

In this issue:

- Exploring literacy and numeracy possibilities: How wide and deep can we go?
- Returning to Germany
- Who is...Amy Barker
- More news from the ELP office. Congratulations, Tasshi Marie!
- Who is...Lynn Rupe?
- ELP blogs
- Upcoming events, September to November 2012
- ELP conference 2012 - Whakawhanaungatanga - Teachers, children, families, communities

Exploring literacy and numeracy possibilities: How wide and deep can we go?

Literacy or mathematics are not add ons, something that we do at a specific time of day or day of the week, they should be like a whāriki, woven through everything we do in our early childhood settings. We need to explore ways to enable children's literacy and numeracy interests to flourish inside vibrant communities that keep learning complex and connected.

Wenger says that, "Building complex social relationships around meaningful activities requires genuine practices in which taking charge of learning becomes the enterprise of a community." (Wenger, 1998). So actually learning belongs to everybody, everybody in the early childhood setting.



Te Whāriki promotes a 'socio-cultural perspective', and while Te Whāriki does not specifically advise educators how to promote or teach early literacy or mathematics it does recognise that,

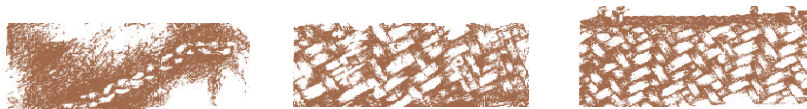
in early childhood, one of the major cultural tasks for children is to develop competence in and understanding of language. Language does not consist only of words, sentences, and stories: it includes the language of images, art, dance, drama, mathematics, movement, rhythm, and music. (Ministry of Education, 1996)

It also encourages a, holistic view of literacy and numeracy where infants, toddlers and young children engage with literacy and numeracy in ways that reflect their growing expertise, and that incorporates their home literacy practices. (Ministry of Education, 1996)

We all need to remember that we need to be mindful to "seek to empower children to become literate through activities that are meaningful and engaging." (Ministry of Education, 1996)



On one of Guy Claxton's visits to NZ he ask us to think about 'What is our role as teachers? Are we helping children learn **or** helping children become better learners and what's the difference here?' These are really good questions to have a discussion around. Is it the difference between teaching skills and knowledge, to actually providing a rich environment where children explore what it means to be a learner?



Margaret Carr, at a Presentation to Hui Topu - Professional Development for Early Childhood Education in Wellington in 2008, said, "it's not about the blocks or the dough. It's about the activity being the vehicle for the acquisition of the disposition to learn." So it's important that we're not just thinking about the skills and knowledge that's occurring. If we're looking at literacy and mathematics, we also need to be looking at who the child is as a learner. What can we write about and what do we know about the child as a learner through this experience? We might write about a block or dough experience, the design of the block structure or the feel of the dough, but we also need to be writing about who is the child as a learner and how is this activity or interest supporting the child as a learner? This is fundamental to what we should be writing about in our Learning Stories.



ERO's evaluation of literacy teaching and learning highlighted the wide variety of understanding of early literacy and accompanying practice across the sector.

High quality literacy practices were evident in services where educators had in-depth knowledge of how children's literacy learning developed. However, in services where ERO observed few or poor quality literacy practices, children were not well engaged with literacy learning. (ERO 2011)



This is an extremely useful resource and can be accessed on ERO's [website](http://www.ero.govt.nz/National-Reports/Literacy-in-Early-Childhood-Services-Teaching-and-Learning-February-2011).

References:

Education Review Office (2011) Literacy in Early Childhood Services: Teaching and Learning. February 2011. Published on: <http://www.ero.govt.nz/National-Reports/Literacy-in-Early-Childhood-Services-Teaching-and-Learning-February-2011>

Ministry of Education (1996). Te Whāriki. He Whāriki Mātauranga mō ngā Mokopuna o Aotearoa. Early Childhood Curriculum. Wellington: Learning Media.

Wenger, E. (1998). Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gillian Fitzgerald

Returning to Germany

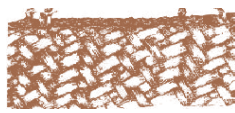
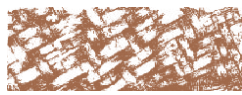
There are no foreign lands. It
is the traveler only who is
foreign.

R. L. Stevenson

I went into Howick this morning, to the Farmers market, choosing lovely fresh vegetables, mingling with friends and marveling at how many colours carrots can be these days. My next stop was the local book shop to check out the books and buy the NZ Herald. I am always on the look out for a new book that interests me and I spotted Touchstones: A Memoir by James McNeish. He has always been a favorite NZ author of mine and there are

probably half a dozen of his books on my bookshelf. Pleased to have spotted his latest book I turned the pages. The book fell open at a page with the Stevenson quote that is above. I read it and I thought about it as I headed for a quiet walk and a think at Cockle Bay Beach in the warm spring sunshine before I returned home for coffee. The quote stayed with me. "There are no foreign lands. It is the traveller only who is foreign." What does Stevenson mean by that?

I am part of the ELP team, about to head for what I considered a 'foreign' land, returning to Germany to follow up on previous visits over the past decade by Wendy Lee, Margaret Carr and members of the Educational Leadership Project facilitator team. Our invitation is to continue to introduce The New Zealand Early Childhood Education assessment model 'Learning Stories' to teachers all over Germany who



are keen and eager to embrace the whole Learning Story philosophy as a pedagogical approach. I am privileged to be part of this team and acknowledge the inspiration, insight and vision our director Wendy Lee has, that provided the opportunities.

As I thought, I gradually began to realise that I had two approaches open to me in my preparation and thinking prior to this trip. Germany to me is a foreign land. The German language, history and culture are so different to mine and the countryside often unfamiliar. Despite two visits I feel it is to me still to some extent an uncharted landscape. There is so much that I do not know or understand about Germany as a country and the German people as a nation. But seeing this trip as going to a 'foreign' land has the potential to develop the mindset of 'passionate missionary zeal'. With a mission to present ideas that are 'better' to seek change for the sake of change. Maybe even to mistake interest as permission to 'present' without listening

I parked at Cockle Bay Beach. The sun was shining the water sparkling children were out on the small sandbanks defined by their dark shadows as I looked into the bright light. I left the car warmed by the sunshine and the familiarity I felt as I walked along the beach towards the ancient Pohutukawa tree. The branches that lean on the beach seem to support the tree in the longevity of its life and relationship with the land. I found my way through the curtain of leaves and branches and stood with my hand resting on its trunk. I felt as though I was somehow inside this massive tree. The comfort of belonging warmed my soul and my thoughts began to center around Identity. Questions flooded through my mind:

Who was I?
Where did I come from?
Who accompanies me on my life journey?
Where does my identity lie?
Do I ever go alone?

As a traveler I may be a foreigner in the eyes of the people I visit but never a foreigner to myself when I am secure in my identity.

As I stood there thinking I remembered the story of Te Tuhi Manawatere, the story that belongs to this tree. The story that carries the history of this area and the first human arrivals centuries ago and I realised that as a 21st century arrival to Cockle Bay or Owhairoa my history is part of this place too. My identity lies as much in this place I call home as it does where my heart lies in Taitoko (Levin) in the Horowhenua where I was born.

I will be the foreigner, I am going into the unknown. I am the one working outside my comfort zone. I go first to seek understanding and to find things out to establish a relationship, to almost as it were, become a friend to enter into their culture, their way of doing things and to listen to their stories. In that process I may reduce my status as a foreigner I may earn the right to speak and to share.

On our Trip in 2010, Sibylle Haas planned a day off for us in her home city of Berlin. She gathered the support of her partner Roland and several colleagues to plan a day's bike tour in Potsdam, a city close to Berlin situated in what was known, post World War 2, as East Germany, and of historic significance during World War 2. We set off, to the amusement of our companions, as a group of rather hilarious strangers as we puffed up slight inclines, wobbled through pedestrians and collapsed with astonishment at the never seen before methods of relaxation practiced by locals. As the day progressed we rode more confidently and listened intently to stories our friends shared with us, the stories that made them who they were and where their identity lay.

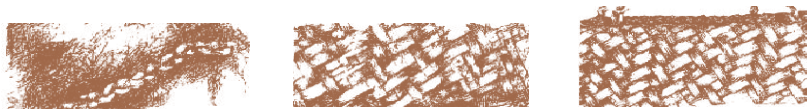
As I reflect on this astonishing trip and the richness of the privilege embedded in the invitation, I do go as a foreigner, a traveler but I go surrounded with the knowledge of who I am. But with this understanding the country is only foreign to me. I am the foreigner in the eyes of the majority of the people I meet.

For the majority of our time in Germany and as we find our way from North to South and East to West we are in homestays with the people of the land. We have the time to listen to the local stories and deepen relationship and discuss commonalities and then we may be afforded the privilege to share our stories in an atmosphere of debate, dialogue and respect.

Robyn Lawrence



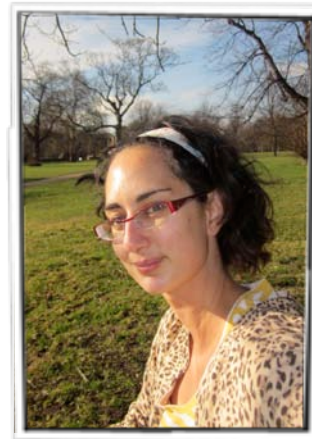
On the road to Potsdam, 2010

**Who is... Amy Barker?**

I have been at ELP since April 2012 after coming back from an overseas trip. I began as a temp but kept sticking around and was made a permanent member of the team. I had no idea that ECE was such a complex field, although I possibly should have as I have quite a few teachers in my family, including one in ECE (Hi Shannon!).

I am the person to contact for enrolments, invoicing queries and general enquires. I also process all your feedback forms, so keep them coming! It's great to read how passionate you all are about your role in children's lives.

In my other life my overriding obsession and 'hobby' are my animals. I currently have a 7 month old puppy, 3 cats, 2 rats, 12 fish, 4 apple snails and 1 Blue Tongue skink. In between wrangling everybody, my downtime is spent trying to figure out where I can fit more cages and aquariums...

**More news from the ELP office...****Congratulations, Tasshi Marie!**

As you might know, here at ELP we love to celebrate! And what better occasion than our project administrator Marie Thom's recent success in achieving her Black Belt in Taekidokai!

Back in 2010, Marie wrote this for our newsletter: "I have risen to the dizzy heights of blue belt, (to match the bruises on my arms), in my future is a black belt. I followed my eleven year old son into the sport and now my fourteen year old daughter trains as well."

Many hours of training and a couple of bruises later (we have seen the most impressive shapes and colours of bruises here at the office), Marie went to Sydney in July this year to take part in a weekend of training (over 12 hours) followed by an exhausting grading process. In the spirit of true NZ-Australian competition, Marie was the only applicant to break her boards on the first go and even lapped all other students in the fitness line! Ka rawe atu koe!

So, at her return to Hamilton, we just had to throw her a little 'black belt' - party:

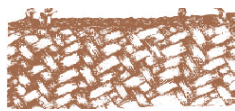
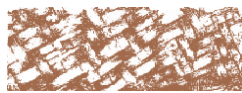
Celebrating in style!



Well done, Marie!



spot the typo...



Who is...Lynn Rupe?

It would be hard to decide when my journey into early childhood began. I know many years ago I said there are two things that I would never be - one was a nurse, I cannot stand the sight of blood, and the second was a teacher. Funny how life can change direction and attitude, I wonder which comes first. Do we change our direction therefore have to modify our attitude and ideas or vice versa. Maybe for me it was my own personal experiences of teachers that put me off ever wanting to go down that path.

When our youngest boy, Jordan, went off to school he found that transition very hard and I stayed around each day to help in the classroom. A month or so down the track I was employed by the school as a teacher aide, which I really enjoyed. This was the start of my changing view of teachers and my changing attitude of what I thought teaching was all about.

In order to succeed though in this change of direction I needed to change a deep seated attitude. As a student in college there were many messages about having a limited ability to learn - I was considered an average student. The thinking that average students should not set themselves too high benchmarks in education because they know they will not succeed was quite prevalent. Thank goodness this is not true. Carol Dweck's and Guy Claxton's work shows that learning is learnable. I had to embrace having a growth mindset that would allow me to push through boundaries that had been imposed upon me that would hinder my taking up new challenges to see myself as a learner.

What a wonderful journey it has been - starting the learning through Massey, working the learning out in centres and extending the learning through professional development, particularly with ELP and within the context of qualified reflective teaching teams.

Other than now being a passionate life long learner, I enjoy the relaxing time in my garden. But having said that, two years ago I knew very little about plants and gardens and now I am enjoying the challenge of creating a large cottage garden with roses, foxgloves, cornflowers the list goes on.

Most weekends I will be found either in the garden or in one of our many cafes in Tauranga. My family and I just love going out and trying new places but recently we have got stuck on one in particular as the food is just lovely.

So reading, learning, gardening, eating and time with my family that is me in a nutshell really. However, with too much eating it may have to be an ever expanding nutshell.



ELP blogs

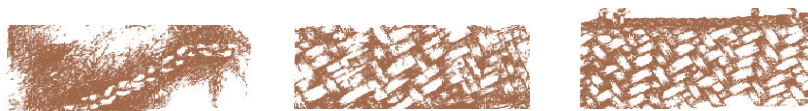
Have you had a look at our blogs lately? There are 4 blogs by ELP or ELP members you can check out:

ELP blog: Our main blog, with news regarding ECE developments, thoughts on teaching and teaching practice, books or articles that might interest you, and news from our ECE friends all over the world. We will try and update you about our Germany trip on this blog as well <http://educationalleadershipproject.blogspot.com>

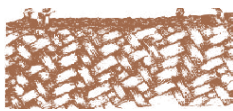
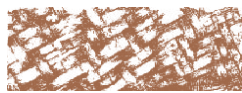
ELP's Kindness blog: A blog dedicated to kindness, with quotes, thoughts, Learning Stories and maybe some of your Centre's stories soon? - <http://elp-kindness.blogspot.com>

Wendy's blog: If you always wanted to know what Wendy does on her travels or why she has a passion for mermaids... - <http://wendyelp.blogspot.com>

Jo's blog: Our ICT queen blogs mainly about...ICT of course! - <http://jocolbert.wordpress.com>



Upcoming Events	Sep - Nov 2012	more info: www.elp.co.nz
<p>11.09.2012 Lecture Series, Hamilton Julie Killick (Head Teacher, Stanmore Bay): Another Year on: A Diary of a Crazy Woman Continued</p> <p>18.09.2012 Lecture Series, Auckland Julie Killick (Head Teacher, Stanmore Bay): Another Year on: A Diary of a Crazy Woman Continued</p> <p>20.09.2012 Seminar Series, Whakatane Gillian Fitzgerald: Bicultural Practices - free of charge</p> <p>25.09.2012 Seminar Series, Morrinsville Carol Marks: Conversations & Questions - free of charge</p> <p>08.10.2012 Full-day seminar, Browns Bay Alison Brierley: Literacy</p> <p>09.10.2012 Lecture Series, Hamilton Greerton ECC Infants and Toddlers Team: Nurturing Spaces, Thinking Places: How Do These Link in Practice?</p> <p>09.10.2012 Evening workshop, Browns Bay Alison Brierley: KTotP unpacked and dusted off</p> <p>10.10.2012 Full-day seminar, Browns Bay Alison Brierley: Documenting children's learning - part 1</p> <p>10.10.2012 Evening workshop, Browns Bay Alison Brierley: Literacy, Investigating a repertoire of literacy practices</p> <p>11.10.2012 Seminar Series, Hamilton Carol Marks: Image of the Child free of charge</p> <p>13.10.2012 ELP Conference 2012, Auckland with Margy Whalley, Pen Green, UK</p>	<p>15.10.2012 Full-day seminar, Browns Bay Alison Brierley: Exploring Social Competence</p> <p>16.10.2012 Lecture Series, Auckland Greerton ECC Infants and Toddlers Team: Nurturing Spaces, Thinking Places: How Do These Link in Practice?</p> <p>17.10.2012 Evening workshop, Browns Bay Alison Brierley: Environments - Waking the Third Teacher</p> <p>17.10.2012 Seminar Series, Morrinsville Jo Colbert: Revisiting Learning Stories - free of charge</p> <p>18.10.2012 Evening workshop, Ponsonby Alison Brierley: KTotP unpacked and dusted off</p> <p>18.10.2012 Full-day seminar: Ponsonby Alison Brierley: Literacy</p> <p>23.10.2012 Seminar Series, Whakatane Lynn Rupe: Social Competence free of charge</p> <p>23.10.2012 Seminar Series, Tauranga Lorraine Sands: Transitions</p> <p>06.11.2012 Evening workshop, Browns Bay Alison Brierley: What learning did I notice here?</p> <p>06.11.2012 Seminar Series, Morrinsville Lynn Rupe: Belonging - Turangawaewae - a place to stand free of charge</p> <p>07.11.2012 Evening workshop, Browns Bay Alison Brierley: Exploring social competence - part 1</p>	<p>08.11.2012 Full-day seminar: Browns Bay Alison Brierley: Documenting children's learning - part 2</p> <p>08.11.2012 Seminar Series, Hamilton Gillian Fitzgerald: Environments free of charge</p> <p>12.11.2012 Evening workshop, Browns Bay Alison Brierley: Broadening the view of literacy</p> <p>13.11.2012 Lecture Series, Hamilton Jo Colbert: Welcome to a world of possibilities: ICT in ECE</p> <p>13.11.2012 Evening workshop, Ponsonby Alison Brierley: What learning did I notice here?</p> <p>19.11.2012 Seminar Series, Whakatane Kathryn Delany: The Language of Learning - free of charge</p> <p>20.11.2012 Lecture Series, Auckland Jo Colbert: Welcome to a world of possibilities: ICT in ECE</p> <p>20.11.2012 Full-day seminar, Ponsonby Alison Brierley: Exploring social competence</p> <p>27.11.2012 Evening workshop, Ponsonby Alison Brierley: Catching the threads and weaving continuity</p> <p>28.11.2012 Evening workshop, Browns Bay Alison Brierley: Catching the threads and weaving continuity</p> <p>30.11.2012/1.12.2012 Celebrating Learning Stories Book Launch and Conference, Hamilton 30.11. - Book Launch 1.12. - Conference</p>



ELP Conference 2012 - Whakawhanaungatanga - Teachers, children, families, communities

Integrated Early Childhood Education, childcare and family support - challenges and opportunities in 2012

The fabulous Margy Whalley, Director of the Research, Development and Training Base at Pen Green/UK returns to New Zealand for this 1-day event in October in Auckland.

During this day, Margy will share some of Pen Green's work which is largely based on trusting and empowering relationships between the centre and wider family environments.

This conference is a chance to be challenged and provoked by what it means to be truly responsive to your children, families and communities and to build strong, reciprocal relationships.

Some of the topics Margy will talk about are:



Expansion for sustainability whilst keeping services intimate for children and families

Early Childhood Education settings in the public sector are having to compete with a hugely expanded private sector and are experiencing radical cuts in funding and new locality based funding arrangements. Pen Green has survived 30 years and has had to extend its services this year to include a third nursery class and a second baby nest 'The Couthie' with new facilities for community parents and 0-3s and infant & adult mental health support services. The challenge is to keep services intimate, local, responsive and accessible to all families.

Responsive locally co-constructed Early Childhood Education services

This is achieved with an absolute commitment to parents involvement in their children's learning, which means honouring the learning in the home. It also means a curriculum and pedagogy for children which is about self realisation, resilience and self regulation, at Pen Green we call it 'being in relation' to each other. It is about working with families which is about adult learning and development family support but not a classic social work model of client worker rather a community development approach.

And much more!

Date: Saturday, 13 October 2012

Time: 9am - 3pm (registration, 8.30am onwards)

Venue: [SKYCITY Auckland](#), Corner Victoria and Federal Streets, Auckland

Costs: \$125.00 (incl. GST & lunch) for ELP members

\$140.00 (incl. GST & lunch) for non-members

Enrolments and Payments: please email Amy at admin@elp.co.nz or call her at 07 856 8708.



To find out more about Pen Green have a look at their website: <http://www.pengreen.org/>

To download our flyer for this conference, please click [here](#).