

Sutherland Dianella Primary School

Social **C**ooperative **L**earning **S**kills

Pronounced: “Skill Us”

The Vision & The Project

Cooperative Learning is a powerful educational strategy in which **Social Skills** need to be explicitly taught. Teaching “Social Skills” (eg how to negotiate) is a challenge many teachers face in schools, especially as diversity increases in the student population. Therefore, both students and teachers need resources and strategies to help turn diversity into a positive force that will help to develop students as individuals as well as supporting the growth of others. With this in mind the idea of a resource that would benefit both teachers and students was born.

This resource would be a video that would demonstrate 4 –5 Social Skills -

- staying on task and ignoring distractions,
- active listening,
- negotiating and
- accepting differences

and explain the “do’s” and “do not’s” of each skill in a fun and imaginative way that would appeal to other children.

The students’ **ownership** became embedded in this **multidimensional project**. They were inspired and intrinsically motivated to succeed in what was now seen as a **commercially viable project** that would compete and be sold on the open market. If this was to be the successful project the students envisaged, we needed to enlist the wider community to up skill us in areas in which we had very little experience or knowledge eg video camera techniques, use of editing software and creating suitable background music were just the tip of the iceberg.

The class worked as a team with me knowing as little as the students - because of this we developed a problem solving approach to our learning that helped us persevere against the many obstacles we faced. Students took on **the responsibility of their own learning** and my job as the facilitator was to seek out the expertise needed.

The extent to which the project is innovative or reflects excellence in an educational setting:

Innovativeness:

- **Designed by students** as a resource to enhance and support teachers’ teaching and student learning.
- **Authentic real life situation**, beginning at the “grass roots” of finding a solution to a problem (how to teach social skills) to naming, marketing and selling the finished product.
- Children conducted **market surveys** with other metropolitan and country teachers to discover if it would be a viable and marketable product.
- As far as we can ascertain there is **no other project** involved in producing a **school resource** that teaches “social skills” to children and teachers and is also produced by the children themselves.
- William Glasser states, “We remember 80% of what we experience personally, but 95% of what we **teach someone else.**”
What better way to teach and practise Social Skills, which are necessary to work cooperatively than have the students teaching other children and teachers via the medium of video.
- Tailored the **curriculum** to the project. (Not the project to the curriculum)

- Sutherland Dianella Primary School is the only primary school involved in the Edith Cowan University **STEP UP! Programme**, a community service, peer-tutoring initiative which is generally located in secondary schools. The **STEP UP!** Peer tutoring proverb reflects Glasser's quoted statement: Tell me and I forget; Teach me and I remember, Involve me and I understand. Our project incorporated skills and knowledge that the Step-Up! Tutors were able to provide. This experience was able to enhance their communication and interpersonal skills..

Excellence in an educational setting:

- Flexibility of the Outcomes and Standards Framework made this project not only possible but also a very **intrinsically motivating, open-ended, authentic learning experience** for students ensuring that they have the "knowledge, skills, understanding, attitudes and values they will need to lead successful lives" in this century.
- Using Cooperative Learning as a **key pedagogical strategy** to support the Principles of Learning, Teaching and Assessment and the 13 Overarching Learning Outcomes (in particular Values) as outlined in the Curriculum Framework.
- Students took **responsibility of their own learning** working collaboratively with each other, and the **wider community**. They developed close relationships and **established partnerships** with Edith Cowan University, Mt Lawley Senior High School, Solutions IT, other teachers from both metropolitan and country schools and parents.
- Demonstrates how technology can be **integrated** into the curriculum and used to supplement and develop instruction.
- Creative use of using **computers as a tool** in the classroom on a daily basis.
- "Enterprise" in the learning area of Technology & Enterprise is often overlooked, but this project recognised the **enterprise component** and developed these attributes in the children improving their **creative and critical thinking skills, leadership qualities and time management skills**. All these skills were crucial when unexpected problems arose and needed to be solved within a short time frame in order to meet the deadline. Because of this project students have excellent enterprise skills that have been put to the test in an authentic real world situation.

Relevance of the project in addressing a need or opportunity within the school and community.

The aim of this innovative project was to provide a much needed **teaching resource** that would be beneficial for **both** teachers and students and would deliver an example and understanding of Cooperative Learning "Social Skills" in an **educative** and **entertaining** medium.

The project also provided the students with the opportunity of embracing the **wider community**. They interacted and worked cooperatively with 3rd year media studies students from Edith Cowan University, teachers from the media department of Mt Lawley Senior High School, technology experts from Solutions IT and parents with expertise.

The extent to which the project demonstrates innovative classroom practice which impacts positively on student learning.

- Achieved outcomes for **ALL** 13 Overarching Learning Outcomes
- Achieved many specific outcomes in the following **learning areas**:
English, Mathematics, The Arts, Society & Environment,
Technology & Enterprise, Health & Physical Education
- Catered for different student abilities and interests.
- Provided open-ended opportunities in a rich task setting giving students authentic learning experiences.
- Elevated the self-esteem of all students
- Students negotiated parts of the curriculum that were relevant to this project.

- Practised higher-level thinking / problem solving skills – analysing, explaining, synthesising, elaborating etc.
- Practised critical / creative thinking skills
- Technology used to supplement and develop instruction
- Integrated creative use of computers as a tool on a daily basis
- Developed skills in using cross-platform software.
- Peer tutoring became the norm. as students passed on knowledge they had gained from external experts.
- Own development and practise of social skill development
- Inclusion
- Embraced the wider community
- Developed Enterprise and Marketing skills
- Rich task providing open-ended student directed education.

Conclusion

The making of this student/teacher resource was a **powerful educational experience**. It provided an effective character building process that along the way helped to develop important social values whilst at the same time achieving many academic outcomes.

This project fostered the students' abilities to work with and appreciate each other's differences. They learnt to depend on each other as they gave and received emotional and academic support that helped them persevere against the many obstacles they had to overcome.

It developed and enhanced students' **cognitive, linguistic and social abilities** giving them values for living as they work towards being productive citizens in our multicultural and technological society.

Debra Parry

WHAT HAD TO BE ACHIEVED

<u>Task</u>	<u>Strand</u>	<u>Sub-strand</u>
Choose/vote on Social Skills that were important in a classroom setting and could be scripted so that they were entertaining whilst remaining educative.	Society & Environment Health & Physical Education	
Use the writing process script write. Students then discussed which script would be best. Often two or more scripts would be combined to create the best possible.	English	Writing
Storyboard script – This needed to be taught and formed part of the students’ portfolios.	Technology & Enterprise The Arts English	
Discussion and decision making on appropriate props to use and how they would be paid for.		
Choose actors, directors, camera persons, props etc.	The Arts Technology & Enterprise	Drama
Learn and develop camera techniques that would portray a professional look.	English Technology & Enterprise	Viewing
Learn and develop video editing skills using Studio DV software	Technology & Enterprise	
Develop time-management plan to ensure deadlines were met.		
Conduct oral surveys regarding the viability of what was being produced and to assess market potential	English Technology & Enterprise	Listening & Speaking
Learn and develop skills in using a music software that would produce suitable music for the video.	The Arts Technology & Enterprise	Music
Create voice overs	Technology & Enterprise English	? Speaking & Listening
Liase & cooperative with the wider community eg ECU	English	Speaking & Listening
Discuss/vote for the video name that will be a selling point and		

help to explain what the video is about.		
Market research to decide on an acceptable price to sell the video	Technology & Enterprise Mathematics	? Number
Discussion on the number of videos that needed to be sold before a profit was made	Mathematics	Number
Design Video Cover	The Arts	Art
Set up production of first 50 video which were pre-sold	Technology & Enterprise	
Design an advertisement for the video	The Arts	Art
Discussion/vote best way of marketing the video and how to ensure we are using the right advertising for our clientele	Technology & Enterprise	
Sending accounts and receipts – keeping records of Income and expenditure.	Mathematics	Number