

Sustained shared thinking

Transcript of video 1 of 1

This video is available from <https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/p-10/transition-school/continuity-curriculum-pedagogies/sustained-shared-thinking>

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Annette Woods:

Associate Professor
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Classrooms where children are engaged in sustained shared thinking are classrooms where problem-based learning will be happening — where children are actually able to consider enquiry and to enquire about the world, and where they may indeed be thinking about critical literacy and critical higher-order thinking, by engaging together, by thinking about what other children within their spaces are thinking, by thinking about a variety of perspectives, and coming to an understanding that the world is not something that has a right and a wrong, but that in fact people think differently.

Rae Welch:

Prep Teacher
Jamboree Heights State
School

[reading a letter from the Tooth Fairy] 'I have some sad news. Last week there was a big storm and my house collapsed. Do you have any ideas? Please write back to me if you can help. From your friend, Sparkles the Tooth Fairy.'

[to the students] When you get yours I would like you to just draw what you can imagine the Tooth Fairy's house might look like. And then we'll put all our ideas together and come up with a really special house for the Tooth Fairy.

Rae Welch:

I set that activity up for thinking to occur by initially asking the children just to do their own drawing. It was their own ideas from the stimulus of the Tooth Fairy letter. So they were captivated, they were interested. It's very relevant to these children at the moment because lots of them are losing their teeth. But it was just their little notetaking — clarify their own thoughts in their heads, and build on their own thoughts as they were doing it, to then share with the class.

Student 1:

A light.

Rae Welch:

A light for the Tooth Fairy. Why do you think the Tooth Fairy's house needs a light out the front? I like it.

Student 1:

So she can see.

Rae Welch:

So she can see. When does she fly again?

Student 1:

At night.

Rae Welch:

She flies at night time. So why do you think a light out the front of her house might be a good idea?

Student 2:

So she can see where she's flying.

- Rae Welch: The purpose of sharing their thinking was to build on the ideas, to recognise other people's ideas as positive things, and to help them extend their own thoughts and extend their own designs. They could just have a look and oh that was a good idea, I can include that. I can adapt mine this way and that. So just, you know, more ideas, more brains to create it, to build on their own initial one.
- Rae Welch: Using all those ideas that we've come up with, see if you can have another go at drawing a beautiful strong big house.
- Rae Welch: I gave the children time to think to start with. I like to think that every child has ... full of imaginative ideas and I want them to be able to express their own ideas and not always be led by the first child who's answered the question. Therefore they've had a chance, they've done their own thinking, they've got it down there on paper. And they could then, throughout the lesson, build on their ideas with everybody else's. But they've got their own ownership of it and haven't had to just copy from someone else.
- Student 3: Fairy.
- Rae Welch: Fairy, and why did you write that there?
- Student 3: Because they know which house is the fairy's house.
- Rae Welch: So they know where it's the Tooth Fairy's house. And then over here is what you designed after hearing everybody else's ideas and you've now got a house. Tell me all about this one again.
- Student 3: Those are the bricks and those are the teeth and that's the sparkles and there's the light and that's the door ...
- Annette Woods: That's an extremely important thing for our children in classrooms to be learning. Learning to understand about other people's perspectives, learning how to get on together, learning how to lead and how to follow. Actually understanding that by working together and collaborating, and understanding each other's perspectives, that we indeed ourselves are learning a lot more than we might if we were thinking in a more individual sense.