



# Mantle of the Expert

An imaginative-inquiry approach to teaching and learning

# Stories as a medium for learning

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*“The human mind seems exquisitely tuned to understand and remember stories - so much so that psychologists sometimes refer to stories as ‘psychologically privileged’, meaning that they are treated differently in the memory than other types of material.”*

*(Why Don't Students Like School? p.66)*

*–Daniel Willingham*

*“Stories are indeed the best vehicles for teaching young children  
– an idea that was ancient when Plato reasserted it in Republic.”*  
The Knowledge Deficit (p.78)

*–E.D. Hirsch*

*“Rather than focus on children’s limitations and inabilities we should focus rather on the kind of conceptual abilities children clearly do have and use routinely.”*

Teaching as Story Telling (p.18)

*–Kieran Egan*



Dorothy Heathcote at work

# Mantle of the expert

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Where the students represent a team of experts

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Professionals with expert knowledge and the power to make decisions

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The Team are responsible to clients...

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and other people; giving their learning meaning and purpose.

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The Team work on commissions for the client...

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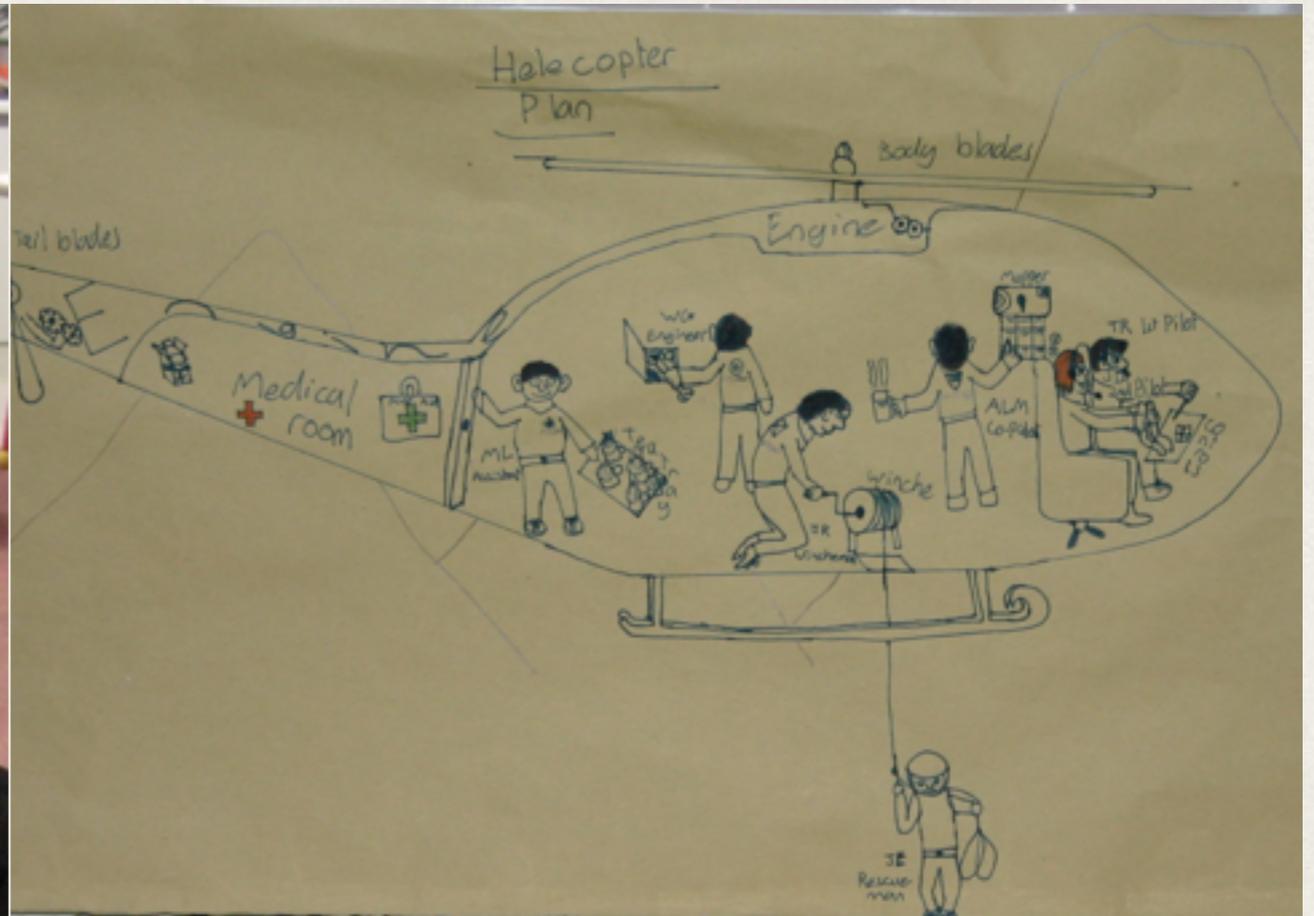
On a range of tasks and activities...

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creating meaningful and engaging, cross-curricular, contexts for learning.



Sasha Spencer (7 years old)

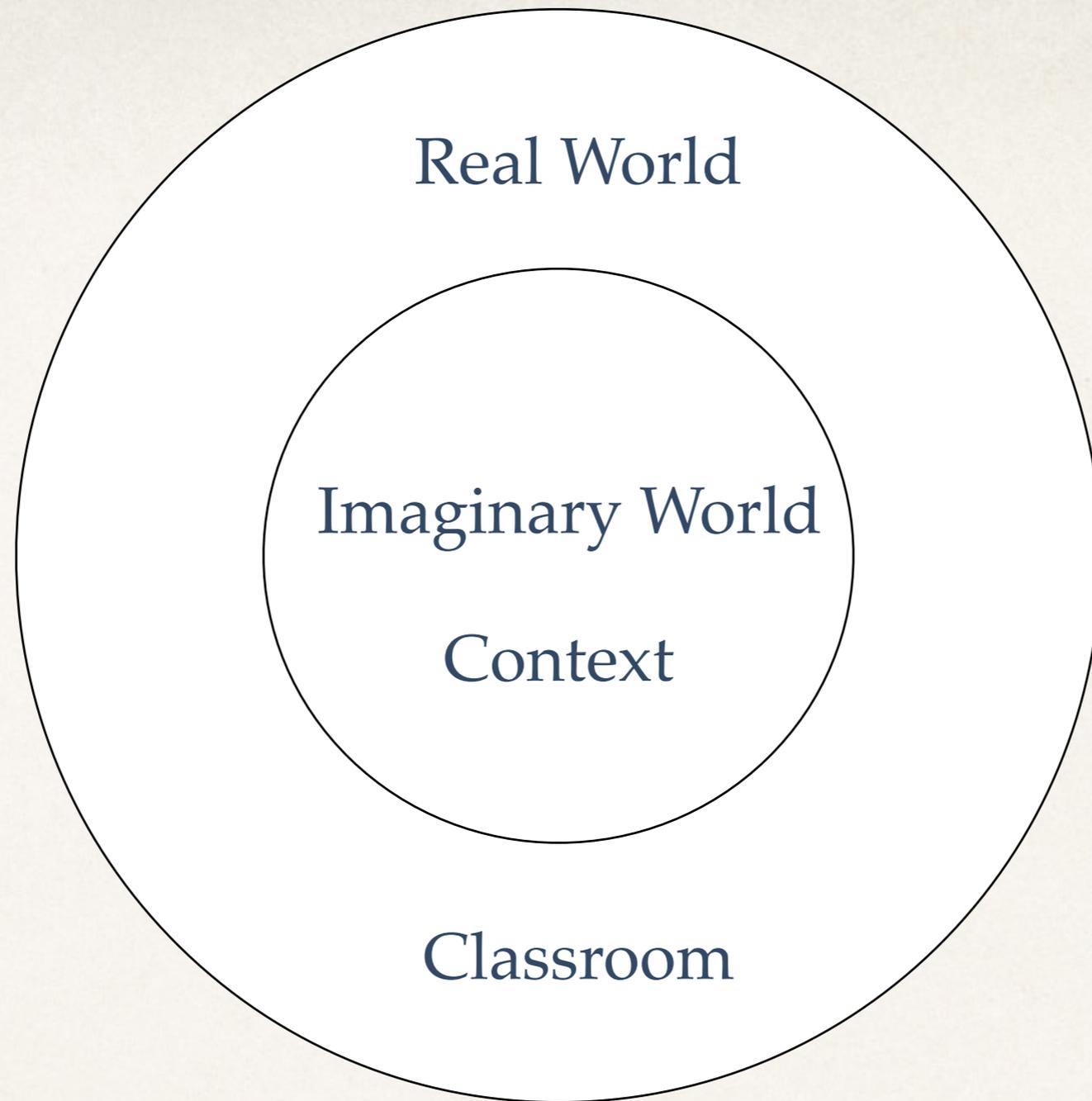
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“Making it more exciting helps you learn better... because we're doing it ourselves. If we read it out of a book we would learn stuff, but we wouldn't learn how we would do it... when you are in it, its like your own story you're doing... This is work, but its like fun work, its creative stuff...”



# Using mantle of the expert for teaching

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Stepping in and out of the fiction for teaching and learning

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# Knowledge is key

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The curriculum consists of ‘know-what’ and ‘know-how’ objectives:

**Information** we want children to know about  
and **skills** we want them to know how to do

*An example...*

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What is the story of Florence Nightingale?

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- Background knowledge: 1. Watched film of the story  
2. Shared books and images  
3. Heard accounts
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What was Scutari like the day Florence arrived?



How did the people working in the hospital describe conditions to Florence?



Put full stops at the end of every sentence.

How can we work together to put Florence's reforms into action and make a difference?

# The story the children have co-created becomes a meaningful context for developing further Know-what and Know-how

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- ❖ **Letters** home from the POV of those in Scutari before and after the change
- ❖ A **report** written by the team to Florence detailing the changes they have initiated
- ❖ **Maps** of the area detailing the terrain and areas of conflict needed by the Team for their work in the field
- ❖ **Pamphlets**, written by the Team for soldiers, detailing first-aid and health advice
- ❖ **Charts** on the walls of the hospital with information about the human-body: major organs, circulation, and skeleton
- ❖ **Information posters** reminding people in the hospital about the importance of cleanliness and the risks of infection
- ❖ Hospital **order-book**, ensuring a plentiful supply of bandages and other medical resources
- ❖ A **display** for the newly opened Florence Nightingale Museum describing events: Florence's life, and influence. Including historical accounts and other information.

*“Classrooms can be labs, places where you bring your knowledge and training with you and take on the mantle of responsibility. You know that the result of what you do there will matter to someone other than yourself. Such settings are cells effecting change in society”*

Dorothy Heathcote's Story (p.126)

*–Dorothy Heathcote*