Curriculum Matters

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Welcome to this SOSE edition of Curriculum Matters, 2003. This issue and the next will focus on the key learning area of SOSE. The publication of this issue coincides with the second anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the USA, the first anniversary of the Bali bombing and the events of the war in Iraq. Therefore it seemed appropriate to focus on the key values of Peace and Social Justice for our first edition. Karen Livingstone, Education Officer SOSE and Michael Boyle, Project Officer SOSE have compiled this edition. Together they have been working to support BCE schools with implementation of this key learning area. This edition highlights the support that has been available from BCE and the exciting work that has been going on in schools.

The essence of SOSE

Investigations of controversial social and environmental issues, meeting challenges of citizenship, culture and economies, thinking critically and creatively about different perspectives and solutions to issues associated with people and their environment, and developing optimistic future visions are all part of SOSE. Couple this with a values perspective that highlights social justice, democratic process, ecological and economic sustainability and peace, and the learning area becomes quite a complex area of study.

SOSE allows students to understand the diverse and dynamic nature of societies. This means developing an understanding of the belief systems, values and history of various societies and gaining understandings of how that knowledge has been created and viewed by others. In our changing and technological world, it is important that today’s students are exposed to the various factors and issues, which impact upon our present world. Furthermore, it is vital that our students have gained a variety of skills and processes, which will allow them to become active participants in society.

In the twenty first century, the ability to engage in careful, reflective and critical thinking has been viewed in various ways: as a fundamental characteristic of an educated person, as a requirement for responsible citizenship in a democratic society, and, more recently, as an employability skill for an increasingly wide range of jobs. SOSE allows students to develop skills in critical and creative thinking, with an emphasis upon detailed analysis, individual and collaborative decision making, and participatory action.

We hope that this issue of Curriculum Matters will prove informative. Readers will notice a slight change in the format of Curriculum Matters this is to enable easier photocopying of the magazine. As always we welcome your comments or even better any contributions which you would like to make to the magazine Curriculum Matters Volume 1 Number 1 2004.

Mary Holford
Editor (Acting)
Some Questions and Answers about the Years 1-10 SOSE Syllabus

1. What are the key values of the SOSE syllabus and why have they been included in the syllabus?

The key values of Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) are:

- Democratic process
- Social justice
- Ecological and economic sustainability
- Peace

The inclusion of the key values in the SOSE syllabus stems from the development of several political and educational agendas in Queensland, nationally and internationally in the decades preceding the syllabus development, for example, the P-10 Curriculum Framework (1987), The Values We Teach – New South Wales Public School System (1987), Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling (1989), UNESCO Guidelines for the Development, Evaluation and Revision of Curricula, Textbooks and Other Educational Materials (1991), A Statement on Studies of Society and Environment for Australian Schools (1994), and Shaping the Future: Review of the Queensland School Curriculum (1994).

There has also been a large volume of academic and policy development work from universities and schooling authorities that has supported promoting values in syllabus and curriculum development activities.

At a fundamental level, the inclusion of the key values in SOSE recognises that no syllabus is values-free and that studying societies and environments involves learning about values and applying values to develop understandings. The centrality of values, along with the processes of inquiry shape the very nature of the SOSE Key Learning Area.

Pages 1 and 2 of the SOSE Syllabus provides a description rather than definition of the key values. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that people have different perspectives of these values, that cultural and other differences influence these perspectives, and that the values are culture, time and space specific. The key values are not discrete entities as they may overlap with each other, and on occasion, they may conflict. For example, in world current affairs, there are examples where the value of social justice may conflict with the value of peace.

The challenge for the teacher in the classroom is to explore with their students how these values operate within society.

In addition, the key values need to be enacted at two levels in the classroom. Firstly, they need to be enacted at teacher level to facilitate learning experiences that take into account these values. Secondly, teachers need to help students develop an understanding of, commitment to, and skills for demonstrating the values.

This may mean planning units of work and learning experiences that explicitly demonstrate and reflect these values. For example, if you are teaching a unit about democracy it is important that students do not just learn about democratic principles but actually get to enact democratic processes through structured activities that have been planned. This means that teachers are modelling the values and using the values to influence teacher practice.

2. What are the processes of social and environmental inquiries and how should they be considered when planning learning experiences and assessment?

The processes of social and environmental inquiries are: investigating, creating, participating, communicating and reflecting. These provide the basis for inquiries and relate to the core learning outcomes of the syllabus. Pages 31 and 32 of the Syllabus are useful pages to refer to when planning units of work since they describe the processes of social and environmental inquiries.

The processes of social and environmental inquiry in SOSE derive from the disciplines and fields of study that inform the strands in which the outcomes are organised. Inquiry is a key means by which students learn to participate in social life as active and informed citizens and gain an understanding of their society and environments. As a result, inquiry processes are an integral, not an additional, dimension of SOSE.

In the context of planning, the syllabus encourages planning and assessment to reflect of the centrality of the inquiry processes to the SOSE Key Learning Area. The syllabus does not highlight a single inquiry model for planning, rather a range of inquiry models are promoted.

An appropriate and effective inquiry model should involve:

- formulating and examining questions, hypotheses and issues relevant to students’ lives
- selecting and developing methods of investigation
• interpreting, analysing and evaluating information and issues
• selecting and formulating forms of presentation and communication
• planning a response or action
• phased, recursive, reflective investigations that rely heavily on evidence.

Social and environmental inquiry offers students a meaningful context and content for learning. Inquiry is reflective in that it occurs over a time period in phases involving introspection and reconsideration of the values, processes and concepts, and encourages student action and evaluation of consequences and outcomes.

3. What is the link between the key values and the concepts, which underpin the SOSE Syllabus?
Each strand of the SOSE syllabus develops five key concepts from Level 1 to Beyond Level 6. These concepts are related explicitly or implicitly to some or all of the key values through the shaping of particular core learning outcomes. For example:

• Systems, Resources and Power 6.5 states: Students apply understandings of social justice and democratic process to suggest ways of improving access to economic and political power. This core learning outcome is developing the concept of access to power and explicitly requires students to apply the key values of social justice and democratic process to demonstrate learning about this concept.

• In Place and Space 1.5 students are required to... describe the relationships between personal actions and environmentally friendly strategies in familiar places. This core learning outcome is developing the concept of significance of place and implicitly requires students to engage with the key value of ecological and economic sustainability.

• In Time, Continuity and Change 3.3 students are required to... use knowledge of people’s contributions in Australia’s past to cooperatively develop visions of preferred futures. This core learning outcome is developing the concept of people and contributions and requires students to engage with the key value of peace.

4. What principles of assessment need to be applied when implementing the syllabus?
The principles of assessment detailed in the SOSE syllabus are identical to those included in the other key learning area syllabuses. These principles state for assessment to be effective, it should:

- focus on students’ demonstrations of learning outcomes as planned for by the teacher;
- be comprehensive and incorporate judgements from a range of sources such as learners, peers, teachers; and comprise a range of processes for gathering evidence of student achievement;
- develop students’ capabilities to monitor their own progress;
- reflect current knowledge of child and adolescent development;
- be an integral part of the learning process;
- be valid and reliable;
- reflect social justice (equity) principles;
- accommodate the diverse needs of learners;
- take place as close as possible to the place of learning;
- be authentic (i.e. involve students in the use of relevant and useful knowledges, understandings and practical skills);

• reflect the Roles of the Lifelong Learner
• inform programs of teaching and learning.

5. How does the syllabus promote civic literacy?
Civic literacy plays an important role in the learning experiences of SOSE, by developing key concepts and processes that are related to the enactment of democracy and access to power. Civic literacy involves understanding a variety of perspectives on key democratic issues and knowing how to investigate current issues and develop creative and critical participation in community problem solving and decision-making. Exercising civic rights and responsibilities is therefore a practical expression of important social values and requires specific personal, interpersonal and advocacy skills.

Civic literacy in SOSE is not limited to the Year 9 and 10 Optional Civics Syllabus but is integral to the whole key learning area at all levels and may be present across a range of learning contexts. For example, a unit developing environmental concepts would also embrace civic literacy to ensure the unit involved an action phase for students to apply their environmental understandings. A unit focussing upon the cultural contribution of migrants to Australian society would promote civic literacy by requiring students to investigate perceptions in the community and ensure that the participation stage of the unit would allow students to share their learning with others in the community.
Philosophy aims to help us to think for ourselves. That is, to think as clearly and logically as possible, to show relevance of such thinking to the problems that confront us and to think in ways that search out fresh alternatives and open new options.

Philosophical inquiry assists students to articulate what they are thinking and how they arrived at that thinking. Such students can then apply knowledge more effectively to make better judgements and to make meaning from what they are experiencing and learning.

Inquiry underpins the SOSE syllabus. Philosophical inquiry permeates the processes of social and environmental inquiries – (on pages 31 and 32 of the SOSE syllabus) – investigating, creating, participating, communicating and reflecting. It is mostly oral and is therefore inclusive.

The main tool of philosophical inquiry is the “Community Of Inquiry”. Books, short texts, videos, photos or cartoons are used as a stimulus for the group. Questions are elicited and the group then forms a circle to discuss the questions and concepts raised. An inclusive atmosphere of trust and respect gives students a forum in which they can hear the ideas of others, reflect on these ideas and come to their own understanding – that is, think for themselves.

"The Race", a book about a hearing impaired boy's experience at school, is excellent when used as a stimulus for exploring social justice through a “Community Of Inquiry”. It challenges both students and teachers in a normal school setting to look at their own behaviours and at what are just practices in classrooms and schools. It is very relatable to teachers and students of all ages.

Examining social justice in a very familiar setting, as in "The Race", is an encouraging and powerful tool for looking at how we live the value of social justice in our classrooms.

Such an inquiry almost always raises the questions – "what is just?" and "what is fair?". If it is just, is it always fair? Further exploration of these concepts is essential to enable students to fully understand the meaning behind the value of "Social Justice". Cards can be used to write words elicited from students about what they think "just" means. The word "JUST" is placed in the centre of the circle and students choose a card and put it close to or far from "JUST", depending on how close they believe the word is to the true meaning of "just". They give their reasons for doing so. As in the “Community Of Inquiry”, the atmosphere of trust and respect allows students to challenge assumptions, question, clarify, agree and disagree with each other. They come as a group to a reasonable consensus. This can be recorded on blackboard or in books. The same can be done with the word "fair". If the five closest words to both "fair" and "just" are then compared, similarities and differences are obvious and the subtle nuances are understood. This can be displayed in the room and the group can make deletions and additions as their understanding of the value of "Social Justice" deepens over time.

To further develop philosophical inquiry it is often useful to use discussion plans and exercises to deepen and broaden concepts such as “fair”, “just”, “equality”, “equity”, “discrimination”, “ability”, “disability” etc. Students are given a sheet that has a scenario from classroom, school, home or the wider community. They are asked to tick whether the situation is fair, unfair, or neither; just, unjust, or neither; equal, not equal, or neither; OR equitable, not equitable, or neither. After they make personal choices, the
group comes together to discuss their decisions and share judgements and reasons. They can then construct for themselves the many ways in which “Social Justice” can be defined.

When exploring democratic process, “Click, Clack, Moo; Cows That Type” is a great book to use for “COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY” for all year levels. It simply but cleverly combines many of the concepts underlying “DEMOCRATIC PROCESS” (Levels 1–6) into a farmyard setting. The substantive conversation of the dialogue process involved in “COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY” allows the layers of the book to be revealed and concepts such as freedom of speech, minority rights, social obligation and social responsibility, and political power, to be examined.

The “inquiry” can then be furthered by whole-class exploration games with words such as “rights and responsibility”, “equity and equality”, “freedom and mandation”. The individual’s own appreciation of the “DEMOCRATIC PROCESS” is widened and deepened.

A deeper look at rights, equality and freedom can be done at a personal and group level using exercises and discussion plans about rights, freedom, free will etc.

The “COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY” is a working classroom practice of the values of “SOCIAL JUSTICE” (inclusivity, respect for others, respect for self, community) and “DEMOCRATIC PROCESS” (freedom of speech, participatory democracy, social obligation, social responsibility and tolerance). Students sense that they are a valued member of a valued community that encourages and welcomes them to participate and “have a voice”.

The skills, trust and atmosphere engendered by philosophy’s “COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY” enable students to explore and develop SOSE values. Exploring the “SOCIAL JUSTICE” and “DEMOCRATIC PROCESS” involves understanding, reflecting and applying 15 different concepts for each value (refer pages 4 & 5 of the Sourcebook). Activities, exercises and discussions that help to clarify concepts are valuable for effective teaching and learning in SOSE. Conceptual development is an on-going process in the mind of each student. The inquiry may be satisfied temporarily but it may be sparked into further action when presented with a different scenario, situation or piece of evidence – life long learning!

Using literature assists learning. By having characters and situations to reflect on, students can “hang” their thinking onto behaviours, actions and reactions of those involved in the story. They can see the difference between power and authority in “The Rebel” by Allan Baille and in “William Tell”. Folktales are often excellent for evaluating ethical situations. The Australian Readers Discovering Democracy books have a wonderful selection of excerpts and stories suitable for philosophical inquiry of values. Students find it easier to understand complex ideas and often refer back to characters and events in a story when explaining their ideas.

Once the meaning and value of philosophical inquiry is experienced and understood by students, the students often initiate a “COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY” or concept development game because they see the need for exploration or clarification of an idea or concept – even eight year olds have told me “It’s time for a circle!” That is, “It’s time we share ideas, give reasons, clarify ideas, examine assumptions, and find alternatives”. That is, it’s time to listen and evaluate the ideas of others so that I can think for myself!

Cathy Douglas
Primary Teacher
The words to the traditional Prayer to the Holy Spirit are still etched in my mind from days as a primary school student four decades ago when so many prayers had to be learnt off by heart.

“Come O Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful, and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your spirit and they shall be created, and you shall renew the face of the earth.”

The two most common symbols used to indicate the presence of the Holy Spirit in our tradition are the tongue of fire and the white dove – the dove of peace. There are very powerful symbolic connections between Holy Spirit, peace-making and renewing the face of the earth (which in practical terms is a purposeful intentionality in relationship with future). The disciples went into hiding after Jesus death, and did not go out to proclaim the good news until they were visited by the Holy Spirit. Jesus, at the Last Supper, had said to his friends:

“I have said these things to you, while still with you; But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father sent in my name, Will teach you everything, and remind you of all I have said to you. Peace I bequeath to you, My own peace I give to you, A peace the world cannot give to you, this is my gift to you.” (John 14:25-27)

The legacy of Jesus, the gift of his peace, was predicted in Isaiah (9:6-7)*

“For there is a child born for us, a son given to us and dominion is laid on his shoulders; and this is the name they give him: Wonder-Counsellor, Mighty-God, Eternal-Father, Prince-of-Peace. Wide is his dominion, in a peace that has no end.”

What are the implications for us from the direct relationship in this text between the words – peace, counselor, wonder, mighty, eternal, dominion? What kind of world might be possibly imagined where these qualities might co-exist?

A rather special anniversary passed unnoticed by most of us on April 11. On that day in 1963 – forty years ago – Pope John XXIII released the encyclical Pacem in Terris.

Why was it written? It was in response to the escalation of Cold War conflict that had led to the brink (who knows how close) of nuclear war – the Cuban missile crisis. In that encyclical, John XXIII emphasized some powerful insights – very powerful for those years:

- Peace (and the making of peace) requires the right order of relationships to exist between individuals, between and within nations, and among all peoples.
- Every human being is a person with rights and obligations flowing directly and simultaneously from human nature
- Every fundamental human right draws its indestructible moral force from the natural law, which in granting it, imposes a corresponding obligation.
- Legitimate authority’s whole reason for existence is the realization of “the common good”.

Pacem in Terris was a plea for peace and it outlined a principled strategy for peace.

Some four years later, in Populorum Progressio, the Development of Peoples, Paul VI directly connected the notion of peace and peace building to the work of the Church’s development activity in the poorest parts of the planet. “Development is the new name for peace.”

These documents in particular, and others of that time, were written in response to extraordinary rising global tension, recognition of the extent of poverty and violence planet wide, the very beginnings of our awareness of a concept of globalisation - responses to the signs of the times. Interesting how pertinent they remain today, perhaps particularly in these times – Iraq, Kosovo, Rwanda, Somalia, Colombia and so on.

Out of these documents, and arising from Gospel teaching, there has grown an articulation of fundamental principles against which our identity, our value, our purpose and our achievement must be measured. They are commonly known as Principles of Catholic Social Teaching. They are the context – the backdrop - for a deepening understanding peace and peacemaking – and
also may act as criteria against which peacemaking activity might be judged for its efficacy. They are extraordinarily powerful principles – from both humanist and humanitarian perspectives – that are found (even underpin) some wider conventions and declarations of UN and other organizations e.g. Human Rights, Rights of the Child, Kyoto protocols, Earth Charter.

These principles challenge us to reflect on who we are, and how we go about living in relationship with each other. The challenge for education and education professionals lies in:

• how these principles are used to make curriculum decisions (planning, content, pedagogy, assessment); and
• how they are used to inform organizational decisions (planning, structure, goals, policies and organizational processes).

EIGHT PRINCIPLES OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

1. The Essential Dignity of the Human Person
2. The Principle of Solidarity
3. The Principle of Subsidiarity
4. The Purpose of Government is the promotion of the Common Good
5. The Principle of Participation
6. The Universal Purpose of Goods
7. The Preferential Option for the Poor
8. The Integrity of Creation

These principles provide a window into understanding the qualities of relationship, structure and process (between individuals, families, groups, organizations and wider communities) that indicate we are on a journey to creating dynamic yet peaceful futures.

The work of making these principles a reality in practice does not just belong to special interest groups, nor only to the Religious Education or pastoral care domains. It is core business – core business for teachers in every curriculum domain, and core business for leaders in every dimension of their organisation’s design and action. The gospel message is that pedagogies of peace-making are central processes in the journey of fulfilling our mandate to “renew the face of the earth”.

PERSPECTIVES ON PEACE MAKING

There are six perspectives on peace and peace-making that are now becoming more commonly recognized in peace research and peace education. They are “layered” in relationship to each other, from simplest to most complex (some might say the reverse is true), from most problematic to most insightful, from the pragmatic to the whole, from the concrete to the cosmic.

The simplest definition I can give as a reference point for your reflection is not of peace or peacemaking. It is too amazing to reduce to a definition. Each of you will create your own descriptions, or perhaps do it together. I will give you a definition of violence – the one verbalized by Johann Galtung: Violence is where there is not peace, and “violence is the gap between that which could be and that which is.”

Keep that definition in mind as you consider each of the six layers. Also ask yourselves in relation to each perspective:

• Where are the power bases?
• Whose interests are being served?
• Whose knowledge counts?
• Who is benefiting?
• Whose way of doing business (pedagogy!) counts, and why?

The foundational question is: what life orientation is evident here – an acquisitive one or a contributive one? (Robert Hinde)

I make the observation, at this point, that most peace activity seems (to me) to deal with the first two perspectives, probably due to the sheer impact of war, civil conflict, arms etc.

A fuller discussion of each perspective and their implications for educators might form the content and context of further writing, or of valuable professional dialogue.

1. Negative Peace – Removal of Physical Violence

This simplest perspective describes the need to provide safe communities, free of physical violence. We explore the contexts of overt violence, critique its causes and consequences and design processes for resolution of “the problem”.

Concepts and language of this ‘territory’ include diplomacy, treaties, arms limitation, disarmament, conflict resolution, mediation, and peer mediation.

2. **Oppositional Peace – Removal of Indirect Violence**

   This perspective reflects on understandings of exploitation, colonialism, the wealth-poverty gap, the imposition of power rather than the sharing of power, as forms of violence, in that they interfere with the realisation of the principles of social teaching outlined above. It also enables us to understand the ways in which organisational structure and policy can perpetuate contexts of indirect violence and conversely to improve them with authenticity and transparency.

3. **Positive Peace – Humane Development**

   On a wider level, what is it that we do, so that the contexts of direct and indirect violence do not arise at all, or at least will be less likely to arise. From this perspective we understand the Paul VI statement more clearly about the relationship between development and peace. How do we understand, as educators, the concepts and practices of aid, development, sustainability, resources distribution, liberation, and their implications for what (and how) each educator and each educational organization enacts their mission.

4. **Structural Peace – Authentic Institutions**

   How do persons, organizations and institutions ensure there is integrity of values, principles and structure, that the organisation’s pedagogy and structure are congruent with its vision, values, principles. Pedagogies of liberation have implications also for us to consider in our institutions.

5. **Non violence – Personal/Communal Peace making**

   This perspective enables us to explore the meaning and processes of social action, protest, reconciliation, restoring to wholeness, transformative relationships between individuals, groups and structures, and a move to understand ourselves in ecological relationship with everything, rather than an "ego-logical" relationship focussing on, and deriving from, self.

6. **Christic Peace – Ecological/Cosmic Interconnectedness**

   Here we begin to explore the deepest experiences of dynamic peace in terms of healing, at-one-ness/is-ness, immanence/transcendence, and contemplative dynamic action.

Teachers are encouraged and challenged to consider the implications of the Principles of Catholic Social Teaching and the Perspectives on Peace and Peacemaking for their pedagogical practices, and for providing opportunities for students to articulate and demonstrate their own understandings of peace.

From the words of the Vatican “In the end, peace is not essentially about structures but about people. Certain structures and mechanisms of peace – juridical, political, economic – are of course necessary and do exist, but they have been derived from nothing other than the accumulated wisdom and experience of innumerable gestures of peace made by men and women throughout history who have kept hope and have not given in to discouragement.

The task, which the Encyclical called “immense”, is that “of establishing new relationships in human society, under the sway and guidance of truth, justice, love, and freedom”. (Message of his holiness, Pope John Paul II, for the celebration of the World Day of Peace , 1 January 2003. Pacem in terris: a permanent commitment. Vatican, 8 December 2002.)

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Social Justice as a Key Value in SOSE

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE KEYNOTE AND CLASSROOM IMPLICATIONS

Social Justice is highlighted as one of the four key values in the QSA Years 1–10 SOSE Syllabus. For teachers in Catholic schools this value, and that of Peace, sits nicely within the Christian teachings and ethos of our schools. But what do the values mean in the context of the SOSE syllabus, how are they modelled in the SOSE classroom and how do teachers provide opportunities for students to understand and demonstrate these values?

Brisbane Catholic Education, as part of the support offered for SOSE implementation, felt it was useful to provide teachers with the opportunity to explore each of the key values of the SOSE syllabus in more detail. The first opportunity was in August 2002, which focused on social justice, and was opened with a challenging and well-received address from Dr Brian Hoepper. Brian is an experienced educator, teacher educator, writer and an advocate of the SOSE syllabus. The following reflections are taken from Brian’s keynote presentation.

Defining social justice

Social justice is about many things, and it is useful for the teacher to identify the particular elements that will be the focus in the classroom. For example, ‘valuing diversity’, ‘people must not be discriminated against ... on the basis of gender, sexuality’, ‘Social justice seeks to ... deconstruct dominant views of society’.

In his presentation Brian highlighted how social justice is so closely linked with the other SOSE key values of peace, democratic process and ecological and economic sustainability, and how one or more of these values are evident within each of the outcomes. Teachers might like to choose a SOSE core learning outcome and try and identify the value/s evident within it, and consider how they might make it a focus within their classroom.

A tension between values

The tension that exists between values is another important discussion for teachers and students to engage in. Sometimes an action that promotes one SOSE value may have a negative effect on another. Brian provided a useful example to demonstrate this; an immediate banning of leaded petrol would be positive ecologically but would have a negative effect in social justice terms, as lower income people often own leaded-petrol cars, depend on them in outer suburban living where public transport is poor, and may not be able to afford a newer model unleaded-petrol car. This example highlights the complex and problematic nature of SOSE where the immediate issue, and the obvious solution, will have vastly different outcomes for different groups. Teachers are encouraged to think of examples relevant to their students that could highlight the tension between values.

Social justice, media and popular culture

The use of media and popular culture are easily accessible lenses that can be used in the SOSE classroom to explore social justice, and are inextricably linked to ideas of identity and belonging. Brian identified three questions that teachers could consider when developing learning experiences within a social justice context:

• Can SOSE provide young people with critical tools to guide the construction of their identity?
• In particular, can students use those tools to navigate through the many texts and messages that they encounter?
• In that process, can students use the SOSE key value(s) of social justice (and peace) to guide their navigation?

Brian also made links between SOSE and critical literacy, introducing the notion of ‘reading against the grain’ when viewing texts. Anchored within some common media images and representations, he challenged us to consider how ‘typical’ these were, what other realities existed, how we might feel about these images and representations, whether it would make be possible for us all to live like the people represented and whether that would actually be a good thing? Teachers have ready access to a range of popular media texts, making them a relevant and useful teaching tool. Brian suggested the following questions could be considered as a starting point:
We are members of Holy Spirit School and we gather here to remember and celebrate the Spirit of God in our lives, our families, our school and our world.

Jesus’ gift to us after his resurrection was his gift of peace in the Holy Spirit. God’s Spirit works in us to bring his peace to our world by the way we live and work and the way we love each other.

Each class has made a special symbol of peace for today: A Peace Prayer Flag. They have been made out of five colours which represent the five elements of our world:

Yellow represents the earth
Green represents the water
Red represents fire
White represents the clouds
Blue represents the sky

As a follow up from the BCE Exploring Peace as a SOSE key value Day, Michael Bruynesteyn, APRE at Holy Spirit School, Bray Park, organised each class within the school to make prayer flags for peace and to participate in a Paraliturgy. Part of the paraliturgy has been reproduced below:
A unit compiled by Year 6 teachers from St. Vincent’s Primary School, Clear Island Waters.

As the dusk sets on the last of our ANZAC soldiers, a final chapter closes on our physical link with a past era. It was their personal sacrifice upon which our country has built its unique sense of cultural identity. We as a community feel inspired by the exploits of our war heroes and the students indicated a desire to investigate their ancestors’ contribution to making Australia the free democratic nation that it is today.

Students investigated the Australian ANZAC Spirit and how it impacted on the development of our cultural identity. Throughout the unit the students researched and identified Australia’s role in varied war conflicts over two centuries. This learning was facilitated through learning centres, war veteran guest speakers, historical fiction reading and writing, researching literature and a negotiated research assignment. Our significant task was to plan and create a living memorial encompassing a memorial garden and ANZAC mosaic for the school community.

Our teaching approach utilised outcomes education with multiple opportunities to learn and an emphasis on the inquiry model with the teacher as facilitator. Students were assisted to negotiate their own learning in the research assignment. During the process the students were given opportunities for both self and peer reflection.

Through our interaction with war veteran guest speakers, we have been offered the opportunity to promote our unit on the War Veterans Education unit website. It is our intention to pursue this exciting venture as we are keen to share our experiences with other teachers to promote this integral part of our Australian cultural identity.

Learning Activities

- Guest speakers: Local war veterans talking about Gallipoli and Vietnam campaigns.
- Learning centre tasks: consisting of Australian conflicts, the role of women in the war, life on the home-front, personalities during the war, time lines and case studies.
- Focused learning: based upon historical events concerning Gallipoli (using the inquiry model): the landing, trench warfare, battles, conditions, the secret retreat and mapping exercises illustrating the location of various battlefields. The analysis of video, written text, website validity and note-taking skills.
- Negotiated Task: Rich Task
  1. Negotiate a topic within the context,
  2. Identify a web of ideas linking to their topic (using the inquiry approach).
  3. Research incorporating a variety of information texts (at least 2 separate resources.)
  4. Choose supporting creative tasks to enhance their oral presentation (these included model making, posters, interviews with war veterans, PowerPoint presentations, poetry, charts, war memorabilia. This was conferenced and approved by the teacher.
  5. Students followed the direction of a criteria sheet to foster their learning.
Students were aware of the completion time and worked accordingly to prepare and present the set task by the assigned due date.


8. Community open day in Year six classrooms showcasing the culmination of the unit and the student’s work.

9. Work displayed in school library to be shared with the school community.

**Cross-Curricular Shared Learning Rotations Within Year Level**

1. Music appreciation – Australian music reflecting on memories of various war eras and experiences.

2. Visual arts – Creating peace posters, charcoal sketches depicting war scenes.

3. Literacy – Picture books depicting war-time themes.

**Historical Reading Tasks**

Children were encouraged to read historical fiction texts with an emphasis on Australian war topics. At the conclusion of the unit students were required to submit one book review in PowerPoint presentation to be shared with their peers.

6. Students read the book, Sadako, then completed a range of activities focusing on the consequences of war for the Japanese after the bombing of Hiroshima.

**Historical Fiction Writing**

1. Students analyse the genre of historical fiction and compose their own historical fiction short story based on a war theme.

2. These were compiled and published into a book format to be shared with the school community.

**Significant Task: Living Memorial & ANZAC mosaic**

The mosaic has been designed and created by the year 6 students.

Each student has signed the back of the framed mosaic which is hung in the school library to be used for class prayer and school celebrations for Anzac day or for peace reflections. The students have left the school this memorial in remembrance of the Anzac spirit.

**Unit Reflection**

Students and teachers engaged in both written and verbal discussion at various stages throughout the unit.

6. Students were aware of the completion time and worked accordingly to prepare and present the set task by the assigned due date.


8. Community open day in Year six classrooms showcasing the culmination of the unit and the student’s work.

9. Work displayed in school library to be shared with the school community.

**Useful Contacts**

- www.anzacday.org.au
- Programs are available for preschool, primary and secondary students across the SOSE, History, English and Media curriculum.

National Museum of Australia
GPO Box 1901
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Australia
Bookings
Tel: (02) 6208 5345
Fax: (02) 6208 5148
Email: bookings@nma.gov.au
Curriculum
Email: schools@nma.gov.au

**The Covers On This Edition**

The back and front cover were especially chosen as they complement the key value of peace from the SOSE syllabus selected for this edition of Curriculum Matters.

The aim of the committee through the poster competition was to encourage students to think about how peace in our community is possible if we embrace the Spirit of the ANZACs – to put others before self and value the principles of democracy; to honour the sacrifice of the ANZACs by choosing to live peacefully and respect one another. We congratulate the two schools and thank the Committee for allowing us to reproduce the posters.

*Front Cover created by Class 5G, St Mary’s Primary, Ipswich*
*Back Page created by Yr 2P/F St Joseph’s, Bardon*
Year 6/7 teachers Kathryn Downing and Susan Delaney of St Pius X at Salisbury have been working together with their classes to focus on ‘So why is Peace possible?’ A series of learning centres were established in the classroom where students worked individually, in pairs or in small groups to complete activities that developed their understandings of different aspects of peace and what it means to be peaceful.

The students have made nearly 4000 peace cranes and, according to students, are “giving them to local businesses to spread messages of peace through their business, and then this will spread through the home, the country and the world.” (Nicola Cifuentes).

The message that accompanied the peace cranes given to approximately 200 local businesses:

Folding a paper crane is like making peace. Some of the steps are awkward. At first it may seem impossible. There is definitely more than one route. Patience and consultation are helpful. But the result, big or small, is a thing of beauty. This thread of cranes comes to you from the students of St Pius X School, Salisbury.

Every business in our suburb will receive a crane. Our message to your business is, ‘If there is peace in your work place today, then peace will go into your homes tonight and peace will spread further around our world tomorrow. Peace be with you all!’

Businesses have responded in many ways, one sending a peace rose, another a message signed by every staff member including the managing director. Everywhere students go they see their peace cranes hanging and the conversation turns to ‘talk of peace’. The local paper came out to do an article on the project.

May peace prevail
Some Useful Websites

Tibetan Prayer Flags
http://www.pps.k12.or.us/district/depts/edmedia/tibet.shtml
(Excellent resources for teachers about Prayer Flags, Tibet, Dalai Lama)
http://www.prayerflags.com/
(Tibetan Prayer Flags - images, types)

Peace Prayer Flags
http://www.cco.caltech.edu/~aigp22/flags/
(The prayer Flag Website sponsored by Amnesty International)

Peace Sites
http://www.amnestyusa.org/aikids/udhr.html
(Kids plain language version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights)

(United Nations Cyber School Bus Peace Education site)

How to Make Prayer Flag Sites
(Uniting Church site on creating peace prayer flags)

How to Make Prayer Pinwheels
http://www.pacinfo.com/~handley/pinwheel.html
(How to make pinwheel garlands)
http://ellerbruch.nmu.edu/classes/cs255w03/cs255students/awozniak/p5/Start.html
(Step by step instructions and pictures for making pinwheels)

Peace Events from the United Nations Calendar for Peace 2003

“The United nations Calendar for peace is a record of many of humankind’s efforts to abolish war and poverty and to establish a world of peace and prosperity for all, on this small planet.”

11 September
World-wide prayers in memory of the September 11 terrorist attacks

27 September
East Timor became 191st member of the United nations 2002.

5 October
World Teachers day

Pope Paul VI urged ‘no more war’ before UN General Assembly, New York, 1965.

16 October
World Food Day
UN Food and Agriculture Organisation founded, Rome 1945.

6 November
International Day For Preventing The Exploitation Of The Environment In War And Armed Conflict

16 November
International Day of Tolerance – adopted in 1995 in then Paris Declaration, when UNESCO celebrated its 50th anniversary. “Tolerance is harmony in difference.”

3 December
International Day of Disabled persons.
Yes, I understand. Understanding brings peace.