Learning to be in public spaces: Using a new model for working with artists in school[a]

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Introduction

The paper explores how the arts can work for social justice in schools. In particular it explores the way that using an apprenticeship model of learning in arts-based work in school has helped disadvantaged and/or disaffected children to engage in activities (both arts-based and others), and to be able to become increasingly autonomous as they did so. It will be argued:-
(1) This can constitute an example of 'children learning to be in public spaces'
(2) Such learning is a step towards doing social justice in school.

The paper is in three parts. In the first part, an account is given of collaborative action research with the schools in the Nottingham Creative Partnership, focusing on the development of an apprenticeship model of learning. A preliminary version of the model was produced prior to the start of the partnership, and it has since been modified as a result of the research. It proposes four phases in a learning cycle, and identifies the learning of each participant (teacher, pupil, and artist) in each phase. The first part of the paper describes the development of the model.

The second part of the paper focuses on teacher-led action inquiry in three of the schools:
> (1) 'The school as fertile ground': How the ethos of a school enables everyone in it to benefit from the presence of artists in class. (John Naylor)
> (2) 'Children on the edge': How the arts reach those children who otherwise exclude themselves from class activities, through shyness, behavioural difficulties, disabilities or social difficulties. (Philippa Weekes)
> (3) 'Children's voices and choices': How even very young children, even when they have special needs, can learn to express their wishes, and then have them realised through planning and executing arts projects (Judy Berry and Anne Holt)

The third part of the paper discusses these three action inquiry projects in relation to social justice, using 'SPACE', a framework for social justice in schools (Self-esteem, Partnership, Actions, Collaboration and Empowerment/voice: Griffiths, 2003). This framework draws on Arendt's concept of public space as web of relation where joint actions are taken (Arendt, 1958). However the framework goes beyond and against Arendt (Arendt, 1961) in (1) applying the concept to schools and education; (2) exploring the role of the arts in self-expression; (3) seeing public space as a ground for social justice.

Context

The research focused on schools in the Creative Partnership Nottingham, one of 16 partnerships funded nationally through the Creative Partnerships initiative. Creative

Partnerships has an overall aim to create new ways of including young people of school age in the cultural life of their communities. The programme offers schoolchildren a sustained programme of artistic and creative opportunities.

In Nottingham, 23 schools participated in the first stage of the project (2001-2003): 3 secondary schools, 2 special schools and 18 primary schools. The schools were organised into five clusters and two Creative Development Workers were assigned to each cluster. Their task was to facilitate the process, acting as a bridge between the educational and cultural sectors, and between the schools and the Nottingham office.

Research with the Nottingham schools has focused on the development of an 'Apprenticeship Model' of learning. A preliminary version of the model was developed prior to the start of the pilot. It proposed four phases in a learning cycle, and identifies the learning of each participant (teacher, pupil, and artist) in each phase.

Apprenticeship models of various kinds have been used in European education for centuries. Most recently, a UNESCO (2004) publication on Arts Education summarises an historical justification for the continuing significance of 'apprenticeship of the arts and creativity in the school environment.'   Tom Davies (2002) provides a useful historical overview of the changing meanings attached to the term within British art education practices. In America, Rogoff (1995) traces the use of apprenticeship as a metaphor for individual, guided participation in art technology. The model developed in Nottingham draws on these traditions, but is also significantly different. For instance, Craft's (2001) careful overview of research and literature mentions cyclical approaches, and mentoring, but does not combine these, as the Nottingham model does.

Part 1: The development of the apprenticeship model.

The apprenticeship model in its preliminary form was presented to schools in Creative Partnerships Nottingham at the beginning of the programme, and before the research started. The model was presented explicitly to schools, but the most powerful means of introducing it was through the Creative Development Workers. Creative Development Workers were very important in the dissemination of the apprenticeship model, and were crucial in ensuring that schools allocated time to planning and in making the link between teachers' professional development and sustainability.

The model draws particularly on the concept of 'guided participation' proposed by Barbara Rogoff, which in turn draws on Vygotsky's concept of the 'zone of proximal development' (Rogoff, 1990). The concept has also been used extensively in relation to literacy, in terms of 'scaffolding', as experts have tried to analyse the most effective ways of supporting children to become independent in writing and oracy. Drawing on recent, interactive models of apprenticeship theory, Roy Corden proposes a model of scaffolded learning where both the teacher and the learner are active participants in the construction of knowledge (Corden, 2000). He suggests four stages of learning: observer, novelist, apprentice and expert.

The value of Corden's scaffolded model is that it uses the principles of guided participation and interactive apprenticeship to offer teachers a clear, practical framework for teaching and learning in literacy. The model that was proposed for Creative

Partnerships Nottingham is similar. It can be seen in Figure 1. The research began with the original model that was introduced into schools, and then developed it, in research partnership with those schools.

The research processes and interim findings
At the start and the end of the two year project, phenomenological approaches were used to investigate the perspectives and understandings of the participants in the 23 project schools. Interviews were carried out with a range of participants in all the schools: headteachers and teachers, pupils, parents, creative development workers and artists/creatives. The model appeared to characterise positive learning experiences with creative practitioners, and it also provided a tool for analysing less successful projects. It appeared to have encouraged some creative practitioners to change their standard approach to educational projects. However, most participants were more aware of the model as 'everyone learns from everyone' than as a model of progression in learning.

The findings from the interviews were presented at a conference for the participants (July 2003), and their views were elicited about what conclusions should be drawn. The initial model was modified accordingly, to emphasise the importance of all four phases[1] as part of a cycle of learning, which is frequently repeated by all participants. It now consisted in the form of a matrix and also a cycle

In the middle part of the research project, collaborative action research was carried out with seven of the project schools, including nursery, primary and secondary schools. Each of the schools identified their own research questions, each of which was related to the overarching question of the impact on learning of the apprenticeship model on all participants in the programme. One of the seven schools, the secondary school, was unable to complete its study of a cross-departmental collaboration in the context of arts based project. The successful schools and their final research studies are as follows:-

Sonja Adams at Glenbrook Primary and Nursery: Professional Development Opportunities The research study investigated professional development opportunities in relation to Creative Partnerships initiatives and in the context of the existing school ethos. A strategy was developed focusing on the long-term and on processes of embedding change.
Holly Wilson at The Elms: Planning for Creativity. The research study investigated ways in which the school could embed creativity in its curriculum. A school policy was written on planning for creativity at both school and classroom levels.
Jo Reid at Radford Primary: Planning for Sustainability The research study began by looking at the process of planning for learning from creative practitioners, and then developed into a focus on the process of planning for sustainability. A guide to the process was developed in the form of a flow diagram.
Philippa Weekes at Seagrave Primary: Children on the Edge The research study focused on those children who found it difficult to join in normal classroom activities, whatever the reason, but who were observed to be drawn in by creative activities. The resulting discussions have influenced approaches to teaching and learning, enhancing the approach to inclusion in this already highly inclusive school.
John Naylor at Shepherd: Fertile Ground The research study used one of the Creative Partnerships projects in the school as a vehicle for investigating why the

apprenticeship model received such ready acceptance in the school. The clearer understanding that has been gained by the process has helped make the 'fertile ground' even richer.

Judy Berry and Anne Holt at Rufford Infants and Nursery: Children's Voices and Choices The research study investigated the values at the heart of the school and of learning and their relationship to the involvement of the creative practitioners in the school. A leaflet was written for use by the school internally, and in its relationship with outsiders, including both inspectors and parents.

Each study produced outcomes which were relevant to the particular circumstances of the different schools. However the processes and outcomes of each study were echoed in the other schools. Moreover, even when there seemed to be little area of overlap, each school recognised the relevance of the other schools' investigations for their own situation. This is particularly striking in view of the fact that the schools had been chosen to be representative of all areas of the city, of different age phases, and included a special school. It was unfortunate that the one school which was unable to complete the research was the one secondary school, so it is impossible to say how far these areas of commonality would apply at the secondary level.

The understandings and explicit knowledge generated in this part of the research programme develop and take further the conclusions of the initial interviews. A common theme for all the schools has been the opportunities for professional development when working with the Apprenticeship Model. The basic understanding of the matrix as 'everyone learns from everyone' has meant that creative practitioners and teachers have developed professional relationships of benefit to both. While all these studies use the matrix, they show the significance of also using the cycle diagram. The studies indicate how much richer the understanding gained from the studies becomes when it includes ideas from the cycle such as issues related to voice, choice, and progression in learning through all the stages in the diagram. A perhaps unexpected theme for many of the schools has been the impact on disaffected pupils and other pupils who find it difficult to join in with school activities. Three of the studies demonstrate how such children are drawn in and then able to learn more, sometimes excelling and often seeing the point of going to school more clearly.

In the last part of the research, interviews were again carried out with a range of participants in all the schools, focusing particularly on the use of the apprenticeship model in fostering sustainability and sustainable links with the creative and cultural sector. The interviews were analysed and the analysis was compared with the findings from the action research projects, to produce the overall findings.

Overall findings and discussion
The research as a whole was able to explore and test the appropriateness of an apprenticeship model in the context of the Creative Partnerships programme in Nottingham. During the research, the model was developed and it is now clear that it is best described as a simple matrix in three columns, together with a cycle diagram, which shows how a learner develops towards independence. The three column matrix is a planning tool, and can be used most effectively in conjunction with the cycle, as each point of the cycle is needed to inform the matrix. It was found to be too complex to combine the matrix and the cycle into one diagram. (See diagrams 2 and 4.)

Although the matrix and the cycle were found to be appropriate, they were not always recognised in schools by teachers. The matrix was most commonly recognised, because it was part of the planning system adopted by Nottingham Creative Partnership. (See figure 3.) It contributed to the idea of the apprenticeship model as 'Everyone learning from each other'. The matrix and the cycle were easily naturalised by teachers, some of whom rejected the naming of the model. Where this was the case, the apprenticeship model was less likely to have any conscious impact on teaching practice in the short or long term.

The matrix of the apprenticeship model contributed to the time spent on and the quality of planning. To complete the planning proforma (figure 3), teachers had to plan their role in projects in partnership with creative practitioners. Many found this an enjoyable and valuable process in itself. Many schools commented on the high level of professional development achieved as a result throughout the programme. It was acknowledged that this would have an impact on the sustainability of the programme. Four of the action research studies show how sustainability has been helped by the model: teachers have learnt more techniques undeveloped greater confidence, creative practitioners have produced materials that teachers can use, relationships between creative practitioners and schools have been developed and all these factors can contribute to building a different ethos and culture in the school, in support of creative learning.

> A lot of the impact of the Apprenticeship Model is at the planning stage. It has been very interesting planning the curriculum with artists. Every teacher that has had the opportunity to do this joint planning has been really excited. Usually, planning is done on your own, and this individual planning can feel forced and boring. And then plans don't necessarily work. Doing it with artists and other people, it's fun. Partnership teaching is a joy. You both kind of know where you want to go. (Creative Partnerships co-ordinator, junior school)

> The model has been central to developing teachers' confidence and ability. It's made them feel part of it, that they had to learn as well. (Creative Development Worker)

The research suggested that the matrix and cycle, working in combination could be used successfully in several ways. They could be:

- a training tool for teachers and creative practitioners
- a planning tool
- an aid to professional development for teachers
- a powerful diagnostic tool, which can be used when things go wrong in partnership projects
- a way of promoting social inclusion in teaching and learning

Part 2: Three action inquiry studies

Fertile Ground -- John Naylor
John Naylor teaches in Shepherd, a special school for pupils of all ages with severe and profound learning difficulties. The school has a long tradition of excellent work in the

arts. He was interested in how the Creative Partnership scheme worked so well in the school, taking the excellent work even further, rather than simply doing 'more of the same'. He focused particularly on the use of video, because it is so relevant to many of the pupils who have problems with words. A video practitioner taught techniques of filming and editing to pupils and staff. To begin with, evidence was provided by John's reflective diary. As the theme of 'Fertile Ground' emerged, he decided that the mode of reflecting and reporting should match the content. Together with a video artist and the pupils, a video showing was made showing the impact of the partnership work on the school. The work was taken further by examining on-going work with the 'Theatre of Possibilities', a creative installation involving pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties. Inquiry centred on how the process worked, as Creative Partnerships artists extended it, and how this process was dependent on the ethos of the school, and also productive of it. Again this has been evidenced in a reflective journal and on video.

The inquiry suggested how the ethos of the school enables everyone in it to benefit from the presence of artists in class – why it is 'fertile ground'. An ethos of mutual respect in the public spaces of the school means that different people work together, rather than working as individuals. This way of working respects the different roles of the participants. Students, parents, teachers, dinner nannies, visiting artists and support staff: all have different roles. On the other hand none of these individuals is confined to a narrow interpretation of their role. On the contrary, the ethos, like the Nottingham Apprenticeship Model expects everyone to learn from each other, as they work together. Evidence collected on video gives some powerful examples of this.

Children on the Edge -- Philippa Weekes
Philippa Weekes is the deputy head of Seagrave, a large primary and nursery school, in an impoverished largely white estate in Nottingham. The school aims to be, and is, highly inclusive. Philippa's project was a collaborative one. It began in April 2003. She encouraged interested members of staff to join her in keeping reflective diaries of the impact of dancers, landscape artists, and other creative practitioners on teaching and learning in the school. In the end, five teachers kept diaries. Fortunately, the teachers who had volunteered included representatives from the range of ages in the school, from the Foundation Stage to Year 6. The theme of 'children on the edge' emerged during the Autumn term. The staff realised that the arts programme appeared to involve those children in the school who otherwise exclude themselves from class activities, through shyness, behavioural difficulties, disabilities or social difficulties. The team of researchers agreed they should each focus closely on one or two 'children on the edge' in their classes. As the research progressed, interviews were carried out with children, teachers, parents and artists.

Even before a close analysis of the diaries was carried out, some 'little stories'[2] emerged, demonstrating that children have not only been able to begin to join in during creative sessions but also have been beginning to join in during other lessons too. For instance, here is Philippa in conversation with a dancer who had done a lot of work in the school:

> Philippa   And K, you may remember or not, she wouldn't say 'Boo' to a goose and then because you had done that dance she came out of herself and started to talk to people. … Because my sort of thinking research-wise is all those children that are on the edge because of their behaviour, on the edge because of exclusion, or on the edge because they are so quiet they don't say anything, or on

the edge because they don't join in. Like you have all those Year 5s: they wouldn't join in at all at the beginning of the term. Five of them refused to do it.

Dancer: There is one little boy and he keeps asking me - I say 'little boy': he is in year 5. He wants to make a keep fit video because he thinks he is unfit.

Parents who worked in the school provided other examples, during an interview, when they were asked what the children had learnt. One mother said:

But there's a lot of kids that don't go further. My son is very timid . He's not outgoing at all … In year 3 they did Romans. Romulus and Remus the play.   I went in to see it. He loved it He was on stage. They all had the costumes. Even the ones that aren't naturally outgoing. Now he's answering questions, putting his hand up. So I feel like confidence is building.. It's like the background to it all.

The others joined in:

It's given them confidence.

He knows he's as good as anybody else.

And he's still not that outgoing.

The mother continued, agreeing with the last speaker:

He's not that kind. He's had a boost in confidence and he now knows that, you know, he's not embarrassed to put his hand up and ask questions.

Later on they returned to this theme, and one of them spontaneously used the term 'on the edge':

I wouldn't say the school are lacking but it just gives that extra bit of something for the children, like I said that aren't maybe so fantastic at the other subjects. It's something that they can excel in without -

Without feeling left out. I think everybody is included. They all get in there and do it. No body's made fun of or -

I think it just boosts them so much.

I've learnt that the children do realise they can do -

Schools not just about - It's a bit of fun as well. You know -

(At this point the tape includes sounds of agreement, and a disparaging mention of SATs.)

Even those that are on the edge have joined in haven't they?

Yes, a lot of them are a lot better -

Their behaviour's certainly better -

Children's Voices and Choices -- Judy Berry and Anne Holt
 Judy Berry is the head of Rufford, a nursery and infant school (ages 3-7), in a largely white, impoverished estate in Nottingham. We began working together in October,

2003. The action inquiry consisted of a series of long, taped conversations between the head, various teachers and me. The first of these, with Judy and Anne, was intended just as a preliminary interview in which we collaboratively established the directions of the action inquiry. In the event, the conversation was so interesting that it set the pattern for the inquiry. Conversations were held each half term, and lasted over an hour. Each one was taped and transcribed. We began by focusing on the overall questions of the research as a whole (the impact of the Nottingham Apprenticeship model) and these were progressively refined, as we worked discursively and reflectively to produce 'little stories' about children's work with sculptors and dancers.[3] The theme of voices and choices emerged. After this the inquiry focused further. More conversations were held. Evidence was also provided by photographs taken by children, and by documentation ranging from a poem by a cook in school, to formal evaluations by outsiders. By Easter, it became evident how the 'little stories' and reflections were able to encapsulate the school's pedagogical principles – and how those principles had become clearer through the process of the inquiry. A clearer understanding was developed of the reasons behind the school's approach to teaching and learning, and of the connections between Apprenticeship Model and the normal activities in the school. For the matrix it was encapsulated as 'Everyone learns from everyone else', and for the cycle, ' Learning confidence, learning new things, and learning to be more and more independent '. A leaflet was written for use by the school.

The inquiry underlined the centrality of 'voices and choices' in how the school works. The evidence shows how even very young children, even when they have special needs, can learn to express their collective wishes, and then have them realised through planning and executing arts projects. For instance, one of the little stories that emerged was about another teacher, Helen. The story encapsulated the meaning of 'voices and choices' for Judy and Anne:

> Helen is one of the teachers in Class 3. She had got it into her head that because next term we are doing structures anyway – This is part of the half term plan. So she was thinking bridges or arches, I think. She wanted to do something similar to that and then the children cut across it and said they didn't want an arch, they wanted a definite bridge and they knew where they wanted it. So that is what is going to happen and it is going to have lights! Because they feel that they have missed out on lights at the moment because there are two classrooms at the moment with wonderful sculptures both of which are *lit*!   (Laughter). … So this half term we are doing 'light' and next half term we are doing 'structures,' but the children will not forget, you see, that they haven't had the light bit and that's what they are doing this week, aren't they? So it won't be in the hall. It will be in their own classroom and *it will be lit*!

When another of the teachers (who had not been centrally involved in the action inquiry conversations) was interviewed about her use of the apprenticeship cycle which spirals from dependence to independence in the arts, she said:

> It is how we help children develop. To me, that is part of every day in school. We want independent learners who are not afraid to express themselves in any form.

At the end of the research, a leaflet was produced which articulates the apprenticeship model in simple words and demonstrates its use in the school by using the words of

children and teachers. It also demonstrates how the apprenticeship model fits well with the ethos and practice of the school. (See figure 5.)

Part 3 Learning to be in public spaces: a matter of social justice

Public Spaces and Social Justice

The argument in this part of the paper is that if social justice is to flourish there is a need for particular kinds of spaces in schools (and other educational institutions). These spaces I term 'political-public spaces' in order to delineate a particular kind of space formed in relationship with others. Therefore there is a need to create the conditions for those spaces. And, the paper argues, there is a need to create conditions such that children can participate in forming those relationships, whether or not they are comfortable with the usual settings for 'rational argument' or 'deliberative democracy' where voice and empowerment are often thought to prosper. I suggest that Arts Education, in some forms, is one good way of creating these conditions.

This argument focuses on one small, though important, part of education. It draws on the action inquiry described in the second part of the paper. It was undertaken by teachers of primary age children, including very young children and including children with special educational needs within the primary stage. It also draws on action inquiry by a teacher of young people with severe and profound learning difficulties at secondary age. However, the argument is a theoretical one. The methodology I use puts very abstract theory in conversation with 'little stories' – specific, significant narratives of practice.[4] I call this methodology 'practical philosophy'. In 'practical philosophy' there is a continuing attention to practicalities and specificities while the theorising continues, and a continuing attention to careful, rigorous, theory and reflection while presenting practicalities and specificities. I began with the theory of social justice that I had formulated in print, and I then had to rethink it in relation to the little stories of the action inquiries.

The action inquiries were not set up to focus on social justice. However, issues of social justice are implicit in the national Creative Partnerships programme in that it is explicitly focused on disadvantaged young people. All the schools in the Nottingham Creative Partnership are, to use the current phrase, 'facing challenging circumstances'. So it is not surprising that the three action inquiry projects reported in this presentation have implications for social justice. Taken together they illuminate the way that arts-based work in school has helped disadvantaged and/or disaffected children to engage in activities (both arts-based and others), and to be able to become increasingly autonomous as they did so.

The argument depends on the concept I term 'political-public spaces'(Griffiths, 2003). I developed the idea in my book, *Fairly Different*, where I also argued that action for social justice requires learning *what to do*. Learning will be well directed in terms of social justice if it is given 'SPACE':
> S: Self-respect, for all.
>> Build and rebuild a robust sense of self-worth. Cultivate 'attitude'.
> P: Political public spaces and public actions.

> > Undertake joint actions in the political. Work with others, in a 'transversal politics'. Decide and plan what to do together.
>
> A: Actions
>
> > Take action, both individually and jointly. Notice its effects and learn from both success and failure.
>
> C: Consultation, co-operation, collaboration.
>
> > Work with others, even when not in total agreement. Attend to their points of view. Form alliances and coalitions. Make compromises.
>
> E: Empowerment and voice.
>
> > Speak AND listen. Express yourself and listen carefully to how others express themselves. Take what you hear seriously.

The 'P' of SPACE is the subject of this presentation. Therefore, I explain 'political-public spaces' in a little more detail. This is how I introduce the idea in the book:

> *First*, the term refers both to space understood as a physical location, measurable in square metres, and also to something more virtual, even metaphorical. Cyber space is the most obvious example of the latter, but political-public space is just as likely to be bound together by a mix of telephoning, letters, occasional face-to-face meetings as by email or chat-rooms. *Second*, it is a space in which people are in social interaction with each other, usually by talking. Thus, people come together to argue, agree, discuss and decide what to do – so neither a cinema audience, nor a mass rally, nor an email petition would count as a political-public space (though each might become one). *Third*, as actions are decided, the space becomes better defined *as* a space by the web of relations which is a result of a joint action, and which then helps create the next one. (Arendt 1958).

The concept as I have formulated it here includes big public spaces like meeting halls and town squares, but it also includes much less obvious spaces: pavements, kitchen tables and barber's shops, for example. These less obvious places are the ones used by oppressed minorities when taking actions in the political. These are the places overlooked by the more powerful when policing the actions of the less powerful. This framework draws on Arendt's concept of public space as a common ground where joint actions are planned (Arendt, 1958). To do so it uses her concept of 'a web of relations' (Arendt, 1958). However it goes beyond and against her in applying the concept to schools and education, something she explicitly rejected (Arendt, 1961). Nor would she have liked neither the use of the term 'social justice', nor the argument of this paper that entering public space contributes to social justice.[5] Another influence on the framework has been the work of Maxine Greene (who is herself much influenced by Arendt), and her arguments about the importance of the arts for social justice in education (Greene 1995)[6].

But how do people learn to enter and participate in public-political spaces? Elsewhere in *Fairly Different*, Jon Nixon responded to my arguments about political-public spaces with some of his own, by drawing on Arthur Wesker's play, *Roots.* He discussed the character, Beatie Bryant, who finds her own voice. He quoted from the play:

> Beatie speaks:
>
> > 'D'you hear that? D'you hear it? Did you listen to me? I'm talking …
> > I'm not quoting no more …Listen to me someone.'

> [As though a vision were revealed to her.]… 'It does work, it's
> happening to me, I can feel it's happened, I'm beginning, on my own
> two feet – I'm beginning ….'

Jon went on, challenging my formulation with one of his own:
> What happens in these final moments of the play is that Beatie, to employ your
> terminology, makes of the domestic place she finds herself in a 'political-public
> space'. … She discovers, quite simply, that talking works; and the way it works is
> by creating 'civic spaces' (my old, republican terminology) within which voice
> and agency matter. … she has, irreversibly and irrevocably, turned to the world.

When I first read his challenge, I had thought that his point was covered by my emphasis
on 'empowerment and voice' (the E of SPACE). However, the research I have been
engaged in this year with John, Philippa, Judy and Anne has enabled me to understand
better the force of what Jon Nixon was saying. (In a way this presentation is a response to
his response.) I am now able to see the significance of learning the very beginnings of
the exercise of voice and agency within a political-public space. Indeed I now see that it
may be necessary to learn to *enter* a space before a voice can be found or a move made
towards empowerment. I also see that voice and agency may need to be learnt in one
(safer, more attractive, more compelling) space, before they can be exercised in other
spaces. It may be, to take this further, that without the experience of exercising voice and
agency, it may be difficult for a child – or an adult – to believe they have the capacity to
do it at all.

Entering Public Spaces: Interwoven Themes
Each school researcher defined a theme for their action inquiry. The themes defined
by John Naylor in Shepherd, Philippa Weekes in Seagrave Primary and Judy Berry in
Rufford Infants were arrived at independently of each other. However, once
articulated, each theme was immediately seen to be resonant for all three schools.
Indeed they were also seen to be resonant for other schools in the Nottingham
Creative Partnership, too.

Each of these themes, in their different ways demonstrates ways in which children and
young people are helped to learn to participate in political-public spaces. It appears that
key to such learning are: an ethos of collaboration, an eye to any children on the edge,
and a high priority on children exercising voices and choices. The themes have been
described discretely, because that is how the research was structured. However,
separating them out like this might have made them appear more different than they are.
But all three schools have all three themes. It has been useful to have the three different
themes identified, partly just because you can see how they interweave.

'Fertile ground' does not apply just in Shepherd. Part of the outcome of the inquiry for
Rufford was a better understanding of the pedagogical principles and practices which the
school operates, and which are key in developing 'voices and choices' throughout the
school. The same is true of Seagrave, where a collaborative way of working was
identified in a number of conversations, and, impressively, given the difficulties of
establishing collaborative research, in the actual method used for the inquiry.

A focus on 'children on the edge' does not appear just in Seagrave. In Rufford, for
instance, the phrase came up independently:

We have thirteen children in there with exceptional special needs. There were only two that people identified, and that was because one was in a wheelchair and one was on a frame. But even the lad on the frame had us crying from day one, didn't he? Because his frame was removed. He walked. … Yes it was absolutely stomach churning stuff. Because we wondered what was going to happen. Because he came in on his frame and when he started to go down on the floor – My word! What's happening? He insisted on doing all the dance routines but on the floor. Then he was just lifted up, and walked. … Other children as well who were just on the edge.

And, of course, in Shepherd, the special school, 'children on the edge' could describe any of their children, excluded or self-excluded as they are from main-stream schooling.

An emphasis on the necessity for children to exercise 'voices and choices' is evident in this account from the parents in Seagrave:

Parent: Even the younger kids have a little taste of this Creative Partnerships don't they. It's not just the older ones. I mean my daughter, I've got a younger one …in year 4 and they've done a little bit in PE and they're learning new things not just PE. It gives them -- They go on the yard and do dance routines and you know stuff like that.

MG   Without the teachers?

P   Yes. … They're taking it on board what they've learnt. They are taking it away and they're getting together. They're like developing their own routines. … Which is brilliant. They actually decided upon themselves that they're going to do cheer leading. We did all the costumes. ... Everybody mucks in.

M   So where do they do the cheer leading?

P   They wanted to do it . They wanted to show. ... and they approached the school. … And the school said yes. They did it in assembly.

In Shepherd, the theme of 'voices and choices' is implicit in the ethos of the school. The importance of young people learning to be advocates for themselves as people with special needs is in the statement of what the school is trying to do, not only in print, but also in the everyday explanations given by the headteacher.

Learning to be in a public space
The promotion of social justice in schools is widely agreed to the central aim of education. Ways of doing it are more difficult to find. The action inquiries discussed here have indicated some processes that will help, at the same time as enabling children to learn more. In my book, fairly different, I was suggesting ways of getting action for social justice in education. However I overlooked some of the very first steps towards making a space: a SPACE for social justice. Some young people need to learn to be in the first place, before they can help create it.

Like so much in education, what has been suggested 'is not rocket science'. On the other hand, it is not so easy. Many schools claim to want an ethos of mutual collaboration and respect for both adults and children. There are few schools were genuinely open to the kind of working together that John Naylor describes. One of the adults participating in the 'theatre of possibilities' is a dinner nanny at the school. That role brings particular strengths and opportunities. She began by being very sceptical, and was able to voice that. Having become convinced she is able to use what comes out of the theatre of possibilities in ways that are not open to teachers, on

the playground and in other informal settings. This situation is in sharp contrast to those many schools that put up symbolic barriers between teachers and helpers, school and its local community, which supplies the dinner nannies. Similarly, contrast these three schools with their inclusive attitudes towards children on the edge with the many schools seeking to exclude disabled or difficult children. It is in such schools that children will be given the opportunity to be drawn into learning through the arts and other creative activities. And again, contrast the encouragement of the expression of choices exercised by these children and young people, especially in relation to artistic expression, with the standardisation and regimentation of so much of the curriculum.

And finally
The research indicates how education for social justice – for democracy – can reach *all* the children, not just the confident and articulate ones. Schools councils, and citizenship education, important as these might be are not enough. Indeed, if only some children can join in such structures, they may contribute to the social exclusion of the less confident and articulate. So as well as these structures, underpinning them is the need to give children, all children, the experience of having voice and agency, which can then be exercised. And this is unlikely to occur in a narrow curriculum, taught narrowly, however good the resulting 'standards' (SATs) might be.

This has been a presentation of hope: of possibilities inherent in real schools in the context of educational policy in England, now. All the schools in the creative partnership are state schools in disadvantaged areas. Some are situated in poverty stricken, depressed white areas. Others have diverse catchment areas with shifting populations. They have to follow the national curriculum, face Ofsted and other inspectors, and often deal with very challenging behaviour. Yet they are developing sustainable programmes for creativity and some of them are developing strategies at a highly practical level, related to voice and agency for all.

Figure 1

Level 1. Observer			
Artist	**Teacher**	**Pupils/learners**	**Example**
Demonstrates skills and techniques. Performs/exhibits finished work.	Draws pupils' attention to aspects of the artist's skills and techniques. Prepares pupils so that they can understand the finished work. Leads appropriate discussion during or after the activity.	Watch an artist at work. See finished work. Pose questions and take part in discussion.	Pupils visit an artist's work place. Pupils watch a performance or visit an exhibition. An artist demonstrates or shows their work to pupils.
Level 2. Participant			
Artist	**Teacher**	**Pupils/learners**	**Example**
Shares skills and techniques. Welcomes pupils and teachers, and invites them to 'have a go'.	Learns new skills or techniques alongside pupils. Encourages and supports pupils as they try out new skills or techniques.	Try out a new techniques or skills within boundaries set by the artist. Collaborate with artist on an artist-directed task. Discuss what they have learned.	Workshop after a performance or linked to an exhibition. Learning a new skill or technique, such as using a potter's wheel, stage sword-fighting or Photo Shop software. Taking part in a TIE performance. Using a new technique to complete an artist's design.
Level 3. Novice practitioner			
Artist	**Teacher**	**Pupils/learners**	**Example**
Collaborates with pupils on an individual, small group or large group activity. Breaks down difficult tasks into manageable steps for pupils. Conveys knowledge of the 'community of practice' in which his/her work is located	Helps artist and pupils to frame the activity. Negotiates practical issues. Supports pupils and artists during the activity.	Work alongside the artist on a jointly agreed task. Begin to work independently, with opportunities for self-correction and self-direction. Discuss work with the artist, the teacher and each other and respond to advice. Begin to understand the professional world in which the artist operates.	Pupils make individual ceramic tiles for a wall decoration, put together by the artist. Pupils make an interactive CD-ROM, following a template provided by a digital artist. Pupils devise and perform a play, with the help of a dramatist. Pupils compose and perform musical interludes between pieces by a professional composer.
Level 4. Independent practitioner			
Artist	**Teacher**	**Pupils/learners**	**Example**
Acts as a fellow expert and offers critical evaluation. Provides advice and support when requested.	Supervises activities and provides advice and support when requested.	Able to decide on own activity or problem for creative solution. Work independently or with peers to find creative solutions. Seek out expert help and advice where necessary. Act as expert artists to others who are less experienced. Use appropriate language for critical evaluation. Have growing knowledge and skills for the world of the arts.	Pupils write and illustrate stories for younger pupils. Pupils can pass on skills and techniques to others. Pupils devise, direct and perform a play for others. Pupils design and make stage sets, costumes and props for a production. Pupils design a carpet for the staffroom, which is manufactured by a local carpet factory.

Figure 2

Apprenticeship model

1 Observer	Artist has complete control
2 Participant	Learner takes part to learn new skills
3 Novice practitioner	Learner takes part alongside the artist on joint projects
4 Independent practitioner	Learner has control, deciding on their own creative activity

Figure 3

Planning proforma

Artist	Teacher	Learner/Pupil

Figure 4

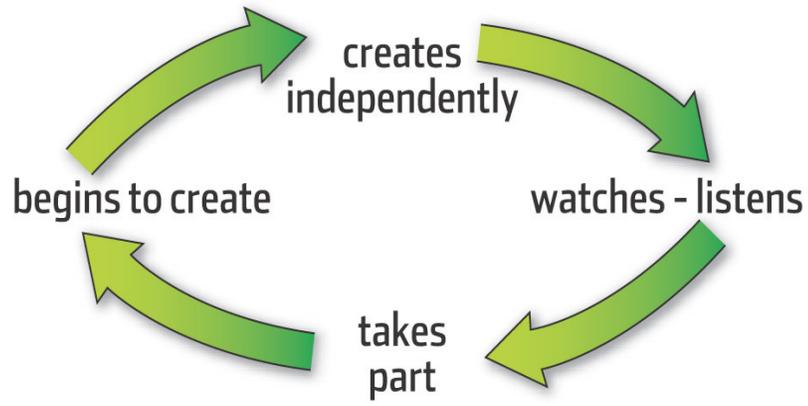Cycle of Learning in the Apprenticeship Model

Figure 5: Taken from the leaflet made for Rufford Nursery and Infant School (Judy Berry, Anne Holt, and Morwenna Griffiths)

The Apprenticeship Model
Everyone learns from everyone else
Learning new things, learning confidence,
and learning to be more and more independent

Learning principles
Children have a variety of learning styles.
Taking risks is okay.
All children should be able to realise their potential.
Enjoyment is important.
School is a part of lifelong learning.
Everyone is responsible for helping everyone else.
Learning in one subject crosses over into learning in another.
Children need to access a range of experience.
Schools need to be inclusive -- they are for everyone.
Everyone should be able to trust one another.

Other activities
The After School Club where children choose what they will do
The Allotment where children grew what they want to.
PILL days when children plan their own day
The playground where children planned the fixed apparatus
with the designer

It was fun pretending to be our animals walking on a journey -- Ben 7

I was happy because I like the dance -- Georgia 5

I felt great. I loved this -- Pearce 7

I felt all stretchy and bendy and I felt with joy -- Jo 7

It was dead stretchy like flying in the air -- Brandon 6

We want independent learners who are not afraid to express themselves in any form. -- Teacher

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Endnotes

[1] Initially and, as it transpired, unhelpfully, the phases were called 'levels'. It was pointed out by teachers that this was a word that reminded them of SATs.

[2] I introduced the term 'little stories' to the teachers. I discuss the term in more detail in a number of papers, especially Griffiths (2002) and Griffiths, Bass, Johnston and Perselli (2004). The term is a translation of Lyotard's 'petits recits', but this should not be taken to imply that it is being used in precisely the same way. However it should be understood in relation to 'grand narrative' – which might be better thought of as a tall tale.

[3] See endnote 2, above.

[4] See endnote 2, above.

[5] See for instance her discussion of Plato and Aristotle's lawmaking and city-building as mere making (poiesis) rather than true action (praxis) (1958: 195).

[6] Much of my work on public spaces and metaphor was worked out in conversation with Maxine Greene (Greene and Griffiths, 2003)