Betty's. (TRRJ).

4.3.3 Student perspective on engagement

Gibb and Poskitt (2010) claim that if the learning is perceived to be fun, then students will more actively become engaged. They add, "To this age group, fun means variety, novelty, and a sense of adventure, as well as the use of age-appropriate humour and laughter" (p.27).

I scanned all the student reflective journals and located all the words within their comments about drama that had a positive rating and that described their enjoyment of drama. Analysing the student reflective journals (SRJ), the students described both their ambivalence initially and their surprised relief that they actually enjoyed the drama. Of the class (n=25) 13 used the word fun/funny, 2 said it was cool and 3 enjoyed the drama experience, 2 said it was interesting, 1 said it was good, 1 said it was ok, 1 said it was boring sometimes, 1 student was nervous taking part in drama and 1 said it sucked. The overall positive rating towards using drama was 84% and negative 16%. Two students who claimed they did not like drama at the start and maintained this at the end explained it was because they did not like acting in front of people and the possibility of being laughed at.

Comments from one student Cain, sum up some of the reflections made by students outside the sample group about taking part in process drama as well as demonstrating some of his developing drama knowledge. *Drama was easy and*

fun because there was not a lot of writing. It was funny doing the freeze frame because of our facials and gestures (SRJ).

The sample group also reported their initial nervousness about drama except for Brian and Gavin who said they were looking forward to taking part. *During the drama I thought I'm going to enjoy this because I like drama and this is an opportunity to do some (Gavin,RJ).*

Jade's response was. *I enjoyed drama because it was fun and the freeze frames were funny. I enjoyed all the other groups and their ideas. It was cool. I learnt to do a freeze frame it was hard not to laugh during the freeze frame (RJ).*

Sam in the sample group said drama was not what he expected, but he enjoyed the whole experience. *I enjoyed basically everything because it was fun, we did games and the drama was only freeze frames (SRJ).*

Issac and Kelly also from the sample group both said in their reflective journals. *I enjoyed it. Why? We liked making up the freeze frame (SRJ).* Brian described his feelings about drama *.Drama was cool. Because I learnt more about drama. I enjoyed this being in a freeze frame. I wanted to do drama again (SRJ).*

For Brian it was an opportunity to work in a different way, he recorded in his reflection. *It was better than doing work in class (SRJ).* Lance a student with high emotional needs said, *I enjoyed the drama it was funny (SRJ).*

By session 7, the students recorded in their journals what they thought about drama. I scanned the journals and recorded the key words or phrases that the students used to describe how they felt about drama. Of the class (n=25), 84% used a positive word or phrase to describe what it was like for them as they neared the final stages of the drama intervention. The words that came through were fun (7), really fun (1), funny (1), enjoyed it (5),cool (2),interesting(1),humorous (2),better than last time (1), best one yet(1).

Some of the comments that came from the student journals were, *people were funny, it was funny watching the teams, I enjoyed everything.* Of the four not recording a positive rating at the start of the drama,2 said it was ok, one was bored and one didn't like it though didn't explain why. Betty went from saying that

drama sucked to it was boring. She said she was bored because “drama is not my kind of thing” (SRJ). The other student recorded after the first session, said she was nervous and then following session 7 said she didn’t like it because she was not mixing with her friends. She said “I had to work with others who are not my friends, I know I should work with others to get used to it”. One student who said it was ok initially said by session 7 “it was the best one yet” (SRJ). The positive response to drama maintained at a steady 84%, that is a significant majority of students saying they had fun from the beginning to the final sessions of the intervention.

One of the boys Russell, who Mike described as shy said, *It was fun, exciting and I was nervous at start but it turned out to be great at the end (SRJ).*

Overall, the majority of the students appear to have been more engaged than they expected. Cain’s comment summed up what many of the students recorded. *I didn’t think drama would be that fun but it was. (SRJ).*

4.3.4 Evidence of engagement from student writing

I thought the verbal would be better than the written and I think it was at times but when you actually looked at the writing in their folders. I think the strength in the reflection was in the writing. (Mike, TI).

The research literature around student engagement makes clear links to student achievement (Gibbs & Poskitt 2010, Hattie, 2009, Bishop 2007). Indicators of engagement within student writing were found in teacher researcher observations, student feedback about the quality of their writing and an increased word count from their first writing in role to the final piece.

There were several opportunities for students to write during and following the drama sessions, mainly through their reflective journal and in response to specific questions following *The Best of Friends* and *The Crow Boy* drama. There were also two specific opportunities for expressive writing as part of writing in role, one as a journal entry the other as an email.

In the journal entry the students wrote in role as Jessie the farmer’s wife and were asked “What will you say? How has life changed since James died? What is it

about your life that you will record? What will you do about William now that James is no longer here to look after him?" (Miller & Saxton, 2004, p. 59). The following are extracts from some of the sample group writing in role as Jessie.

My life without James is a perilous road destined to run off a cliff. I miss the weight of James at the other side of the bed. I might have to sell the farm because he isn't there to run it. (Gavin WR)

I feel sad, I don't like cats but William is an exception. I don't want to get rid of him because he meant so much to James, James wouldn't be happy if I got rid of him. Life without James is really hard, I'm so busy and I feel really sad without him. (Jade, WR)

It's very lonely without James, so lonely. I miss him dearly. I am going to keep William because he was very loved by James and he would've wanted me to keep him. I've grown tolerable of him and inside, very deep inside I know I am able to love him as much as James did. (Lois, WR).

The quality of writing is evident here, both in the use of a more elaborate vocabulary and overall description of feeling. 'Perilous' and 'tolerable' are words not usually seen in writing at this level.

Both Issac and Brian do not like writing and Brian especially has difficulty writing. They wrote the following respectively.

It is hard because James died and it's hard to do all the milking and things. I am going to keep William because James loved him (Issac, WR).

My life has been so sad when James died. I have been so lonely no one to help me. No one to keep me warm. I have felt like I was the one who died (Brian, WR).

The students appeared engaged not only by the writing experience itself but also to the sounds of their words being read back to them. When I read back to the students some of their writing the students appeared stunned and silent as they listened to their words. Students then reported that they could not believe that they had written those excerpts as they *sounded like adults* who said this.

Another opportunity for writing was in session 7 where students in *role* as the wolf (an adolescent delinquent) from the fairy tale Little Red Riding Hood, were asked following a restorative conference to write an email saying how the wolf's

life had changed. My journal includes observations of the ability of the students to write for longer and with increasing expression.

I had previously used teacher in role to motivate students to write but I was again surprised at the quality writing as a result of the buy in from students (TRRJ).

I have included four from the sample group, Lois, Kelly, Jade and Mandy, writing in role as the wolf describing how life has changed for him since attending the restorative conference. They are writing to Bob his probation officer. These extracts are quoted at length, to illustrate the quality and the quantity of words produced.

Dear Jo,

I know I've changed Jo, you have to believe me. I've made it better with the people I've harmed, they said they forgive me.

I know everything I've done was bad, maybe even evil. But I don't want to be like that anymore and I'm not. In no way I am the same person.

Before I did all those things because I was confused. I didn't know my parents, I didn't know my background and doing all those bad things was my way of saying "please help me" but now I know, now I know everything. I've thought about this for hours and actually got off my butt and did something about it. Thank you so much Jo for believing in me and helping me. I owe you so much, I can't thank you enough.

Sincerely

Bob the Wolf (132words), (Lois, WR2).

Hi, there it's Bob wolf.

Today in the conference I didn't realise how many people hated me. I took it in and I have decided to not do any bad things. I would like to thank you for supporting me and giving me another chance. From now on, If I want food I will buy it for my family with the money from my job, I will try to make it up to everyone. I am sorry I am trying to go on the right path.

I am grateful for that conference. If we didn't have it I wouldn't of heard everyone's concern then I would of continued my ways. I could of gone to jail. So I hope to progress in everything and to keep moving forward.

So once again, Thank you

Yours sincerely

Bob (134 words), (Kelly, WR2).

Hey Jo,

It's me the wolf. I'm just writing this to tell you how my life has been since the last time we talked, back then I was an idiot, everything I did was to fit in. After the conference I moved schools, to a completely different place, I made some new friends and had counseling during the week.

I moved in with my mum, I think that was a good decision. I didn't keep in contact with my "bad" friends because I knew that I wouldn't be able to change with them in my life. Mum enrolled me into an art programme and I won a scholarship to one of the top art schools in the country. I'm loving it!

I'm so grateful that the conference we had went well. I have my life back on track finally.

I love art even more than I did before and all my spare time is taken up with art and hanging with my new awesome friends. Thank you so much for all you have done for me. You helped me get my life back on track and I can never thank you enough for that.

Sincerely Wolf (196words),(Jade WR2).

Hello Jo bo

It's Bob here. Life is much different now my IQ has gone up from 0.7 to 50 which I am proud of. I am expecting my new daughter as you know Susan has been pregnant for a while now. I am studying to be a probation officer like yourself and I have finally be able to get in touch with granny. We have so much alike. Little Red is doing great in high school she has been super good at her sport and she is going to help babysit our little daughter. We are thinking of calling it Lilayh Jo Bobson Wolfie????

We are unsure hope to talk to you soon and I will keep in touch with you. Keep well, be safe and we thank you soooo much for being there.

Yours sincerely Bob (139words),(Mandy WR2).

When the initial journal entry as Jessie was compared to the email from the wolf I noted an increase in word count the word count for all of the students. The time allocated to both writing sessions was about five minutes. Writing was in a different genre and arose from a different dialogic encounter. However the increase was striking. One might assume journal writing rather than emails would encourage lengthy writing, where in this case it was the emails that were longer. It would be interesting to surmise what might have stimulated this increase in word count. It is impossible to claim a direct comparison of course, since another possibility is that the subject matter of the second writing sample was closer to the

students' personal experience or that their relationships with me had developed along with their belief in themselves as writers. Whatever the reason Mike was as surprised as I was at the quality and quantity of the overall writing. Following is a graph comparing the sample groups writing in role. See figure 4 compares word counts for both writing in role tasks.

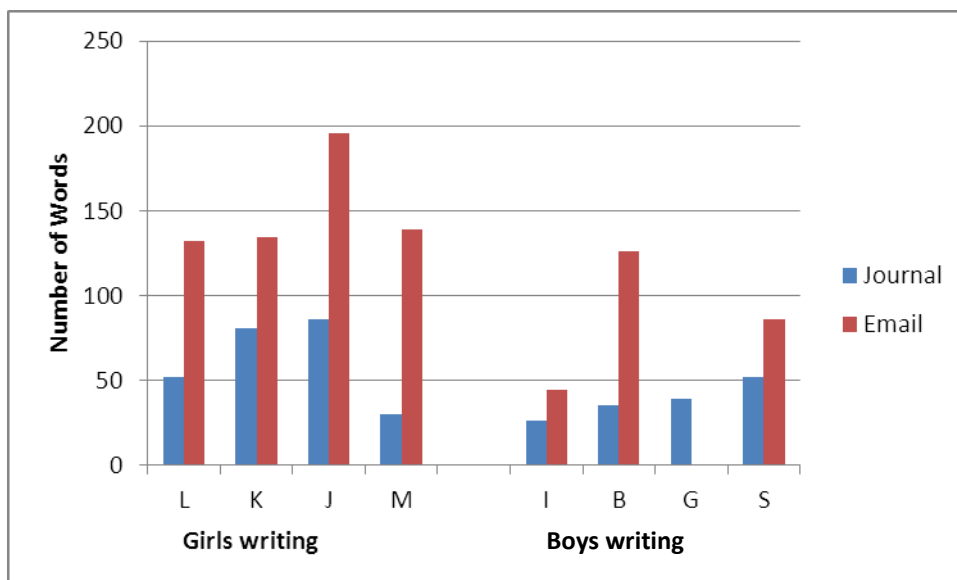


Figure 4: Word count between genres and gender in the sample group.

The increase in number of words is in the brackets Lois (+80), Kelly, (+53), Jade, (+110), Mandy (+109), Issac (+18), Brian (+91), Gavin was away for this session and Sam (+34). The girls made significant increases particularly Jade and Mandy, Brian also made a significant increase to the length of his writing.

I would suggest (though this cannot be claimed as 'fact') that the increased word lengths were a sign of engagement. It has long been my observation over the years of teaching process drama and writing that students write in role for longer and with a more elaborate language code than when asked to write out of role. This certainly seemed to be the case in this study. Their writing rarely contained clichéd or stereotyped statements and they were able (without necessarily realising it) to use the sophisticated device of being able to write about an event from another character's perspective and take both the first and third person

perspective. Whereas their out of role writing tended to be stilted and somewhat clichéd (for example, It was fun. It was cool).

I recorded this following the wolf session. *The writing of the email was wonderful, all wrote, all the boys who are reluctant writers wrote half a page to a whole page and the quality and personal voice heart rendering (TRRJ).*

Further research is needed is needed on the direct correlation between drama and writing, but within the limited scope of this study it certainly appeared that the engagement of being in role lifted both the quality and quantity of writing produced by boys and girls.

4.4 Key Thread: Inclusive Behaviours/Relationships

The data was combed for indicators of inclusive behaviour that demonstrated if students were mixing in groups across gender and ethnicity. This data was drawn from the three perspectives, firstly from interviews with the teacher (TI), secondly from my observations of the group composition at the start and end of the drama intervention (TRRJ) and the transcribed student discussions (TSD), and thirdly from student reflections on how well they worked in groups, journal and transcribed discussion, writing in role (SRJ,TSD,SWR), comparison data from the questionnaire(SQ) and the interview at the close of the drama intervention (SI).

4.4.1 Teacher Perspective on Inclusive Behaviours/Relationships

At the onset of the drama intervention Mike as their classroom teacher observed how exclusive the original groups were and his concern that this was happening in his classroom. He also recognised how essential it was for students to be able to work together in heterogeneous groups...

That for me is the main thing I noticed the most when the students were working in groups I noticed was the exclusion side of it that was really, really noticeable to me and the dynamics of that. I think that was partly because I was on the outside and just watching. That has affected how I have thought about things because I am going to challenge myself next term to do more activities that is more like when we do PREP next term I need to look at more activities to get them to mix in their groups. Because they are quite clique-y, I kinda knew that but I noticed it since seeing that with the drama. It has been the exclusion and the subtle exclusion of some kids that they have done that I have really been surprised by that (TI).

Mike expressed concern at how the relationships were structured around belonging in groups and also how some students were clearly marginalised as a result of those groups. He said he was shocked at this and had resolved to work out ways to develop different group dynamics by trying out different activities in class. Again the opportunity to observe afforded him the chance to “see things” like antisocial behaviour that sometimes “went under the radar” as being part of the class dynamic which continued to marginalise some students and that some of the “good” students appeared to collude in this.

I was surprised about that when you did the tally. I realised that I don't see a lot of it. The thing that surprised me the most because I have basically a zero tolerance for swearing and as I said I don't see it. I guess if I had asked kids about the swearing I don't think I would have got as much (information) so by getting them to do it informally it was very good. I had to be reflective about that (TI).

He began to be aware of the hidden curriculum,(the dynamics that go underground)in a classroom after he saw the results of the survey.

Like I said we don't get a lot in here but it tends to be under the radar. It is something I took for granted wasn't happening but reading and seeing those numbers means that I need to make sure that the relationships between the kids is good to stop that sort of thing happening(TI).

Mike in his interview commented that the drama activities gave him an opportunity to find out about his students and to think also about his relationships with his students.

Yes all those little energiser activities I have had some of the students for my second year and I have had Simone and I didn't know about why her parents called her by that name. And those other connections with families it certainly made me think about my relationships with the students it was really, really good (TI).

Mike recognised the importance of his role in ensuring that he develop positive and inclusive relationships in his classroom. He acknowledged that he needed to go back and develop his pedagogy around inclusive and collaborative group work.

Mike's observation of Brian in class with the jigsaw puzzle (quoted earlier) identified students beginning to work in more accepting and inclusive ways.

4.4.2 Teacher Researcher Perspective on Inclusive

Behaviours/Relationships

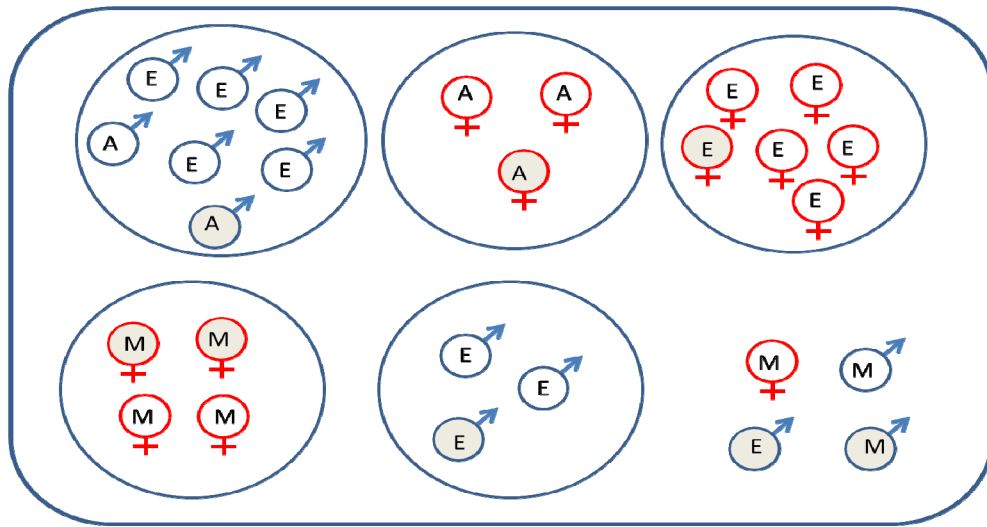
I thought as an experienced teacher I was aware of the group dynamics operating in a classroom, but I was still unprepared for the clear demarcation lines of who was *in* and who was *out* of the social groups operating in this classroom. The students appeared very entrenched in who was in what group and it appeared belonging predominantly was based around ethnicity and gender. Name calling appeared to be one way of keeping the groups exclusive and I noted after session 5 (the Crow Boy drama) my surprise at the callous and unkind ways students teased others about their names. I was surprised at the level of and type of name calling that happened to students and how imaginative in their cruelty they could be.

I felt the same as Mike when I heard what students called each other, I thought I knew but it caused me to reflect on this activity has having real impact in describing the problem from a restorative perspective. How I could use this in all the classes as naming the problem? (TRRJ).

For both teachers there were elements of discursive practice happening in the classroom that they did not see. Throughout the drama I constantly challenged the class to change the dynamics of the group, giving criteria for mixing. For example each group to have a friendship pair and one other from another group. The overall aim was to have groups that were mixed according to gender and ethnicity. By session four, following *The Crow Boy* drama I noted in my journal how students were beginning to mix.

Some took a risk and worked well in groups with different people. Lance joined in the circle with Mathew and made some contributions to the programme for Chibi. Keegan working with a group. Different combinations (TRRJ).

Group Composition Session one



Group Composition Session 7

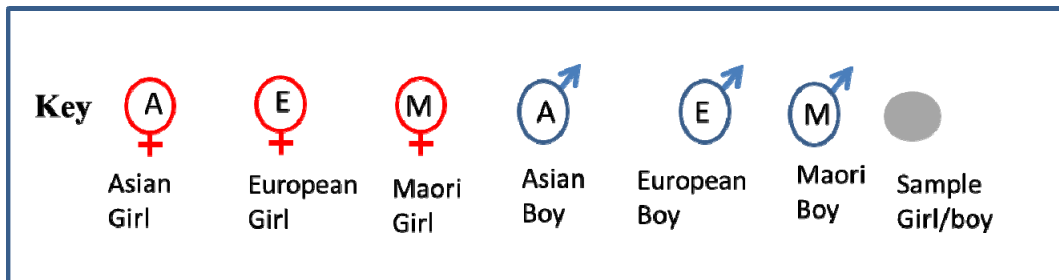
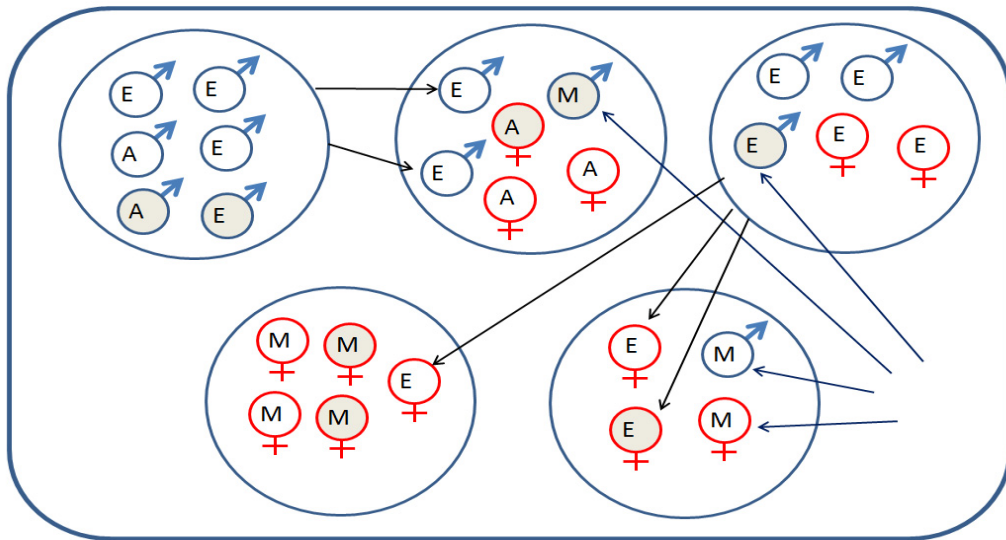


Figure 5 : Comparison group composition session 1 and 7.

As evidence of the student's group dynamics I documented the group composition at the start of the drama intervention and again after session seven. On both occasions these were groupings that were spontaneously formed by the students not created by myself or the teacher.

The top box represents the group compositions at the start of the drama in session one and the one below what the groups compositions looked like by session seven.

Immediately after session one I noted how exclusive the groups were and the clear exclusion of four students, who were not invited to join any group. Two of these students Gavin and Issac were from the sample group. The groups tended to be either all girls or boys and ethnicity tended to be a factor in the groupings.

In my reflection following session seven I took notes of the group dynamics again. By session seven the groups had changed and there was a mixing of boys and girls, three groups out of five had girl boy mixes. The two groups that had only boys or girls had accepted someone else from another group. Brian had joined group one which was significant in that these were perceived as the capable students, Issac previously on the outside following session one, now was in a mixed group and stayed there for the entire session. Gavin was also working with a mixed group. Group 4 had accepted another girl into their circle and group 5 had two students who had previously been on the outside of the class groups at the start of the drama intervention. While group five had two members from the marginalised group they still managed to complete a freeze frame but decided not to share it.

Overall, 3/5 of the groups had boys and girls and all the groups had students from different ethnic backgrounds. As students began to know and form relationships outside of their usual group they began to include other students into their groups.

In addition to noting the group compositions I transcribed the student discussions following session one and two and noticed two significant phenomena. Firstly by session two, more students had entered the discussion and secondly, they were speaking for longer.

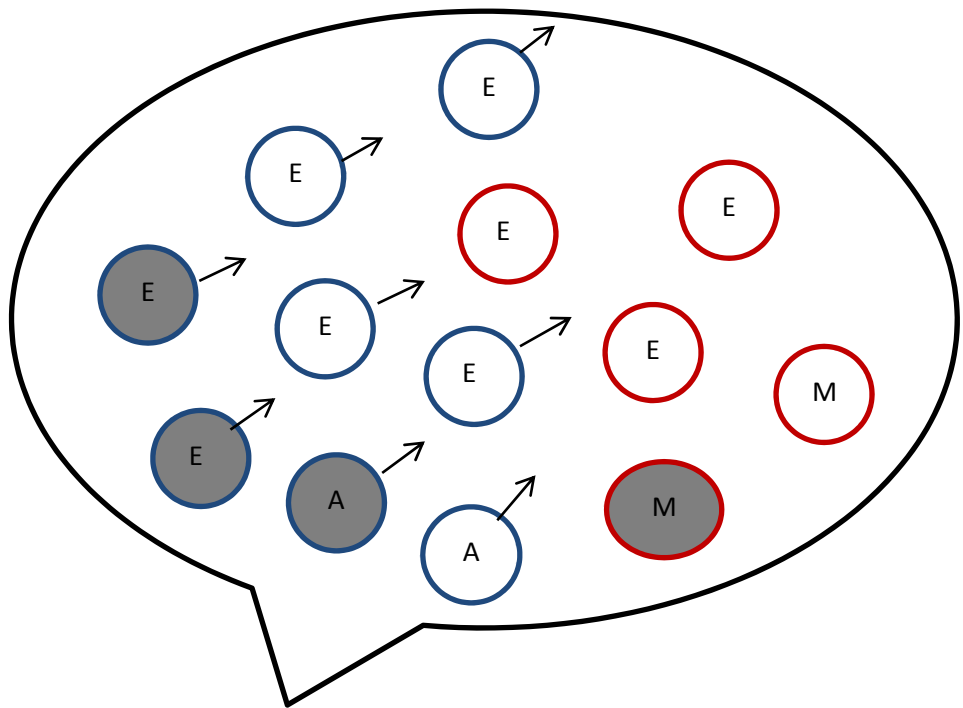
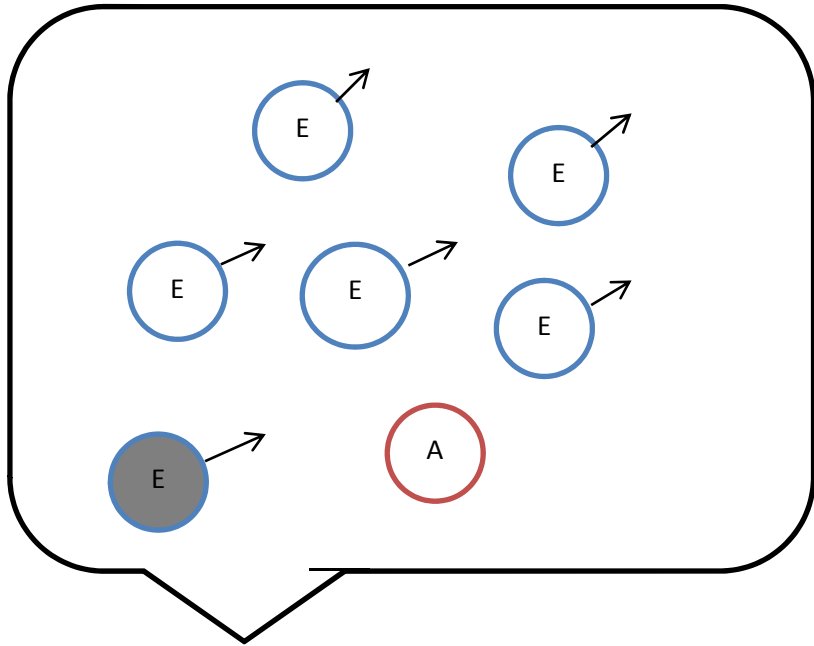
Gender	Ethnicity	Words Session 1	Words Session2
B	E	9	38
B	E	11	35
B	E	11	31
B Brian	E	9	54
B	E	20	19
B	E	13	23
G	A	22	Absent
B Sam	A	-	43
B Gavin	E	-	48
G Mandy	M	-	48
G	M	-	35
G	E	-	29
G	E	-	38
G	E	-	43

Table 2: Comparison of who spoke and for how long.

Following session one, 7 students commented, 6 boys and 1 girl, the boys were all of European descent and the girl was of Asian descent. Half the boys were from the confident capable group and half were from the less confident group. The comments had a range of 8-22 words. After session two all the boys from session one commented as well as Gavin and Sam from the sample group. Five girls also recorded their reflections with a word range of 19-54 words. Brian made the most significant increase in comment length from 9-54 words. No further data was collected in subsequent sessions but it would have been interesting to see if the number of students talking continued to rise or whether there would be a plateau effect? It would be interesting to see if there continued to be more students talking or would there be a plateau effect? My very clear sense from having participated in the sessions is that all the children, including the shy ones were contributing more. Transcribing the recorded sessions I became aware of who was speaking and who developed confidence to speak in the second session.¹⁴

¹⁴ Data is limited to one session because after session two, Mike and I decided to stop the recordings due to the time it took to go around the circle with the microphone because the students were tending to read from their writing rather than speak spontaneously.

Students who spoke after Session One



Students who spoke after session two

Figure 6: Comparison of who spoke after session 1 and 2.

4.4.3 Student Perspectives on Inclusive Behaviours/Relationships

The data threads for this perspective came from the transcribed student discussions (TSD) their reflective journals (SRJ) and their writing in role (SWR). Another thread that wove through this theme was the decrease in antisocial behaviour in particular name calling and swearing, this was evidence drawn from the student questionnaire (SQ), the student interviews at the end of the drama intervention (SI) and the recognition of empathy in other people within the student questionnaire.(SQ).

Half the sample group (4/8) commented on a shift in their enjoyment of working with others (SRJ). For Issac often on the outside of the group this was an opportunity to work with others he didn't normally work with. *I thought drama was cool and I got to work with others. It was funny. I learnt how to do a freeze frame. I enjoyed this because it was funny and I haven't worked with them before (SRJ)*. In his journal he reiterated this sense of belonging and working alongside others.

For some it was not easy adjusting to another group and they realised negotiation and compromise needed to occur if they were to present their freeze frames. For Gavin it was a difficult task initially but his need to be part of the drama work ensured that there was compromise as he made a stand about taking on a stereotypical role because of the way he wore his hair. *I didn't like working at the start of the freeze frame activity. I didn't like working with my group because they tried to force me into a role that I didn't want to do just because of my looks. (How did you come to make your freeze frame?) We compromised and sorted it out. (Did you feel better about the role you took?) Yes I did. (SRT)..* In his reflective journal he said how much he liked working in the drama and making the freeze frame because... *I felt like I belonged in a group for once (SRJ)*.

It appears that for Gavin at least there was a significant shift in how included he felt. Mandy another student from the sample group describes the improvement from the first drama session to the next and how the girls used a subtle kind of exclusion technique that of ignoring or the silent treatment. After session two, Mandy said, *This drama session I thought we did pretty well cos last week we were all fighting and had different ideas and people didn't want to do what*

others wanted to do. (What kind of fighting?) More like the silent treatment. (What was better about today?) All agreed, shared ideas and agreed on one idea. (How well did your group work?) Started off kind of discussing not knowing what to do. Then in the end we negotiated and then we managed to find a way(TSD).

Sam also described how it wasn't easy when starting out with the freeze frame and as the group began cooperate and to enjoy themselves, the hardest thing was staying in the freeze. *Today I found the freeze frame quite difficult at the beginning because someone wasn't cooperating but at the end we managed to get it right. (How did you work on that ... when your group has a goal?) We discussed it over and then in the end we just managed to do it right. Today I thought that the freeze frame was hard because you had to keep the same face and I couldn't stop giggling when I looked down at my friends (TSD).*

In response to how well the drama went following session two Brian had this to say. *I found that today was better than last time we did drama. Cos the freeze frame was more easier. I found it easier to work in a group than cos if you are just one person. Nearly everything you need more than one person for. Working in a group was much more better (TSD).* His writing echoed his feelings of belonging. *I thought drama was great because I like being in a group and I like sharing in a freeze frame. Drama is not an everyday thing (SRJ).*

Hana from outside the sample group said, *I really enjoyed the fruit basket game but I found it difficult with the freeze frame because we didn't know what to do but then when it was time we had ... we figured it out. Today I had an easy bit in the freeze frame (How did you group work?) I think they worked pretty well. (How did the boys and girls mix?) I think it was pretty good. Yeah (TSD)* Russell had this to say about his group. *Today I think that my group did better than last time. Cos last time we had different ideas. (What did you do? How did you get the group to work better ?)... compromised (TSD).*

Sera also reflected on what went well in the second session. *I thought it worked better this week because last week the boys were just acting like they had guns and they weren't really working. This week they actually worked and they weren't really doing that sort of stuff. (Was it the same people in the group? Do you think*

if we changed the groups for next week it would make a difference?) *Yes and no.*
 (Challenge to change next week) *Yes ,maybe (TSD).*

Most of these students have been together for at least 6 months and some from the very start of their schooling and even with that background there was a lot that they didn't know about each other .As Debs one of the students outside the sample group said, *I really enjoyed the role playing game cos I got to find out things about other people instead of having to go up to them and asking them personally. It was more fun finding out an easier way (TSD).*

At the end of the intervention all the students were asked to revisit the questionnaire. In response to the question that requires the students to list people in school and out of school who they believe to be highly empathic, 34% (9/26), added between 1-7 names to their list, this includes all the students present during the interviews. They added between 1 and 7 extra names. In the sample group 50% added to their list. See Table 3. This shows how many students the sample group added to their list of empathic students following the drama intervention.

Boys added	Girls added
Brian added 5 other students	Mandy added 3 other students
Gavin added 1 other student	Lois added 2 other students

Table:3 Chart showing sample group additions of empathic people in their lives.

Mandy in her interview summed up why she had included others on her list. *When I first started I didn't know them as well as I do now (SI).*

Prior to the intervention students filled out a questionnaire that asked them to rate the way they treated each other in class in terms of respect.(Appendix F) They used the range 1-10, 1 being very disrespectful and 10 being very respectful. Following the intervention the students revisited the questionnaire and were asked to amend the scale if they noted any change. The difference is pre and post for the sample group is in Table 4.

Sample Student	Respect rating prior	Respect rating post	Change
Mandy	7	9	+2
Lois	6	7	+1
Kelly	6	6	0
Jade	7.5	Absent	
Gavin	5	6	+1
Sam	7	8	+1
Issac	5.5	5.5	0
Brian	10	10	0

Table 4: Recorded Change in the way we treat each other in class.

Half the sample group 4/8 recorded a shift upwards in the way they treat each other in class. Three noted no change and one student was away.

When the students were asked to amend their questionnaires in terms of antisocial behaviour, of the sample group 2/8 said aspects had decreased, 1 said some aspects had increased and 3/8 recorded no change. Gavin recorded a drop in swearing, stating it had gone down from 3-5 times a day to 1-2, Sam thought teasing had gone up from 1-2 to 3-5 times a day, Brian remained the same at 2-3 for both name calling and swearing. Mandy recorded a drop with both name calling and teasing from 3 -0, Lois no change, Kelly no change, Jade was absent.

I had an opportunity to revisit the class six weeks after the drama session at the teacher's request and to revisit this aspect of the survey. This was after the class had a reliever for a week and was about to have her for another five weeks while their classroom teacher was acting in a higher leadership role.

The following graphs are the student perceptions of antisocial behaviour that occurred in a class on a weekly basis at the start of the intervention and six weeks following the intervention.

Student Reporting of Occurrences of Antisocial Behaviour in Class

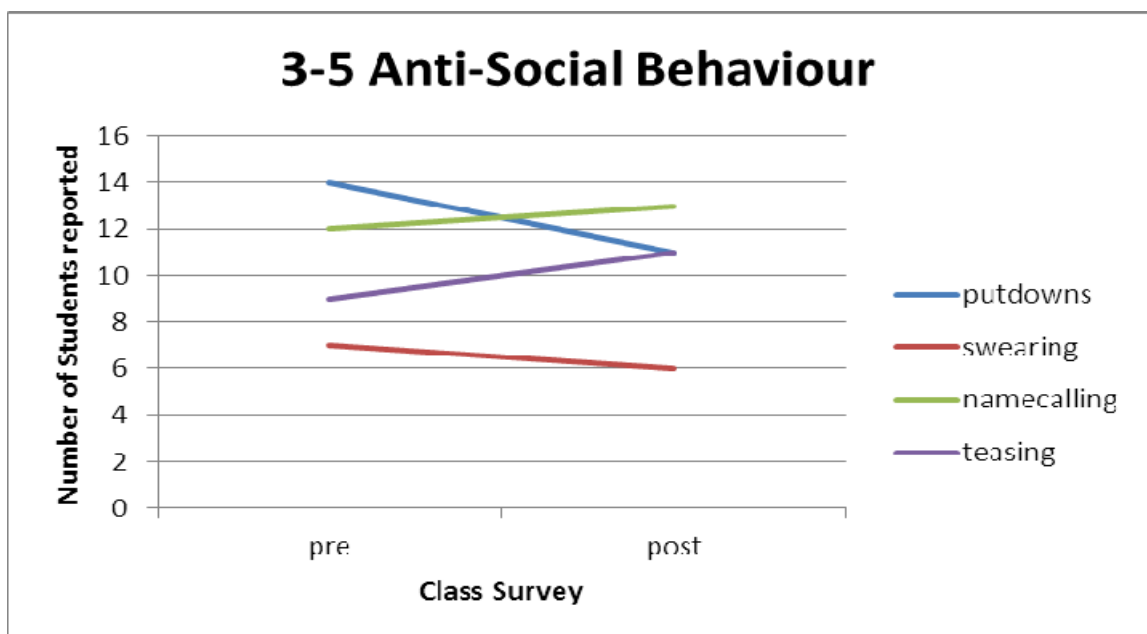
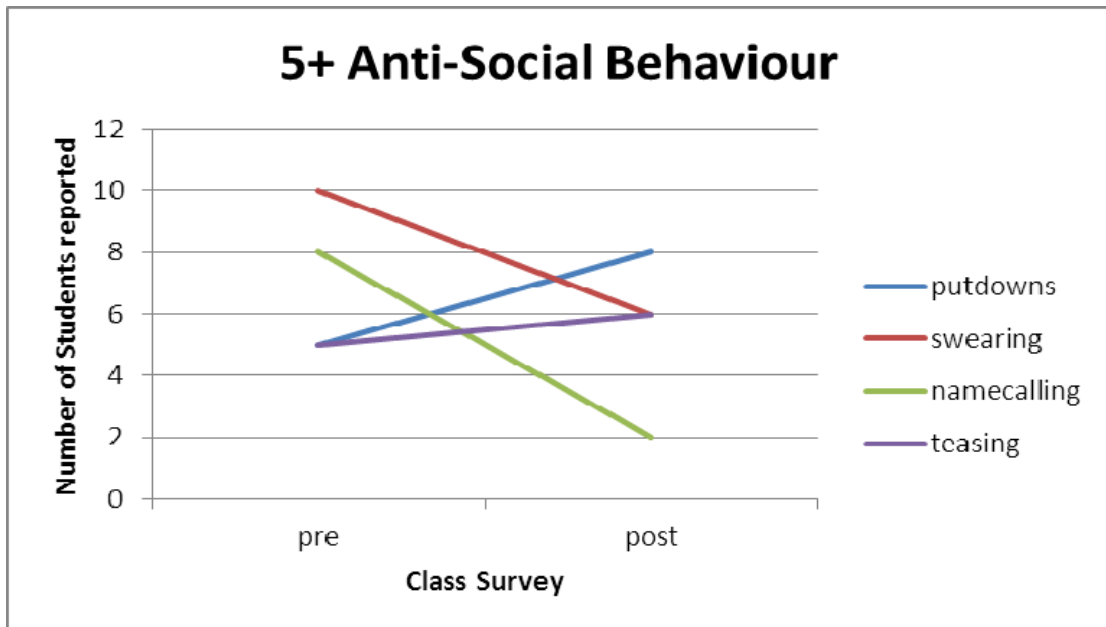


Figure 7: Graphs showing number of antisocial behaviours reported by students

I have analysed the reported number of antisocial behaviours noted by the students from the 3-5 and the 5 + range as indicators of shifts. The students reporting in the 5+ range appear to show a decrease in the name calling and the swearing. Teasing has increased slightly. In the 3-5 range, name calling remains a constant, swearing and putdowns decreased slightly. In the post survey of antisocial behaviour there appeared to be a difference in perception of boys to girls to incidents of anti- social behaviour.

Where they both noted a shift in swearing and name calling ,75% (9/12) ,of the boys said that only 1-2 occurrences of swearing would happen in a day and 66% (8/12) of the boys recorded name calling as happening about 1-2 times a day. The girls, 78% (11/14) recorded swearing between 3 and 5 plus a day and 71%, (10/14) noted name calling as occurring between 3-5 times a day.

While this is not a precise tool for measuring because of the small sample and because it is difficult to tell if the “incidents” of anti-social behaviour are different ones or just the same ones viewed by the students, the second graph indicates that the higher frequency of 5 occurrences or more has decreased in name calling and swearing. Two students indicated that teasing had gone up in the five plus (5+) range and two students also thought teasing had gone up in the 3-5 range of anti -social behaviour.

In the post interview one of the students when describing if the drama had made a difference to the way people treated each other or worked in class noted that some people who don't often speak or participate were actually doing that in the drama as part of the drama or the reflection outside of the drama. “Different people were in to it (the drama). Not all those people speak up in class but (when) you were acting it they say it” (STI).

4.4.4 Evidence of inclusion from student writing

The students writing in role described what life must like to be excluded in the case of Chibi in Crow Boy. In role as RTLBs¹⁵ they wrote a programme to

¹⁵ RTLBs are specialist resource teachers of learning and behaviour who assist teachers in teaching those students who have learning and behaviour needs.

support the special needs of Chibi which was inclusive and caring. This programme is outlined under the section 'perspective taking' as there are significant links between inclusion and the ability to understand what it is like to be another.

In the emails they wrote to the probation officer, the students writing in role as the delinquent wolf expressed a strong desire to be included into mainstream society. Writing as the wolf, Jade carefully documents all the things she has done to be accepted back into society in order to have a new life.

. After the conference I moved schools, to a completely different place, I made some new friends and had counseling during the week.

I moved in with my mum, I think that was a good decision. I didn't keep in contact with my "bad" friends because I knew that I wouldn't be able to change with them in my life. Mum enrolled me into an art programme and I won a scholarship to one of the top art schools in the country. I'm loving it!

I'm so grateful that the conference we had went well. I have my life back on track finally.

I love art even more than I did before and all my spare time is taken up with art and hanging with my new awesome friends (SWR).

Also writing as the wolf, Brian describes his desire to be included, because he has ended up in prison. He writes that he has changed his life and wants to get out of prison and back into society to make good, especially with Granny and The little Pigs.

Email to Jo

Hi Jo, My life has changed I haven't had a fight for ten years. I am in here for 14 more years. I have did good by writing letters to all the people I have hurt. I know that you don't like me because I have hurt you in a way but I am really, really sorry. I would like to get out so I can help out Grandma , build a house for the pigs. They all said ok all I need is you to get me out. My Mum said I have a good chance because I have changed. I have stopped smoking and drinking and the worst drugs and abuse.

From Chop suey

P.S Everyone in prison says hi. (S WR).

It is interesting to note how for Brian and the other students in the class showed the ability to write in the first person with no specific teaching on how to do this from either the classroom teacher or the teacher researcher.

4.5 Key Thread: Perspective taking

The ability to view situations from another's perspective was the third emerging theme, as both teachers and students recorded and reported shifts in understanding what it must be like to be another. Mike reported both a shift in his ability to react to student behaviour differently and to take the time to think about what might be behind challenging student behaviour and to work more restoratively. I too, challenged my preconceived version of events around some student behaviour and acknowledged the strength of working with metaphor and reframed stories to distance the problem from the student. The students expressed through writing *in role and out of role*, discussion *in and out of role*, and taking part in the drama activities the ability to understand what it must be like to be another and many recognised empathy in other students.

4.5.1 Teacher shift in perspective taking and practice

Mike the classroom teacher took part in some of the activities but mainly observed from within the drama and constantly noted how powerful it was to be in this position as an observer. He had the opportunity to observe and reflect on what he saw happening not only from a pedagogical professional development view but also from a relational perspective. These emerging strands were summarised from his interview (TI). The first strand that emerged was that in his observation of another teacher's practice in relating to students caused him to reflect on his practice and to model some of those ways of working in class. He said "I've tried to crib some of it" and he refocused on the positive aspects of student behaviour when he went back to class. "After the first drama sessions I went back to class and wrote out tons of positives".¹⁶ (TI)

Perhaps most striking was Mike's description of how not long after the last session at the wolf's restorative conference, on one occasion he was having a bad

¹⁶ 'Positive' are slips given out by teachers to students in recognition of excellent behaviour. These are a form of positive reinforcement.

day. As he was talking to a student he stopped and thought about what it must be like for that student and what might have led him to that position. He said “I thought about the book you read and the wolf’s story and I changed how I responded to the student”(TI).

Mike acknowledged that drama as a relational pedagogy had a positive impact on some of the students in his class.

I think I was really pleased with some of the kids who don't engage as much as some of the others. I was happy for how some of them engaged. For some students it suited them really, really well and I definitely think it in terms of engaging them it was better than a traditional way of teaching restorative practice (TI).

Mike has considerable skills in information and communication technologies, having being celebrated at the national level for excellent practice in this field particularly in the setting up and maintaining of class web and blog sites. He recognised that this art genre afforded him further opportunity to develop his excellent practice by using the visual and expressive nature of drama to continue to develop as a teacher.

I've been teaching for about 15 years now and I've had some outside people come in and do drama. I've never thought about doing drama myself. What I really liked about it was the visual aspect of it. We do a lot of work visually with digital cameras things like that but I hadn't thought about that aspect of it as a way of the children expressing themselves. What I liked about it and I thought the same when I looked at the pictures last year because they piqued my interest in it.. Something now as a teacher I like to challenge myself to come up with different things so I don't get bored and it's something I hadn't really that is part of the curriculum but honestly I've never done anything properly...(TI).

He commented that he had not used process drama in his own teaching and realised how powerful it could be.

I've done drama at my previous schools in terms of production and stuff but in actual terms process drama structured like that and particularly tying in with restorative practice. We've had some of it in KOS (role play) with the police but I enjoyed the elements... kids especially the freeze frames the kids got into it. Dare I say it and it is something I could see as beneficial and something I need to look into myself (TI).

Mike reflected on his relationships with students, what he knew and didn't know about them, how to improve the relationships with his students and between his students and his need to continue to develop his practice in ICT especially in using process drama.

4.5.2 Teacher researcher shift in perspective taking

I too reflected in my journal, shifts in my understanding when, to put it in narrative terms allowed a particular story to dominate my thinking about a student. I found that for me personally the use of reframed stories or working with metaphors had powerful implications in deconstructing negative stories around students and rewriting new stories. The data that I collected through my reflections demonstrated a deepening of relationships with students I thought I knew well. Brian in particular stands out as one such student. I thought I knew him well and had a positive relationship with him based on our interactions from the previous year. However, observing him throughout the drama and listening to him after the interview gave me a much greater insight into what life must be like for him.

It seemed to me that drama gave Brian a vehicle to develop confidence and stories that he could use as ways of explaining what it must be like for him. This was most clearly manifested during the post drama interview when I asked him if he had an understanding of how William the cat felt he said... *I do. I am like the cat and it happens with me and my brothers and I feel like the cat. They leave me out of some things. They ask me if I want to come play. I say yes. I put on my shoes and they leave me out. Quiet sad because they ask me to do something and then they turn around and say no. Impact on the way you are sometimes? Probably. In what way? Getting angry a lot of the times (SI).*

This conversation with Brian not only gave me gave me insight into his life but also showed he was gaining an insight into his own behaviour. It gave me as a teacher an opportunity to share common stories as a way of working and understanding about what it must be like for students experiencing difficulties.

4.5.3 Student perspective on perspective taking

Through the drama conventions, especially writing in role, students began to express understandings about what it must be like to be another. In discussing both their writing and the use of the conventions they were able to reflect on why the characters were acting as they did. In *The Very Best of Friends* drama, the students described what it must be like for Jessie when James died and that her love for James and his memory caused her to change her treatment of William, the cat. The students demonstrated the ability to write both in role and to reflect out of role on the characters' behaviour. In their out of role writing students were asked which drama convention helped them to view the situation from another perspective. The writing from all the students was rich and deeply reflective.

I have selected three from the sample group as examples. Here Jade describes what life must be like for Jessie.

I feel sad, I don't like cats but William is an exception. I don't want to get rid of him because he meant so much to James, James wouldn't be happy if I got rid of him. Life without James is really hard, I'm so busy and I feel really sad without him (SWR).

Out of role Jade was able to say perhaps why Jessie was treating William unkindly.

That loss causes sadness and sometimes causes people to neglect animals When she realised what she had done, neglected William (SRJ).

Jade in her reflection said that the drama convention, *writing in role was helpful because it helps me realise/understand how Jessie felt about the situation (SFJ).*

Another student, Lois writes in and describes how she will treat William better, in memory of James.

It's very lonely without James, so lonely. I miss him dearly. I am going to keep William because he was very loved by James and he would've wanted me to keep him. I've grown tolerable of him and inside, very deep inside I know I am able to love him as much as James did (SWR).

Lois, later recorded that writing in role was an effective way to help her understand what it must be like to be Jessie and perhaps prepare her for a similar situation in the future. In answering the question I wonder why William grew lean and mean? Lois stated that

Jessie realised that William had grown lean and mean through her own faults and how she treated him. She knew that isn't what James would've wanted (SFJ).

Lois like Jade, explained that writing in role helped her gain another perspective.

*The feelings that I wrote about and what it would be like if I went through what she went through. I thought this was a great way to learn about things that you haven't experienced (Jessie's loss).
..... I learnt this way to get an idea of how Jessie felt though I will never know until it happens to me (SRJ).*

Brian for whom writing is a struggle, wrote the following when in role as Jessie:

My life has been so sad when James died. I have been so lonely no one to help me. No one to keep me warm. I have felt like I was the one who died (SWR).

The poignancy in Brian's comments was deepened further when placed alongside his reflection that freeze frame was helpful as a convention in understanding how both William and Jessie felt because of the way the group got William to scratch Jessie (SI).

In all three of these examples it can be seen that the Crow boy drama gave students an opportunity for a different kind of writing. Once again this showed perspective taking within the drama. They were asked to adopt the blanket role of principal and RTLBs. The challenge was to create a programme for his learning needs. The convention 'role on the wall' was used to enable students to write in role as principals, describing the ideal teacher for Crow Boy. All the students agreed that the essential characteristic of the ideal teacher was the ability to be kind and care about kids. The girls were adamant that a female teacher was the best because *females tend to treat kids as their own and males tend to be grumpy*. Boys generally said as long as they had the characteristics that were described in

the job description it didn't matter if the teacher was a male or female teacher. The boys tended to use primary rewards such as coffee and food as an inducement to teaching someone with learning needs. When writing in role as teachers of learning and behaviour (RTLBs) they wrote an inclusive and engaging programme. It is difficult to summarise the ideas as they were original and creative but some of the common statements from the class were suggest

- Develop an encouraging programme, one because if it wasn't he would fail and not make it through school. A programme where they fold paper/origami + paper activities, play eye games like eye spy, could do a bug day when they just teach about bugs and they go out and find some bugs. Could get people from other schools that are like him so that they can relate for one day.
- Helping him learn /understand maths, self-defence, games that make learning fun for him. Lots of playful activities, paper construction, board games, counting, basketball, netball, computers.
- Developing a bully free zone, learning space centre, a punching bag, science class, a special meeting club. Learning posters on the roof and walls. Have a rewards chart for him.

Students would not be able to write such a compelling job description without developing a strong sense of Crow Boy's perspective and needs. Here, then we have evidence of drama strategies and conventions being used to establish multiple perspectives and later to express these multiple perspectives through 'in role writing' and 'role on the wall'.

See figure 8, for characteristics described by the students as the ideal teacher for Crow Boy.

Teacher Job Description

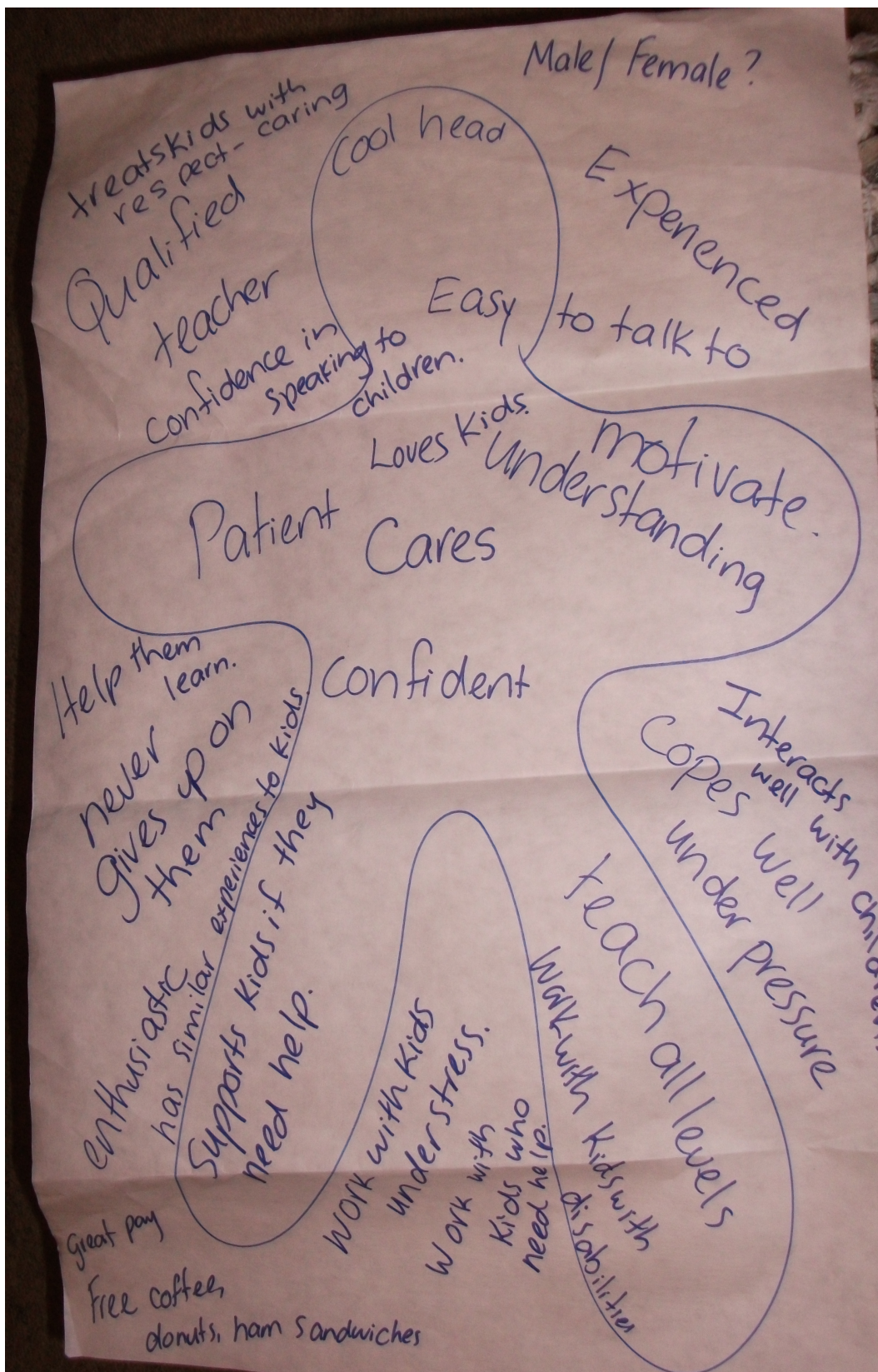


Figure 8 : 'Role on the wall' to describe the best teacher for Crow Boy

Further evidence of the students' ability to take multiple perspectives was found in the questionnaire before and after the Crow Boy drama. See Appendix M. In analysing the response to the first question *Why do Students run away from school?* the majority of the students recorded in their view that students run away from school because they are bullied or the programme is boring. In response to the question, *How must life be for Crow Boy?*¹⁷ Most of the students used two to three words. The students outside the sample group (n=18) reported the following words to describe how Crow boy must have felt, lonely (6),hard (5),sad (3),boring(3),exhausted, miserable, complicated and horrible (2).

The sample group used similar descriptors. They were hard (5),sad,(2),difficult(2),horrible(2),lonely(2) no friends (2). When both the class and the sample group were asked in their post reflection what they would do if Crow Boy was in their class? The class reported, 13/18 that they would be kind to him, help him, and include him, 2/18 said not to pick on him and 1/18 said she would probably *leave him to himself unless he was being bullied*. The sample group 5/8 reported that they would be nice to him, friendly and talk to him. However Lois said, *Maybe I could be nicer to people when they feel how Crow Boy felt*. She then went on to say *I would probably still ignore him*, Sam said *not sure*, and Gavin said *He is a bit weird*. Jade tended to summarise what the rest of the class said in their reflections. *Just try to be nice and not to judge him because things aren't always as they seem*.

4.5.4 Evidence of perspective taking from student writing

Following the restorative conference for the wolf, the students once again were able to demonstrate how life must be for another by writing an email to the probation officer describing the wolf's new life. Lois was able to explain in role as the wolf what life was like and why she did the things she did.

Before I did all those things because I was confused. I didn't know my parents, I didn't know my background and doing all those bad things was my way of saying "please help me" but now I know, now I know

¹⁷ In a restorative conversation and conference this question is often posed to the wrongdoer in order for them to understand the harm that has occurred.

everything. I've thought about this for hours and actually got off my butt and did something about it (SWR).

Jade also takes the wolf's perspective by explaining to Bob the probation officer why she acted the way she did and now she has changed. As the wolf, she describes how her life has changed.

It's me the wolf. I'm just writing this to tell you how my life has been since the last time we talked, back then I was an idiot, everything I did was to fit in.....

You helped me get my life back on track and I can never thank you enough for that (SWR).

In writing this message it could be said that the student (Jade) is giving the wolf another chance. This is restorative practice in action.

Similarly, Sam in his writing in role describes what it must be like to be the wolf.

Dear Jo

Thanks for giving me a chance, my life has changed completely. Instead of doing bad things I'm helping the community, every person that I've wronged I've corrected. Right now I'm living in New York, I've got a wonderful family but I still have some bad habits. Every once in a while I go out yoink a pig or chicken and eat it. Other than that everything else in my life is great, so once again thank you for giving me a chance (SWR).

Again he demonstrates the ability to forgive the wolf though in this case he provides a happy ending with a reality check, for the wolf still has some urges that come to the surface every now and again.

At the conclusion of the drama I interviewed all of the students present in groups and one group in particular in answering the question about what they had learnt from writing in role. The answers given by the group clearly show that they felt the writing in role helped them to understand the other perspective.

Susan outside the sample group had this to say. *Yeah it was fun though. I liked that . You get to kind of its well kind of like you are playing a character like a production cos you've got to pretend you are that person like you have to make*

like you feel what that person feels. I liked it. It was cool (SI) .Kelly from the sample group said writing in role helped her to understand what it was like to be someone else. Yes cos there will be people who you cross, like they are different from you. And um you just like have to accept them and like try to include them like be in their shoes. She went on to explain ...Be what it's like to be them for a day. Yeah on the outside everyone's different but you just have to try and make them feel like everyone's the same like kind of (SI).

All the students thought their thinking and understanding had changed around restorative practices. The following is an excerpt from the student interview and what is particularly significant here is the subtlety of the shift in understanding being reported by Mandy, Susan and Megan. They are all caring girls but, by their own admission would tend to distance themselves from conflict happening between their peers. Susan said *Yes like since we have done all that stuff in drama it's like I know how we really need to care for someone and stuff like that.*

When asked in the interview if they had known about restorative practices before Susan replied, *Like it kind of made a bit more sense. And like kind of made me understand how other people feel.*

Megan *I knew like that you needed to still care for others that were different but now like we can do it like more like actually say hello like cos usually like I wouldn't do much like I'd just you know walk past and not say if we didn't know each other. Don't actually have to be friends it's just the small things.*

Mandy in response to the question what is your thinking around restorative practices now said, *Now I can like be normal like not be different around them and like treat them as just one of us. Not anybody different.* The literature around bullying and restorative practice talked about the importance of bystander behaviour and how the small 'things' can shift someone from passive collusion in bullying towards behaviour that actively promotes positive relationships. Thus for Megan, Susan and Mandy, it may be that the small shifts in awareness they note have more impact on their behaviour than if they claimed huge transformational shifts.

4.6 Summary and transition to Chapter Five

This chapter has discussed the three threads that emerged from the student and teacher perspectives on the intervention. The three threads identified were engagement, inclusion and perspective taking. These threads were identified using quantitative and qualitative data that was combed several times in order to establish a picture of what was happening with students and teachers in a drama class and provide evidence to answer the second research question, *What shifts in relational attitudes are recorded and reported by year 8 students participating in process drama based around restorative practices?*

Chapter five will discuss the connections to the literature from chapter two that sets out to answer the first research question, *What are the intersections to be found in the literature between the key concepts of process drama and restorative practice?* in order to make links to the second research question stated above.

Chapter Five: Discussion

5.0 Introduction

To exist, humanly, is to name the world, to change it. Once named, the world in its turn reappears to the namers as a problem and requires of them a new naming. P.61 Friere (1973).

This chapter discusses the findings of a process drama intervention based around the teaching of restorative practices to year eight students at a middle school in Aotearoa, New Zealand. This intervention showed that there were overlapping philosophies of care and empathy for both restorative practice and process drama as a pro social pedagogy. Intersections were also noted in both, in terms of practice around ways of working. Themes that emerged from this intervention were engagement, inclusion and perspective taking. Findings discussed in the previous chapter indicated that shifts had occurred in the way the students in this year 8 class spoke to each other, wrote and demonstrated what it was like to be another. It was also found that students became more inclusive in their group activities. Early indicators of classroom behaviour suggested that there was an increase in more respectful ways of treating each other. Both teacher and the teacher researcher reported shifts in their understanding around pedagogy and relationships with students. What was also evident was that restorative practice emerged within the drama context and drama elements were evident within restorative practice.

Overall this intervention recorded high levels of student engagement in the drama activities and an improved quality of writing by the students. In this chapter these findings will be discussed in light of the second research question, *What shifts in relational attitudes are recorded and reported by year 8 students participating in process drama based around restorative practices?* There will be connections made to the literature review in Chapter Two and the intersections between the two pedagogies as background to understanding the patterns emerging from this action research.

5.1 Perspective taking and Inclusion:

There is significant literature around the need for people to be able to understand what it is like to be another. This ability to view from another perspective or perspective taking is crucial to both restorative practice and process drama as pro-social pedagogy. In this intervention there were shifts in both student and teacher understanding of what it was like to be another from within the drama fictional context and from outside in the spoken and written reflection.

5.1.1 Shifts in speaking and writing.

Working in “role” the children in this process drama were given a unique opportunity to step into the shoes of another and in doing so begin to see, feel and reflect on the world from that perspective. As Murphy explains “they come to care for its characters, their worlds and their dilemmas” (P.312,2007). In the Very Best of Friends drama the students began to understand that unkind acts towards humans and animals creates levels of anger and violence and acts of kindness can make a difference. Every student present during this drama wrote heart felt journal entries of what life must be like without James. They expressed the difficulty of carrying out all the tasks needed to make a success of the farm. Many spoke of the need to carry on as James would have wanted even if it meant being nice to that “wretched” cat William. As Lois writes ‘I have grown more tolerable of him’ (SFJ). Their writing clearly indicated the ability to write in role as if they were Jessie.

Following the Crow Boy drama, the programme the students wrote in role as RTLB’s demonstrated their insight into what it must be like to be a shy, withdrawn child with learning needs. When asked to write an engaging programme for him, the students all used the fact he was interested in insects as a focal point to re-engage him in class activities. A consistent theme was the need for him to have a caring empathic teacher. They were clearly able to express the shared experience of being left out and in creating this programme indicated their ability to be in his shoes. The students made connections to the character of Crow Boy. In role as experienced principals they were asked to write a job description for teacher suitable for a student who had learning needs. This job description provoked intense discussion, with students debating over whom was more suitable

for a teacher, male or female. Interestingly those students who were seen as *quiet* made the most noise about issues to do with gender. The characteristics described by the students supported Reynolds' (2005) view of what schools should be like. "Schools need to be developed not as garrisoned outposts, where efficiency and control reign, but as loving, caring environments, filled with compassion" (p.50.). The new teacher proposed by the students would certainly fit into Reynolds view of a humanistic school meeting the needs of the students.

The students accepted and did not judge the wolf following the restorative conference during which time they meet the wolf's mother (TIR). The emails expressed an understanding of what life was like for the wolf and how it could be changed given a chance. The wolf was positioned by the students as a product of his upbringing and it was assumed that if he was given extra support and care could change and turn his life around. Through understanding the character of the wolf the students realised he had been punished enough. All the emails describe the wolf transformed into a person of 'good' character, though for some it took him a while to get to this state.(He had a spell in prison first according to Brian!). The content of these emails demonstrated the ability to forgive (McCullough,2010) their responsibility to make things right and repair the relationships that were harmed as a result of the wolf's offending.

Through the drama sessions students and teachers shared personal stories about name calling, students had to justify special programmes to reluctant teachers and were asked to make a decision to support the wolf or send him on a journey to prison. In these fictional contexts they demonstrated the ability to take on another perspective and to be empathic. The ability to forge strong relationships with each other means we have the ability to forgive. This connects to the literature noted on empathy and perspective taking in Chapter two. This ability is essential in terms of getting along with each other and using conflict resolution strategies and restorative practices (Thorsborne, Drewery, Mc Farlane, Cavanagh et al).

The ability to be empathic in class and make connections to others who are different to ourselves is crucial in terms of student engagement, achievement and emotional well- being. Those students who do not feel connected in school, not included in the culture of the classroom are at risk of failing, leaving school early

or of greater concern lacking in emotional resiliency. During the adolescent stage of life, they are especially vulnerable to those self-harming behaviours so clearly described by the students in the co-construction of the wolf and his deeds prior to the conference. (See appendix M for a description).

5.1.2 Shifts in the way we treat each other

There were several indicators that students during this intervention were shifting in the way they were treating each other in particular in the way they spoke to each other and in the development of more inclusive practices with students who had previously been excluded.

The way we talk to each other

The positive feedback student's gave to each other and the group at the end of the drama especially following the freeze frames has implications not only for group dynamics but also in terms of engaging pedagogy. According to the literature around feedback and cooperative learning (Gibbs and Poskitt), incorporating self and peer assessment helps promote positive interaction, as does randomly calling on individual students to report on their groups' effort" (p.28).

Also being presented with the data around teasing appeared to have some impact on the level of teasing that was happening in the class. Students in the follow up interviews thought that name calling had decreased as a form of teasing and one student in particular commented on this in regard to how she had been teased about her name. This was in conjunction with the Crow Boy drama around name calling. This supported the outcomes cited by Brown et al (2009,p.25 in Gibbs and Poskittp.28)who suggested that having "group or class conversations, and encouraging students to work with the teacher to find solutions helps build collaborative relationships and conflict resolution skills".

There appeared to be an impact at both the individual and also the class level in terms of developing pro- social behaviour. The possibility that this had some impact on behaviour could be seen in the data from the post drama intervention survey which indicated there was a decrease in the higher frequency of name calling and swearing.

Inclusive groups

During and following every drama session there was a discussion not only around the big ideas as part of the drama but also how well the students were working as a group. They were asked to consider this question in light of their group work if in fact they had other students in their groups that had not been present before? And who was in the group and how well were they working together? By session two, students were beginning to mix and enjoy the different drama activities. Feedback not only in terms of academic performance but social and emotional behaviour is crucial in establishing respectful classrooms and cultures of inclusion. This leads to students reflecting on their behaviour and setting goals and has the long term impact of establishing responsibility for individual actions by creating internal locus of control (Strahan, 2008, in Gibbs and Poskitt, p 31).

Both the teacher and the teacher researcher documented the undemocratic nature of the group composition at the start of the drama intervention to a more inclusive pattern near the end. The students also noted that by session two they were mixing with each other and it was good to see what different students came up with. They got to know different students in the classroom that they hadn't worked with before. The ability to work in groups is seen as an essential life skill and is documented in the New Zealand curriculum under the key competencies of *relating to others, contributing and participating*, and alongside the core values of *equity, diversity, community and participation, integrity and respect* (2007, p.10 NZC). The need to create curriculum plans around these competencies is a requirement asked of by the Ministry of Education of all New Zealand schools.

The New Zealand curriculum document states it, there is considerable evidence to support it and teachers know it, that it is essential for students to learn to work respectfully with a diverse group of others in order to create democratic and humane communities. The need for schools to encourage, model and explore the principles, the key competencies, and the core values and to show evidence that they are in the "schools philosophy, structures, curriculum, classrooms, and relationships" (2007, pp 8-13) is stated in the New Zealand curriculum document.

The review of the literature around group work or cooperative learning indicates that "it meets students' social needs of belonging, peer acceptance and

demonstration of competence” (Gibbs and Poskitt p.28). Coleman (2011) when working with a similarly diverse group of students also noted that the students recognised that process drama was a way to get everyone to participate. She claimed that this was an indicator of student engagement. The students from her study in a multi-cultural New Zealand classroom said they all enjoyed process drama because “it was fun and everyone can join in and we can all participate” (P.29).

5.2 Teacher perspective taking

5.2.1 Classroom teacher reflexivity and praxis

The opportunity to observe his own class while someone else taught provided Mike the classroom teacher time to reflect on not only what was happening in his class but what he needed to do in his classroom. He realised he had to work on two fronts, not only to develop positive respectful and inclusive relationships but to provide different engaging pedagogies for those students who were at risk of becoming dis- engaged in school life.

Throughout the drama Mike expressed shock and concern as he became aware of the subliminal anti- social behaviours and exclusive relationships that were alienating some students in his classroom. He stated in the follow up interview he needed to attend to these and to find ways to get his students to work in groups and develop more inclusive and positive relationships. Observing what was happening in drama and also taking part in aspects of it had caused him to deeply reflect on his role in the possible perpetuation of antisocial behaviour in his class by not noticing what was going on. It was “flying under the radar”(Mike, TI).

Baer and Glasgow (2008) in their work in process drama and bullying state the importance of teachers as figures of authority need to be able to intervene when anti- social incidents or bullying occurs. “Teachers and administrators are the most effective and proper agents of authority and should be able to intervene in these power struggles, but they don’t always know what is happening, much less take appropriate action” (p.80).

Again the research cited by Gibbs and Poskitt (2010,p29) similarly claim that students enjoy working with others especially others who have a different

background to their own. “Students claim they learn better when working with other students and enjoy learning more (Pickens & Eick,2009).Students may also develop friendships with students from different backgrounds (Allison & Rehm 2009)”. This is particularly significant in terms of knowing the *other* in the classroom.

The literature around student engagement and achievement reinforce the need for relational teaching in schools. There is a need for programmes such as restorative practice in order to teach and develop respectful relationships in schools. The literature based on current research in New Zealand claims it is crucial to build relationships and make connections whanaungatanga, (interconnectedness), within social groups because it is essential not only for engagement and academic success for Māori but all students. This is well documented in the work of the Kotahitanga projects alongside evidence cited by Gibbs and Poskitt (2010,p.16) that clearly establishes the need for students to be included and part of a group if student academic success is to occur.

Mc Farlane cites the work of Smith and Laslett who say it is essential that you have to “get on with them” before you can “get on with it” 1993).

What was significant for Mike was as a result of observing the ‘wolf’s restorative conference’ he too began to reflect on his way of interacting with some of the more challenging students in the playground. He reported in his interview that during a lunch time when about to engage with a student he stopped and thought about what it might be for that student and modified his conversation. Mike also noted his lack of knowledge and experience at using drama as pedagogy. He reflected on the enthusiasm of his students, particularly his reluctant learners who he observed engaging in the drama activities.

5.2.2 Teacher researcher reflexivity and praxis

Working alongside students in this drama I reflected that I too had let things fly under the radar especially in regard to student involvement in curriculum plans and in teacher professional development. I had let the curriculum be dominated by only one of the key stake holders in the school, the teachers. Students had only a small “voice” in what was happening at school particularly in curriculum planning.

Once again it reinforced that students were the “experts” when it came to who they wanted as teachers and what they wanted to learn. Carspecken (1996) claims “seeing something clearly that one has already known in an unclear or implicit way” is what can occur for the researcher in critical ethnographic research (p144). This noticing is also a crucial part of restorative practice and drama where there needs to be democratic practice around what stories are privileged and who ‘speaks’ in classrooms and schools.

Neelands notes (2002) teachers are often overwhelmed by the apparent scale of what is required them (p.119) and “We live in an age in which the curriculum as ‘planned’ has overshadowed the vitality of the curriculum as ‘lived’ experience” (p.107).

Like Mike, I too had been shocked at the initial groupings in class for I had believed that as a multicultural school we were inclusive. I thought I could allow this to carry on for the sake of the research outcome but how authentic was this? I had to use my knowledge of cooperative learning and feedback to suggest different ways to be in the classroom. I began to request that each time we did another activity there had to be a new person or pair in the group. Following these activities we reported back on our co-constructed criteria about the success of our groups. I reflected, if I wanted a democratic classroom then I had to model respectful ways of working and share power in terms of curriculum planning.

Drama also worked for me on a personal level. It gave me a safe way to vent my frustrations in an almost classic cathartic manner. In the lived reality of my experience in education, how often had I listened to *wolf* stories and needed the students to reintegrate ‘the wolf’ back into their class in order to ‘grow the other story’ around the ‘wolf’? How often had I listened to teachers telling me they did not want *that* child in their class. How often had I heard the statement “ I am not going back into that class Miss cos the teacher is boring and doesn’t care”.

Using teacher in role I was able to say as a principal that my teachers did not want that student. I could be the mother who said to the principal in an overheard conversation “Why should crow boy get a special programme when my good boy didn’t ?” I could be the mother of the wolf and recite a litany of punishing life

events that I have heard repeatedly in my career. These were real life problems and the students in 'role' needed to help me with them because I didn't know what to do? They were my community and they had the "power" to make a difference. Heyward (2010) links this notion to Vygotsky's theory of socially constructed knowledge and claims that it is necessary that the teacher brings to the discussion alternate stories rather than the dominant discourse so often presented in classrooms. ".....the socially constructed nature of knowledge necessitates that teachers elicit conflicting perspectives so that learners engage in sustained, thought provoking dialogue rather than the mere repetition of a single dominant viewpoint" (Alton-Lee,2003;Lyngard & Mills,2002, cited in Heyward p.198).

Drama worked for me on many levels and certainly I was as engaged as the students during those sessions. From a research perspective the critical ethnographic elements of personal, professional and political came together within the drama sessions and in the reflections outside as I consciously and curiously listened to the reflections of the students and teacher following the intervention.

5.3 Intersections between process drama and restorative practice

The results of this intervention seemed to suggest that process drama appeared to be a successful way to teach the underlying principle so of restorative practice. Drama incorporates at least six pedagogies linked to factors three and four on student engagement as outlined by Gibbs and Poskitt (2010). While drama is an engaging pedagogy suitable to teach restorative practice there are several intersections in the practice of both that emerged from this drama intervention.

Both process drama and restorative practice are about real life problems and solutions, both involve people coming together to share stories and to listen to 'other' stories in order to understand the 'other' and create new stories. These old and new understandings are revealed through the skilful questioning of the drama teacher and the restorative facilitator. Both create new stories and new ways of being with each other.

5.4 Drama as engaging pedagogy

5.4.1 Having fun

From the start of the drama intervention there was an overriding message about having “serious fun” but a clear difference was made between laughing *with* and not *at* peers taking part. Throughout the drama work the majority of the students (84%) recorded that drama was fun and this figure was maintained until the last sessions.

Evident throughout the drama was the emergence of adolescent humour another indicator of student engagement that often “constitutes cognitive engagement” (2007, Milne & Otieno, cited Gibbs and Poskitt, p.27). Gibb and Poskitt (2010) state that “students are more actively engaged when learning is perceived to be fun” (p.26), this relates to factors three and four to do with student engagement. The drama conventions, most notably the writing in role and freeze frames also became vehicles for student humour. From Brian’s email describing life in prison and his reasons for wanting to get out.....to students creating alternate stories in their freeze frames suggesting reasons why granny was screaming when the wolf entered her bedroom, such as a surprise 60th birthday party, a large spider dangling in the corner of the room and so on. Drama gave students an opportunity to make their peers laugh and it was often those students like Brian and students who experience difficulty being with others or achieving, who appeared to “shine” in the drama as observed by Mike their teacher (TI). Lance a student with high emotional needs said, *I enjoyed the drama it was funny* (SRJ). Prior to the Crow boy drama, students were asked in their questionnaire why students run away from school, the majority answer was split between either the student was being bullied or the programme was boring (SQ). The students’ comments reinforced the research around engaging programmes. Murphy (2007) argues that the teacher working *in role* makes the drama fundamentally engaging and there is no need for extrinsic rewards.

“The motivation for engagement becomes even stronger if further tensions are skilfully inserted into the drama as it progresses. This is generally done through the teacher’s intermittent introduction of new information that will serve to raise tension and disturb the status quo” (2007, p.310)

I too noted that during this drama intervention I did not use a primary reward system. As a classroom teacher I always use some form of positive reinforcement based around points for respectful behaviour. I wanted to see if the drama aesthetic could sustain the students' interest. In my notes from session six I wrote *I have not used any reward system except the actual drama itself! And all the students were participating. (TRRJ)*

5.4.2 Interactive activities

The dramatic conventions used in process drama are interactive activities and Johnson (2008,p.81) suggests “that classroom time spent primarily in interactive instructional formats is highly engaging” (cited in Gibbs and Poskitt p.25). The interactive nature of drama alongside the games established common links with each other as we found out what “roles” we had in common and why our parents called us the names they did. The students enjoyed finding out about each other and demonstrated respectful curiosity around the way students received their names. Helen said she enjoyed the role game because you got to find out about someone in an easier way. “ I really enjoyed the role playing game cos I got to find out things about other people instead of having to go up to them and asking them personally. It was more fun finding out an easier way” (STD). For Brian it was also an opportunity to work in a different way, it was interactive he recorded in his reflection. *It was better than doing work in class (SRJ)*. The students consistently recorded in their journal how they enjoyed doing the freeze frames and such conventions as conscience ally.

5.4.3 Real life problems

The fact that within the fictional context of drama, real life problems were played out. These were real life issues that were not sanitised or avoided heightened the engagement and the quality of the result. These problems of cruelty, bullying, exclusion are the ‘stuff’ of restorative practice.

In terms of student engagement what was noted was the speaking and writing by the students during these drama sessions clearly demonstrated an elevation of register and content. There was a confidence when articulating their ideas especially those students who do not often engage or are shy in class. The students

in these dramas took part in, spoke and wrote about real life scenarios. In *The Very Best of Friends*, they wrote accounts of life after a loved one has died and all that needed to happen to make sure life went on as James would have wanted. The *Crow Boy* drama saw the students working and writing in role as specialist teachers (RTLBs), devising a plan for a student who had learning needs and who often ran away.

In the final drama, the students were invited to a restorative conference as either victims or supporters of the wolf. The wolf was a juvenile delinquent about to be sent to borstal.

The negative stories of an at risk character, the wolf, are all real life issues often talked about by adolescents and often not discussed in formal learning situations in a classroom. It “goes under the radar” as Mike observed. Sometimes schools bring in specialist programmes from outside that often deal with specific health issues to do with personal safety or specific drug and alcohol education. In these programmes engagement is mixed and contentious issues are often sanitised or skirted around the edges (Noffkt 1997). Heyward (2010) cites Nimmo (1998) who argues “that many educators in the Anglo –American cultural tradition steer learners away from dealing with strong emotions and, in doing so, miss important learning opportunities, as moments of strong emotion in a social context can become part of the shared memory”. The drama contexts in this intervention were all planned to challenge the students to think about these issues and how they would resolve them if they were in the shoes of that character. Dorothy Heathcote often described drama in the classroom as a rehearsal for life¹⁸ and through participation in drama the students came to understand the universal of “man in a mess” (1984).In process drama the students work together in this imagined *as if* situation trying to provide possible ways forward out of the mess. As an engaging pedagogy, process drama is about “learning from the real world” (2009,Neelands,p.178) and reflects the findings of Gibbs and Poskitt by using real life problems and problem resolution (Smith,2005,p.5).”Middle school students enjoy grappling with real-life problems, making the learning meaningful

¹⁸ This is linked to Boal’s view that theatre can be a rehearsal for life (1992,p.242).

while building their sense of growing competency” (p.29 Ibid). Again the literature around engaging pedagogies suggests that real life problems, honest open communication with the teacher promotes students’ engagement.

5.4.4 Real life solutions

This could be seen in the ritual and symbolism of the restorative conference held for the wolf. Drama, when given a context (such as the restorative conference) meets the need for the student to make sense of and develop a way forward out of the mess. “..... the contextual quality of the activity responds in a very immediate way to the child’s need for relevance in learning, while simultaneously helping him/her to develop the skills and qualities needed in order to engage with the social and political complexities of the contemporary world”.(2007,p.311)

They could in fact write action plans for Jessie, the principal, the compassionate teacher and finally the wolf in order to move on, perhaps proof of cognitive emotional resiliency.

Murphy argues that drama is a radical pedagogy because the “children’s attention is focused on the universal task of balancing the needs and rights of the individual with the needs and rights of society”

In all the writing especially the justification for a special programme for Crow boy or the appointment of a female or male teacher to the decision to give the wolf another chance the students were weighing up the rights of the individual over that of the community. They created authentic real life descriptions and records of life following conflict and problems and were able to create ways out of the mess.

5.4.5 Sharing stories and listening to problems

During the discussion around names as both teachers and student shared why they were called what they were and who named them connections were being made. About ¼ knew why they were named and were ok with their name, 1/4 did not like their name and talked about how people used it. Both teachers also reflected on how their names had been used to tease them when they were children. I noted following the naming session prior to the Crow Boy drama this in my journal.

Students talked about others’ naming them and how students could reverse their

names, to tease them. Some were named after famous people and hated their names. Three students were named by doctors or nurses as their parents couldn't speak English. A couple passed but all the students were amazingly honest and open (TRRJ). Strahan (2008) cited by Poskitt and Gibbs(p.26 2010) outlines three types of care that appears to make up the development of trusting relationships with teachers that students need have if students are to feel included and engaged at school. One of these is the “discovery talk” where the teacher takes the time to find out about the student. Mike reflected following this discussion how he had no idea that his students were named and the impact on their self-esteem as a result. “I have had some of the students for my second year and I have had S..... and I didn't know about why her parents called her that. And those other connections with families it certainly made me think about my relationships with the students it was really really good” (Mike, TI). Another way a teacher can show care is to listen to problems, in this process drama Mike became aware that a lot of antisocial behaviour was subliminal had gone “under the radar” but when he saw the teasing survey he was shocked and realised he needed to work on that aspect of his classroom culture.

This is essential according to Stahan's (Ibid) research especially in the reengaging of disengaged students. With evidence at the start of the drama to suggest that students were already being marginalised and out of the four, three were Maori students, two boys and one girl it was crucial that Mike not only recognised this but put in place ways of encouraging group inclusive practices into his classroom.

5.5. Student achievement in writing

It wasn't originally an intention to look at standards in writing however it was seen as evidence that using drama as pedagogy is effective not only in developing pro social behaviour but also has implications for developing quality writing. The writing that resulted from this intervention was completed by all students and developed in quantity and quality. The writing the students undertook during this drama intervention could be further crafted to meet the school wide benchmarks for the appropriate curriculum level in specific writing session following the drama session. What is perhaps significant here was the full engagement of all the

students during these writing sessions and the developing belief and subsequent evidence that they could create quality prose. I also noted quality writing from students who don't like writing or who were initially outside the class social groups. Perhaps the status of being an "adult" writer helped in creating an improved culture of inclusiveness in the classroom? There was evidence from both the quantity and the quality of writing that indicated that this had also occurred during this intervention. When I reported back after the first drama sessions what some of the students had written they said they thought they sounded like adults. In all the writing there is a clear and sustained sincerity of voice of the character, there was a range of interesting vocabulary and there is a deliberate conversational and colloquial tone suggesting that all the students were talking directly to the reader.¹⁹

Perhaps the tone of each of the tasks or the positioning of the task itself gave the students the writer's mantle and consequently they wrote fluently and with expression in all their roles. The students wrote a job description for a new teacher and in role as experts or experienced principals and later a programme for a student with learning needs as resource teachers of learning and behaviour. In both roles they assumed the *role of the expert* and the quality of the discussions and writing was elevated as a result.

In the emails to the probation officer following the wolf drama, the students adopted an adult register with undercurrents of humour while attempting to tell Jo they had changed. This ability to write from a "characters" perspective is linked to character writing which is directly linked to an NCEA²⁰ level one standard" (2007,p.1 English curriculum exemplars).

The New Zealand Curriculum sets out statements in all the curriculum areas and in the English describes this writing as poetic writing based on personal experience and character. "The closer students are to a real experience or person, the greater the life, clarity, and sincerity of their writing about them" (Ibid). The

¹⁹ For this analysis I used the guidelines/wording from the English exemplars at level 4. Reference www.tki.org.nz.

²⁰ National Certificate of Educational Achievement.

expectation is that in English students will leave school having achieved level two English.

5.6 Summary and transition to Chapter Six

In taking part in a series of process dramas based around key concepts of restorative practices the students in this year 8 class spoke, wrote and demonstrated what it must be like to be another. Their writing clearly indicated their ability to understand another perspective and describe what life must be like to be another. Early indicators of classroom behaviour also suggested there had been shifts made in the way they were treating each other. Perhaps more significant was the realisation by the classroom teacher that he needed to attend to the relationships in his class and ensure that all his students were included in the life of their classroom. Chapter six will expand on the notion of drama as a radical pedagogy that is inclusive, democratic and is an engaging pedagogical way to teach students about restorative practices.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Future Implications

6.0 To walk in another's shoes.

Growing caring communities- I runga I te manaaki.

6.1 Introduction

Sharp's (2003) report on what makes a restorative school outlines several descriptors, one being, when a school clearly invites students and adults to learn about restorative values. This research was a response to that challenge and part of a long term action in creating a school culture based around respectful relationships and restorative practices.

This critical ethnographic action research involved a drama intervention that was deliberately planned and implemented in order for all involved to reflect on the collusion by students and teachers in the exclusion, both overtly and covertly of groups of students. The long term goal was to awaken in the students the power they have to make choices about how they treat each other. To choose between judging and exclusion to acceptance and inclusion based on restorative practices. Miller (1998) describes Maxine Greene's notion of "wide awakesness" as a form of moral vigilance and action against plagues of habit, passiveness, indifference, and alienation (p.146). The students during these dramas reported and recorded shifts in understanding what it was like to be another and in some areas of classroom behaviour demonstrated improved empathy towards each other.

This final chapter outlines the claims that can be made as a result of this drama intervention and the limitations of this action research. This chapter will also develop some of the key ideas around humane and democratic schools, transformational and engaging practice and pedagogies with suggestions for further implications and research in this area.

6.2. Student engagement and participation in school

Shifts in classroom practice in terms of curriculum content and implementation needs to occur if students are to be engaged and achieve. Considerable shifts in

power need to be made in classrooms as teachers pressured to meet standards based on a positivist version of learning fail to create classrooms that are democratic and humane. This by default means shifts in understandings about what knowledge is worthwhile and what isn't. The table rasa or empty pitcher concept of education needs to be constantly challenged as the collection code of knowledge acquisition (Neelands,2009) creeps back into our curriculum planning and practice. Neelands believes that education in schools socialises children into *knowledge frames which discourage connections with everyday realities* (Neelands citing Bernstein 1973,242).

Both the teacher and myself recognised the high levels of engagement during the drama sessions and supported by the research around this clearly means this has untapped potential especially in working across the curriculum and teaching pro social behaviour needed for a restorative way of working and life -long skills for global citizenship.

6.3 Democratic and Humane Schools

“The difficulty of his childhood were sufficient consequences for him” (2010 SRD).

This quote from a student in taking part in the previous year's drama programme made me realise as a teacher how effective drama was in developing certainly at the cognitive level an understanding of what it was like to be another. I was as Heathcote described (2002) getting collaboration from the class by using subtle and honest strategies, which forge bonds rather than confrontation. The process of working in drama is restorative in that students begin to understand what it is like to be another and there is a realisation that we have common feelings and ways of being. It is hard to be cruel once you have an understanding what it is like to be another. Therefore there is a move towards forgiveness and reparation rather than punishment.

The underlying philosophy of both process drama and restorative practices is to develop empathic understanding around what it must be like to be another. In a restorative way of working it is essential that the wrongdoer recognises the same

feelings of hurt and alienation in the other in order to repair the harm and begin to reconstruct new relationships.

The core teaching in process drama seeks to create reframed situations whereby students think about, discuss and create new scenarios based around caring and respectful relationships. Structuring the drama around Heathcote's *mantle of the expert* as a convention rather than a complete pedagogy or Hughes' (2004) *enactment of the expert*. The students in the three dramas became aware that they had the expertise to make a difference to the life of a cat and ultimately to that of the widow Jessie, to a little boy with disabilities and finally to the life of an at risk wolf. "As Yonezawa et al (2009,p.201) assert, "Students must be given opportunities to do more than participate in academically rigorous, adult-sanctioned activities.... Rather youth must partake in the active and critical creation of the institutions they attend". If students can *in role* write job descriptions for a compassionate teacher, programmes for a student with disabilities and life plans for an at risk wolf does the possibility exist for them to do so in real life? Rather than being a rehearsal for life (Heathcote,1988) could not students actually perform these acts as members of a democratic school community?

Students' involvement in curriculum planning certainly at a majority of schools in New Zealand has been limited and research in this field by Brough (2010) clearly indicates the ability by students to design and develop student-centered curriculum plans that are rich, purposeful and authentic programmes of learning. Neelands (2009), in describing the schools that have drama at the centre of the curriculum says that students in these schools learn to work inclusively that has possibilities for being able to live with each other and not against each other in the future.

.. in schools like these that adopt drama as pro-social ensemble –based process for building community and a common culture, young people are beginning to model the conditions of a future society based in necessity of learning how to live with the grave importance of our interdependence as humans. In both cases, children and young people have been led to imagine and look for new ways of living together rather than against each other, to find solidarity in their common disadvantage (Neelands,p.175).

Drama creates imagined worlds where students can “write like adults”, act as principals and significant others so that Jessie will resurface from her grief induced depression to carry on life without a loved one, students with disabilities like Crow Boy will not need to seek refuge under a classroom or run away from school and the challenging student like the wolf will be surrounded by a strong loving community so that he does not need to self-harm or break and enter into old Grannies’ homes. If it can happen in drama can it also happen centre stage in schools?

6.4 Drama as transformational practice

The data emerging from this intervention suggested that both students and teachers were making changes at the cognitive, emotional and behavioural level in the way they were interacting with each other. Students who were “storied” as antisocial, quiet or not successful in this class were able to take part successfully in activities where they appeared to “shine” (Mike TI). Emancipatory moments were created in drama whereby students in role ‘acted as another’. Some of the more confident and successful students recorded in their writing and in interviews how they noticed different students who are usually quiet in class were involved and talking in drama. For one student, Brian his developing confidence spilled over into his interactions with his class members and he also realised he could “write like an adult”. Betty and Gavin often excluded in class activities and initially marginalised at the start of the drama were involved by the end of the drama.

The changing group dynamics from the exclusivity at the start of the drama to the more inclusive pattern of group formation demonstrated shifts in power and status within this classroom. Importantly those students who were in danger of becoming “marginalised” in the classroom appeared to be re- engaged in the drama sessions. Research in this field in New Zealand (Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh, Hattie, Gibbs Poskitt) claim an ameliorating effect on student engagement and consequently achievement at this middle school level and future success at high school if students have positive relationships with peers and teachers.

This space created by drama where students feel safe *to speak and be*, gives voice and agency to students often marginalised in classrooms. Neelands (2004) claims the need to be cautious about the many miracle claims of student transformation that occur as a result of participating in a process drama. However in this intervention there were some claims to magic moments, from Gavin being hot seated as Crow Boy, to Betty's writing and Brian's inclusion in class activities. However it was the seemingly insignificant shift by Mandy, Jade, Kelly and their friends that could be claimed as the most transformational. Their ability to recognise themselves in the 'others', the 'good' kids knew that they could make a difference to the 'different' kids. They were as 'normal' as them. It is when the 'good' kids do nothing, the bystander that we have serious problems to address in our schools and in society in general.

The drama conventions gave students an opportunity to express themselves in a way that suited their learning styles. For Brian it was the activity of the freeze frames for Lois it was the writing in role. They had a 'voice' in drama. This is also explained in terms of the multitude of literacies that process drama embodies. Roper (2004) cites Kalantzis who claims these literacies exist in drama "there are a multitude of literacies-in linguistic, audio, spatial, gestural, and visual modes-that need to be learnt and lived. I believe that many of these can be explored through drama"(p.66).

Teachers play an important role in this emancipatory practice in classrooms and schools. Mike the classroom teacher, in much the same way recognised that he played a crucial role in the classroom in terms of modelling inclusive behaviour and had to look not only at his pedagogical practice in order to include drama but to actively change his way of working with those students who present as "difficult". As Feuerstein (1980) argues teachers create the most resistance to different ways of working because they are "representative of a system that demands a certain degree of efficiency and an identifiable end product as a result of the process of teaching" While there has been controversy around the research on the teacher impact on student learning especially in mitigating against the punishing circumstances of some students' lives there significant literature and a personal belief that quality teachers do make a difference (Hattie, et al).

Kozol (1991) in his answer to the “Savage Inequalities” that exist for many students in the American school system claims that the “hiring of extraordinary teachers” as one step in addressing the failing of at risk students. Murphy (2007) notes Conaty (2002,p.158) who describing the role of high quality teaching and student empowerment notes the shifts the teacher made from being expert to an agent “Teachers who can make the shift from being a teacher to an educator will inevitably move from being an expert to an agent” (p.306). As classroom teachers we can model and reinforce oppressive forces and exclusion of the disadvantaged or we can become change agents giving students’ voice to the way things a done around here from teacher job descriptions, to appointments of teachers, to the culture of our classrooms, and to the very content of curriculum.

6.5 Limitations of the study

This research was the lived experience of two teachers and a class of year eight students in a New Zealand middle school over a period of five weeks. The very nature of schools gives rise to barriers for research as well as the short nature of the intervention can only suggest that some evidence began to emerge that was potentially significant in terms of pedagogy and the key ideas being taught around restorative practice.

Schools certainly in the New Zealand context are very busy places. This was seen in the constant interruptions of the sessions and the complex nature of the classroom community reflecting some of the repressive elements of society at large. That is, the classroom groups initially formed in drama were clearly gender and ethnically composed and indicative of the ways the students worked with each other in class generally. At the start of the drama four students did not belong to a group, of these three were Maori (2 boys and 1 girl) and one was of European decent (1 boy).By the final session all students were included in the class groups. As Gavin said *I felt like I belonged for once.*

The size of the class to record adequately and democratically proved difficult and perhaps similar future research might look at video recording over a longer period of time using a case study methodology. Bolstad’s (2010) in depth literature synthesis on the impact of the arts on educational, social and economic outcomes

for New Zealand declares while many studies in involving arts teaching clearly claim an impact on engagement well-being and empowerment there needs to be long term studies in order to substantiate these claims .Further- more she states that this research needs to be disseminated into New Zealand schools and classrooms. Ironically schools and teachers are so busy they have difficulty finding the time to read and reflect on current literature around emancipatory and transformational practice.

6.5.1 Reliability and validity

This research generated more questions to do with reliability and validity. Could the relational changes beginning to emerge be sustained throughout the year? What would be the long term effects of this on the school climate over a period of two years? Given that some research (Carlo et al ,20003,p.125) indicate that the ability to perspective take does not necessarily lead to altruistic or helping acts towards others. Could lifts in literacy especially writing be attributable to this way of working?

As a teacher researcher working within the critical research paradigm I deliberately mediated the learning experiences. Would these outcomes be achieved with someone who was new to the classroom or process drama? Could this way of working be transferable? Having worked with the students in the previous year I believe I had already established positive relationships based on trust. It would be interesting to observe a drama teacher taking the same sessions who did not already have those pre -established relationships. In the long term cycle of action research as a teacher researcher how do I continue to research in a rigorous manner and continue to meet the demands of school life as a teacher and leader?

The task of democracy is forever that of creation of a freer and more humane experience in which all share and to which all contribute .Dewey 1919.

6.6 Future Implications

6.6.1 Professional Development

For both teachers this proved to be an effective form of professional practice with the developing social construction of ‘stories’ about how we behave and metaphors to describe and ‘script’ future dialogic encounters. This research will be shared with school and Board of trustee members as a form of professional development. This could lead to the school using this as a model for future professional development.

6.6.2 Drama as engaging and effective pedagogy

In undertaking this research I have been reminded of the underutilisation of drama in the curriculum that occurs in the majority of primary and intermediate schools. Clearly significant research and the results of this intervention require long term research around this notion that drama is an effective pedagogy that has the potential to lift achievement in writing and more especially the development of pro- social behaviour. Drama clearly has a role to play in the teaching of the key competencies. It might also be claimed that drama effectively addresses the hidden curriculum so successfully that the formal curriculum can be effectively implemented. Drama allows teachers to get them in, get on with them in order to get on with it and move them on (Smith and Laslett quoted by McFarlane,2007).

Hicks (2007) notes where Bealings, a school in England uses the drama pedagogy *mantle of the expert* has received an accolade from the government because the students are involved in many aspects of school life and make decisions about what happens at the school “Bealings is already doing what the Government now says all schools should be thinking about: listening to its pupils” (report in The Independent). Is there a school in New Zealand who would do the same?

Neelands notes schools in low socio economic areas where drama is centre in the curriculum as having transformed from hard and cruel places to cultures of care and humanity. Roper (2004) cites several studies around the impact that drama has on literacy levels and says New Zealand teachers need to use this pedagogy to work across curriculum especially in literacy. “In New Zealand, I feel that at least we are part way there by having drama visible within the curriculum, but we have

a long way to go in proving its status and value, particularly in aiding literacy” (p.65). She believes that there needs to be focussed professional development in drama because it is an engaging way to teach children not as an add on but as a way “of knowing more about stories and the human condition” (Ibid).

6.6.3 Implications for Future Research

A subsequent search of the literature failed to locate similar interventions except for the case of the Scottish Government using process drama to teach restorative practices to teachers (Sharrock, 2010). This was based around setting up various conflict situations as role play and teachers had to respond using a restorative approach. Noffke (1997) “Despite the concern with social issues and even social transformation on the part of academics writing about action research, there have been few examples of practitioners engaged in efforts to link their practices with efforts focused on gender and racial inequality, for example” (p.330).

Considerable literature exists around the way drama works in the affective domain of the emotions and creates cognitive connections but it is the long term impact on behaviour that has yet to be studied. Duplicating research in New Zealand classrooms around process drama and literacy especially writing would be worthwhile in terms of establishing if levels of achievement could be lifted using this pedagogy.

Buckley and Maxwell also state that there needs to be long term research around schools who implement restorative practice. Again the results claimed by schools in terms of lowered suspensions rates as a result of implementing restorative practices needs to be further investigated. How do schools become totally restorative? This intervention in a small way established a professional way of working with two teachers in a class of middle school students in an attempt to teach the key principles of restorative practice in an engaging way. The long term challenge is to take this intervention school wide and document the long term effectiveness of such an intervention.

6.7 Conclusion

When schools recognise that they are not being successful for groups of students there is considerable pressure to change their current practice. This is a complex

and difficult task especially for the educational leaders in schools. How do leaders of change in school make sense of the current demands to provide “evidence” of success when bombarded with often multiple and conflicting policies, pedagogies and programmes that claim to make a difference and “add value”? Current research indicates that teachers can make a difference, and therein reveals a web of sticky threads based around politics, power and the personality of the teacher.

As Feuerstein (1980) argues teachers create the most resistance to different ways of working because they are “representative of a system that demands a certain degree of efficiency and an identifiable end product as a result of the process of teaching” (p120) This disassociation of school learning from the real world and the pursuit of subject knowledge is increasingly recognised as failing to meet the full range of needs of young people (Neelands,2009,178). The point is to understand ourselves better and through that understanding, to provide a moral climate in which our children are unlikely to perform violent acts. (Nel Noddings in p.167in Ayers and Miller).

If our goal is democratic and humane societies then we have a responsibility to create democratic and humane schools. With the key competencies mandated in the New Zealand curriculum documents the scene is set for teachers and educators to develop pedagogies of practice that are emancipatory and transformative in order to develop good citizens who chose kindness over cruelty and believe that punishment is not the answer to a punishing life story because “*The difficulty of his childhood were sufficient consequences for him*” (2010 SRD).

6.8 Postscript

Following my study leave I returned to my school in the remaining weeks of the final term. As described it can be a furnace of emotions especially a shortened term where still all the necessary events and curriculum expectations and reports have to be undertaken and written. I had on at least two occasions needed to speak to members of the class I had worked with in the drama, about teasing. As we talked I simply said remember what caused William to act the way he did and how Jesse changed the situation. The boys decided how they would put it right and the relationships between the boys was re-established. What was significant here was the confidence I felt with being able to use common stories or metaphors

with students when engaging in difficult conversations and the scripts of forgiveness they could enact in order to put things right for themselves. The principal has agreed that this programme will be part of a school wide arts programme in 2012. This means all teachers and students in this middle school will take part in using process drama to teach the underlying principles of restorative practice and perhaps come to Kelly's realisation.

Yes cos there will be people who you cross, like they are different from you. And um you just like have to accept them and like try to include them, like be in their shoes. Kelly.

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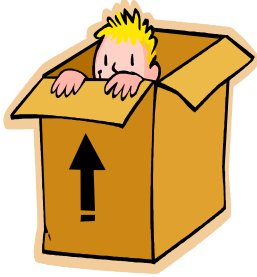
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Appendices

Appendix A: Information to Students



Hi to the students of Room x,

This year you might remember the principal telling you that I was going to have study leave and I would be going to Waikato University. I am completing my Masters in Education and I want to examine if drama can help with students' understanding around restorative practices.

I would like to invite you and your class to take part in eight drama sessions. I am asking your class because I know you like to take part in different activities and I believe you would tell me if what we did, was making you think about those topics and if I could improve what I was doing.

Some of the topics we might explore would be *friendships, how we treat each other, making judgments, getting the full story and empathetic behaviour*. There are eight sessions on Tuesday and Wednesday morning on these dates June 14,15,21,22 ,28th ,29th and July 5th and 6th from 9.00 until 10.30.

You will all take part in the drama as part of your morning school programme. During these sessions you have the right to pass on the activities or the follow up discussions. Choosing not to take part in the drama would not disadvantage you in any way.

There will be a questionnaire to complete at the start plus discussion and writing for some of the sessions. After the completion of the questionnaire eight students will be selected to have their work included in my research. This is because

analysing 30 or more writing samples and questionnaires would be too difficult and take up too much time. You can indicate on the questionnaire if you would like to be considered for the sample group. At the end of the eight sessions I will give you back the original questionnaire for you to compare and complete .

I would ask Mr X to audio tape your discussions during class time and I would only analyse those eight students talking. There are no right answers for any of the work you would be doing just what your thoughts and feelings are about the topics we would be discussing. All your work belongs to you but I would take copies of it for my research. It would remain confidential and kept secure in a filing cabinet at school. You would have a code so no one could identify you, this class or the school. You have the right to not have your work included in my research and you have until July 15th to make this decision.

I need your consent to use the results from the questionnaire and if you are one of the eight students to have your work analysed and used in my research. I would also like to ask your permission to talk about the results of this work with other teachers, educators at schools, universities or be published in journals.

My results will be published as part of my thesis and a copy of this will be available at the school office, also a copy will be held at Waikato University.

If you have any concerns during this time please let your parents or the principal know so they can contact my supervisor Dr. Viv Aitken.

Thank you for reading this. If you are happy to be involved, please sign the consent form.

Mrs Bleaken

Appendix B : Information sheet for Parents and Caregivers.

Dear parents and caregivers,

This year I am taking study leave to complete my Masters in Education thesis. This involves an action research project working with a group of students at X Intermediate School .

This research will be supervised by Dr. Viv Aitken from the University of Waikato and has been approved by the University of Waikato faculty of education research ethics committee.

The focus of my study is Exploring process drama as a pedagogy to teach the underlying principles of restorative practice.

Why the study?

Last year I taught all of the year 8 students drama and based the sessions around the key concepts of restorative practice.

I was interested in what the students were saying and thinking as the sessions progressed. I want to check out if this way of working makes a difference to student thinking and behaviour in terms of understanding the key principles underlying Restorative Practice.

Who will take part?

All the students Mike's class will be invited to participate in this project.

Why

Mike's class is a representative sample of the school, in terms of diverse cultural and ability groups.

When

The students will take part in 8 sessions twice a week over 4 weeks.

Times and Dates

Tuesday 9-10.20 14,21,28,of June, 5th of July

Wednesday 9-10.20 15,22,29 of June, 6th of July

What will be involved ?

The students will take part in eight, 1 ½ hour drama sessions. The sessions start with a picture book and progress to using different drama conventions as students explore some of the underlying themes such as *friendships, how we treat each other, making judgments, getting the full story, empathetic behaviour.*

At the start of the sessions the students will complete a simple questionnaire which will seek to establish how they relate to each other in class. Students can nominate if they want to be considered for the sample group of eight students. Their discussions and written work will be analysed.

Privacy

Classroom discussions will be audio taped for research purposes and the written samples analyzed. The students will have a code or pseudonym so that their identity will be protected and all records will remain confidential and stored securely as per the University's (Waikato) *Ethical Conduct in Human research and Related activities Regulations 2008*. All data will remain locked in a secure cabinet for the duration of the research and up to five years following this. A summary of the findings will be available on request from the school office.

A digital copy of my thesis will be lodged permanently in the Waikato University digital repository research commons.

The school will receive a copy which will be held at the office for you to read.

The results maybe also discussed with other teachers and educators as part of the work being completed in the world wide research community on process drama

and restorative practices. Articles could also be published in journals as a result of this research.

Curriculum coverage

Attending these sessions will not disadvantage the students in terms of their other learning as the students will cover the core areas of the English curriculum, (reading , writing, viewing presenting, speaking and listening) as well as the key competencies. These sessions could be viewed as cross curricula extension activities.

Permission

I am asking your permission to use the information from the first questionnaire and the writing and oral discussions from the sample group students. I am approaching your children for permission to do this. The students will find out at the end of the drama sessions if they have been selected for the sample group and I will arrange to talk to them about this in a one to one interview. During this interview they decide if they still want to be part of the group and have their work used in my research.

The students know that they have two weeks after the final session to make this decision. (July 15th).

For further information please feel free to contact me either by leaving a message at the school office or on my email **[sbleaken@intermediate .school.nz](mailto:sbleaken@intermediate.school.nz)**.

If you have concerns regarding the research please contact my supervisor Dr. Viv Aitken at University of Waikato. **Email viva@waikato.ac.nz**

If you are happy for your child to participate, please sign the attached consent form.

Sue Bleaken

Appendix C: Consent form for parents to sign

Drama sessions involving research.

I agree for (name of student) -----

To take part in eight drama sessions from June 14 to July 6th. If my child is selected as part of the sample group I agree to allowing my child's voice to be recorded and writing samples to be collected .

I understand that all audio tapes, transcripts of tapes, student writing samples are to be used for research purposes only, to be treated in the strictest confidence and be stored securely. All data used as part of the research will maintain student anonymity and the class or school will not be identified.

I understand also, that my child has the right to pass on any activity or discussion during the drama sessions. Also if they do not want their work included in the final data collection they have the right to say so and have up until July 15th to make this decision.

I am aware that some of the published research might be used in other settings for example schools, education institutions and academic conferences and published in academic journals.

I am also aware that a digital copy will be permanently stored at the University of Waikato.

Signed parent/caregiver:-----

Appendix D: Application to complete research at X Intermediate School

Dear Principal,

I am writing to request permission to undertake action research in school during the latter part of term 2. This research is following on from the work I did last year in drama. I have attached the information sheets and consent forms for your approval. A formal application to the University of Waikato's Ethics committee has been made and approved.

The focus of my study is : Hikoitanga tapuwae o te hunga ke. To take a walk in another's shoes. Exploring process drama as a pedagogy to teach the underlying principles of restorative practice.

Why the study?

When I was teaching drama last year to all the year 8 students using themes based around restorative practices I was interested in what the students were saying and thinking as the sessions progressed. I want to check out if this way of working makes a difference to student thinking and behaviour in terms of understanding the key principles underlying restorative practices.

Who will take part?

All the students in Mike's class will be invited to participate in this project.

Why

Mike's class is a representative sample of the school in general in terms of diverse cultural and ability groups. This could also be seen as an additional opportunity for professional development for Myles in process drama and restorative practice.

When

The students will take part in 8 sessions twice a week over 4 weeks. I have checked the long term calendar to ensure there are no scheduled school wide events.

Times and Dates

Tuesday 9-10.20 14,21,28,of June and 5th July

Wednesday 9-10.20 15,22,29 of June and 6th July

What will be involved.

The students will take part in 8, 1 ½ hour drama sessions. The sessions start with a picture book and progress to using different drama conventions in order to explore some of the underlying themes such as *friendships, how we treat each other, making judgments, getting the full story, empathetic behaviour.*

At the start of the sessions the students will complete a simple questionnaire which will seek to establish their understandings around restorative practices. A sample group of eight students will be randomly selected. They will take part in discussions and complete writing samples.

At the end of the drama the students will revisit the initial questionnaire.

Privacy

The discussions will be audio taped for research purposes and the written samples analysed. The students will have a code or pseudonym so that their identity, their class and the school's will be protected and all records will remain confidential and stored securely as per the University's (Waikato) *Ethical Conduct in Human research and Related activities Regulations 2008*. All data will remain locked in a secure cabinet for the duration of the research and up to five years following the completion of the project. A summary of the findings will be available on request from the school office. A digital copy of my thesis will also be stored permanently at the University of Waikato.

Curriculum coverage

Attending these sessions will not disadvantage the students in terms of their other learning as the students will cover the core areas of the English curriculum (reading , writing, viewing presenting, speaking and listening) as well as the key competencies.

Permission

Parents will receive the same information – see Appendix A, B and C and will be required to sign a consent form for the use of their child’s work to form the data set. Students will receive information and be required to sign a consent form. See Appendix A.

All students will be expected to take part as per their morning programme, however they have the right to not have any of their oral or written work included in the research findings. They have until July 15th to make this decision.

During the discussions and the activities the students have the right to pass .

A copy of all the documents approved by the ethics committee will be attached for your information.

I would like to request that this information be tabled at the next Board meeting so that the Board members are aware of this research happening in school.

My supervisor is Dr Viv Aitken at the University of Waikato and she can be contacted at this address **Email viva@waikato.ac.nz** if you have any concerns.

Thank you for your support to date and I look forward to hearing from you in regard to this research being able to go ahead.

Sue Bleaken

Principal consent form

I have read all the information pertaining to the research project outlined by Sue Bleaken and understand and agree to her completing this intervention between June 14 to July 6th.

I have informed my Board of Trustees about this taking place.

I understand that all data will be treated respectfully, confidentially and stored securely for up to five years at this school.

All identifying information will be removed so that student, class, teacher and school have their anonymity protected.

I also understand and agree to the use of the research findings being used to inform other teachers, schools, universities, in conference settings and possible publications in journals.

Signed

Date

Principal

Intermediate School

Hamilton

Date:

Phone:

Appendix E: Teacher information and request for research support

Dear Mike,

As you are aware , I am currently on study leave completing research to fulfil requirements for my M Ed. This project has received approval from the faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee.

The focus of my study is : Hikoitanga tapuwae o te hunga ke. To take a walk in another's shoes. Exploring process drama as a pedagogy to teach the underlying principles of restorative practice.

Why the study?

When I was teaching drama last year to all the year 8 students using themes based around restorative practices I was interested in what the students were saying and thinking as the sessions progressed. I want to check out if this way of working makes a difference to student thinking and behaviour in terms of understanding the key principles underlying restorative practices and relating to others.

I would like to invite your class as representative of the school to participate in my research project and I would also like to invite you to be an observer and to audio tape the discussions. While all students will take part only a randomly selected group of eight students will be selected to form the data set. I will ask you to select these based on gender balance, ethnic diversity and to represent a range in terms of apparent empathetic skills. Part of your role would also to provide feedback to me as a "critical friend". I would ask you to report on what was or wasn't being seen or heard by myself . This is often called the critical friend or the "Black hat" and serves to provide a critical balance by giving a different lens to view what the students are saying and doing. I have attached some readings around this and would co construct with you what this would entail.

When

The students will take part in 8 sessions twice a week over 4 weeks.

Times and Dates

Tuesday 9-10.20 ,14,21,28,of June and July 5th.

Wednesday 9-10.20 15,22,29 of June and July 6th

What will be involved.

The students will take part in 8 1 ½ hour drama sessions. The sessions start with a picture book and progress to using different drama conventions in order to explore some of the underlying themes such as *friendships, how we treat each other, making judgments, getting the full story and empathetic behaviour.*

At the start of the sessions the students will complete a simple questionnaire which will seek to establish their understandings around how they relate to each other in class. They will take part in discussions and complete writing samples.

At the end of the drama the students will revisit their initial questionnaire.

Privacy

The discussions will be audio taped for research purposes and the written samples analysed. The students will have a code or pseudonym so that their identity as well as the school's will be protected and all records will remain confidential and stored securely as per the University's (Waikato) *Ethical Conduct in Human research and Related activities Regulations 2008.*

Your identity will also remain anonymous. All data will remain locked in a secure cabinet for the duration of the research and for five years following the project. A summary of the findings will be available on request from the school office. A digital copy of my thesis will be stored permanently at the University of Waikato and a copy kept at the school office for reading.

Curriculum coverage

Attending these sessions will not disadvantage the students in terms of their other learning as the students will cover the core areas of the English curriculum (reading, writing, viewing presenting, speaking and listening) as well as the key competencies.

Permission

All the students and parents will receive information and consent forms. I would like you to invite the students to take part and collect in the consent forms.

During the drama sessions they have the right to pass on the discussions or in the activities. Opting out of the class drama will not disadvantage them in any way. There is also a possibility of my sharing this research with other teachers, educators and at academic conferences and publishing the outcomes in journals. Your participation would provide an opportunity to see your students working in groups, the principles underlying restorative practice as well as to see process drama in action.

My supervisor is Dr Viv Aitken at the University of Waikato and she can be contacted at this address **Email viva@waikato.ac.nz** if you have any concerns.

Thank you for your support to date and I do hope you take up my invitation to assist by observing critically in this research.

Regards Sue

Consent form teacher observer

I agree to take part in this research as an observer.

I will audio tape all the discussions and help randomly select the students to form the sample group.

I will provide feedback at the end of the intervention by using the lens of *critical friend*.

I am aware that the research findings will be used as part of the requirements for a thesis and that this might also be shared with other teachers and educators at schools, universities or that the results might be published in research journals.

Signed

Date

Mike Acting A.P

Appendix F: Pre and post questionnaires

Empathy is one of many skills to do with relationships and this questionnaire focuses on this.

To be completed at the start and end of the drama sessions to collect quantitative data.

Blue pen start, green pen Finish.

Girl/ Boy

Ethnic group

Number

Can you please read the following questions and answer them as best as you can.

Respect .On a scale of 1-10 1 = being very disrespectful ,10 = being very respectful .How would you rate the following: Put a x on the scale.

The way we treat each other in class.

1-----5-----
-----10

The way we treat our teacher.

1-----5-----
-----10

Empathy is described as the ability to understand what it is like to be another.
Caring about others.

Using the scale 1-10. 1 being very uncaring or non - empathetic and 10 being very caring or empathetic how would you rate yourself?

1-----5-----
-----10

Do you think your friends or family would agree with your rating? Circle one.

Yes

Maybe

Don't know

No

Why do you say that?

Can you list people who you know at school, in your family or outside your life who you think of as being highly empathetic?

1/

2/

3/

4/

5/

Why do you say that ?

In every class students say and do mean things to each other?

Saying mean things = put downs , swearing at you, name calling and teasing.

How often in a day would these things happen in your class? Circle the one that most applies.

Put downs none-----1-2----- 3-5----- 5 or more,
write how many-----

Swearing none-----1-2----- 3-5----- 5 or more,
write how many-----

Name calling none-----1-2----- 3-5----- 5 or more,
write how many-----

Teasing none-----1-2----- 3-5----- 5 or more,
write how many-----

The Wolf Drama

Comments before the sessions and after the sessions on the Wolf . The B part will be completed before the drama intervention takes place. The wolf after questions will be completed week 5, after the wolf session.

Can you please fill out the questions on B = before. A= After.

If someone breaks and enters a house what do you think should happen to them ?

B

Why do you say that?

A

Why do you say that?

What do you know about restorative practice?

B

Why do you say that?

A

Why do you say that?

Do you think people can change after they have done something wrong ?

A

Why do you say that?

B

Why do you say that?

Were there any drama conventions you thought helped you understand the Wolf's story?

Are there any other comments you would like to make about The Wolf drama?

Crow Boy Drama

Comments before and after the sessions on Crow Boy.

B 1/ Why do you think kids run away from school?

B2/ Why do you think kids call each other names?

B3/ Have you ever teased another student about their name?

B4/ Why do kids not include students in their groups?

B5/ What do you understand by the word disability?

Comments after the story/Drama

A1/ How must life have been for Crow Boy?

A2/ Can you describe what you might do if Crow Boy was in your class?

A3/ Can you describe the kind of programme you might design if you were his teacher?

A4/How might this information help you later in life?

A/5 Were there any drama conventions that helped you understand Crow Boy's story?

A6/Any other comments you would like to make ?

Appendix G: Writing samples

Writing Samples to be undertaken by the students as part of the drama intervention.

Session one.

Writing a journal entry in role as Jessie. (Individual sample)

Session three

Writing a job description for a teacher in role as a principal. (Pairs/class)

Session Four

Writing a learning programme for Crow Boy in role as an RTLB (Pairs and individual)

Session Five / Six

Writing an email in role as the wolf *What is life like for him after the restorative conference.* (Individual)

Appendix H: Teacher questions

Bowell and Heap Planning process drama P119 2001.

There are no clearly defined “right” answers. Good theatre poses questions rather than provides answers. It holds an aspect of the human condition up for examination and, through the lens of the dramatic context and the interaction of the characters found there, allows our thoughts and feelings to be disturbed as we struggle to find the answers for ourselves. The second is that process drama is a collaborative form in which the teacher and pupils, together construct the meaning.

Teacher questions to be used in taped discussions during drama sessions.

These will be open questions for example

What do you think was happening here?

Why do you say that ?

What might (the character) be thinking and or feeling and why ?

Is this useful information to have?

What was the most challenging thing for (the character) why do you say this ?

What were you thinking when you did (different drama techniques)

Who might be interested in reading those emails and why?

What do you think the victims/supporters might be thinking or feeling after reading those emails?

What questions might you want to ask (the character) and why do you say that?

Appendix I: Letter to sample group following drama intervention



Dear _____,

Congratulations you have been selected for the sample group

Thank you for taking part in the drama sessions over the past five weeks. I have really enjoyed being part of your class and I hope you have had some fun as well. I have appreciated the time you have put into these sessions with your participation, writing and discussion comments. The work you completed for me and the discussions were very useful to my understanding around how students think about key issues to do with restorative practice and drama in general.

If you can remember your work and identity will be anonymous and you can decline being part of this group and if you decline you will need to complete the slip below and hand into Mr X before Friday 15th July.

I could not have completed my work at university if you did not agree to work with me so I have really appreciated all your contributions.

Thank you again and have a great holiday. See you next term.

Mrs Bleaken

Appendix J: Sample group student declining use of data.

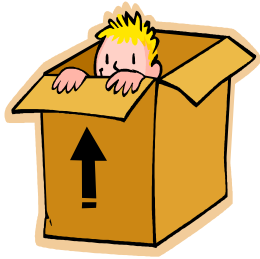
I, (name) -----

do not want my work to be included in Mrs Bleaken's research. Can you please make sure it is taken out.

Signed:

Date:

Appendix K: Thank you letter to class



Dear _____,

Thank you for taking part in the drama sessions over the past five weeks. I have really enjoyed being part of your class and I hope you have had some fun as well? I have appreciated the time you have put into these sessions with your participation, writing and discussion comments. The work you completed for me and the discussions were very useful to my understanding around how students think about key issues to do with restorative practice and drama in general.

If you decide that you don't want to have your questionnaire included in my research can you please let Mr X know by July 15th.

I could not have completed my university work without your help so thank you again.

If I don't see you before the end of term have a safe and happy holiday.



Appendix L: Description of wolf co constructed by class and teacher

Following is my recording of the co-construction of the wolf's identity and crimes.

The students described him as a 15year old wolf had serious anger issues and had started out by bullying and wagging school. He was into tagging/graffiti and had been had up for breaking and entering and stealing. There was some discussion about self- harming and we discussed if we knew for sure if it was cutting himself or drinking and drug taking. He was underage drinking, possibly drugs, there was mention of assault and bullying, out after dark, joyriding, he had been in possession of a firearm underage. There was some discussion of sexual assault and even rape was mentioned However, I said that if that was the case it would be dealt with in a different way and not a restorative conference. The conference was to see if we could help him and re -story him. But I honoured the comment and gave it serious consideration though wondering if it was meant to shock and get attention from others. All were agreed that he wasn't doing that yet but there might be some kind of hint at this....maybe. We also spoke about working metaphorically and even though he was the wolf he was actually a boy so the murder aspect and attack on Little Red was not going to part of this story as said before we were only going to talk about story so far and perhaps this sort of behaviour might lead to those very serious kinds of things in the future (TRJ).



Appendix M: Crow Boy Questions

Crow Boy: Comments before The Crow Boy Drama

B 1/Why do you think kids run away from school?

B2/Why do you think kids call each other names?

B3/Have you ever teased another student about their name?

B4/Why do kids not include students in their groups?

B5/ What do you understand by the word disability?

Comments after Crow Boy drama

A1/ How must life have been for Crow Boy?

A2/ Can you describe what you might do if Crow Boy was in your class?

A3/ Can you describe the kind of programme you might design if you were his teacher?

A4/How might this information help you later in life?

A/5 Were there any drama conventions that helped you understand Crow Boy's story?

A6/Any other comments you would like to make ?

Appendix N: Wolf Questions



The Wolf

Comments before the sessions and after the sessions on the Wolf . The B part will be completed before the drama intervention takes place. The wolf after questions will be completed week 3, after the wolf session.

Can you please fill out the questions on B= before. A= After.

If someone breaks and enters a house what do you think should happen to them ?

B

Why do you say that?

A

Why do you say that?

What do you know about restorative practice?

B

Why do you say that?

A

Why do you say that?

Do you think people can change after they have done something wrong ?

A

Why do you say that?

B

Why do you say that?

Were there any drama conventions you thought helped you understand the Wolf's story?

Are there any other comments you would like to make about The Wolf drama?