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Maya Gunawardena  
*University of Canberra*

Bernard Brown  
*University of Canberra*

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## Fostering Values Through Authentic Storytelling

Maya Gunawardena  
Bernard Brown  
University of Canberra

*Abstract: Stories are used for diverse pedagogical purposes. Storytelling is a culturally inclusive and widely used pedagogical technique. However, the success of storytelling interventions in education can be dependent upon how teachers engage students to analyse experiences, and events to gain deeper insights to influence change in their thinking and behaviour. This paper firstly provides a literature review which synthesises Australian Curriculum content and outcome-based approaches used in values education in primary schools including storytelling. Secondly, it offers a novel taxonomy supported by a pedagogical model for storytelling. The proposed pedagogical model contains a constructivist process that can enable teachers to catalyse students' thinking to reflect on their own ethical behaviour, values, and actions. Metaphorically, stories and the process of storytelling enable them to understand themselves through mirrors and others through windows. The pedagogical model explains how wisdom is obtained to influence students' behaviour as opposed to only developing students' understanding.*

**Keywords:** The Australian Curriculum; values education; storytelling; pedagogies; primary school.

### Introduction

Values education should have a fundamental role in school education (MCEETYA, 2008, Lovat, 2009; Mitchell, 2012; Lovat, 2019) as it contributes to increases in students' emotional intelligence, capacity to have greater self-control and enhanced cognitive functioning (Coskun & Oksuz, 2019, Lovat, et al., 2011). Values education has also been connected to greater social competence and effective social interaction (Weissberg, 2019). Emotional intelligence and social competence have direct influences on health and wellbeing of a person. The understanding of values is part of a holistic approach to education that does not compartmentalise different components of learning (Lovat, et al., 2011). There is a consensus among school leaders that "schools play a vital role in promoting the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, moral, spiritual and aesthetic development and wellbeing" of children (MCEETYA, 2008, p.4). However, values education is diverse, sensitive, personalised and evidence is limited on the effectiveness of the pedagogies used in schools (Taylor, Taylor & Hill, 2019).

The purpose of this paper is to critically examine the extant literature on explicit learning outcomes-based approaches to values education in primary schools, and the place of values in the Australian Curriculum. Secondly, the paper will introduce a purposeful storytelling framework for primary school learners which has been designed by embedding

key learning principles. These key principles were adapted from a range of social constructivist learning theories presented by scholars such as Dewey (1916), Vygotsky (1978), and Bruner (1990) who discuss effective principles that enhance students' understanding through effective meaning making processes. The proposed framework not only offers opportunities to develop students' knowledge and understanding of values but also aims to provide primary school students with chances to reflect on their own behaviour and actions; understand themselves through mirrors and others through windows (Wright, et al., 2008; Sanders, Isbell, & Dixon, 2020) to gain deeper knowledge, insights and wisdom into people, their behaviours and communities. A mirror provides an opportunity for students to reflect on their own behaviour, understanding how they react to situations and a window provides an opportunity to view someone else's experience. Thus, mirrors and windows will allow students to understand their own perspectives and to compare and contrast them to those of other students to get deeper insights into human behaviour and actions and how they influence and impact on others psychological wellbeing (Sanders, Isbell, & Dixon, 2020; Wright et al, 2008). An inquiry into how teachers can provide such opportunities in the classroom is worthwhile in order to offer useful suggestions for empowering teachers. Hence, this paper sets out to answer the following research questions.

1. What are the prominent approaches and considerations for fostering values in primary schools?
2. How does the proposed authentic storytelling framework enable the fostering and nurturing of values in the primary school?

The recent COVID 19 crisis has demonstrated the importance of education with a strong emphasis on values. A lack of sensitivity towards others in the community has been a dilemma that authorities attempt to address in trying to combat the virus. Further, the early years of education are crucial for developing attitudes, self-regulation, and a growth mindset (Wright et al., 2008). While there is no magical solution or 'one size fits all' approach to values education, evidence suggests that it can enhance emotional and social competence (Dusenbury & Weissberg, 2018; Weissberg, 2019) through an appropriate and thoughtful intervention. Designing systemic programs or pedagogies needs consolidation of effective principles of learning.

This paper first synthesises approaches to fostering values, then it describes the proposed storytelling model that allows students to engage in wondering (questioning), pondering (thinking and reflecting) and enlightening (obtaining a greater knowledge) to foster values. The pedagogy suggested here is developed based on five social constructivist learning principles that create synergies between "intellectual depth, inter-relational capacity and self-reflection" (Lovat, 2005, p. 2). As Lovat explains, the purpose of intellectual depth is "to drive students towards dealing with the full array of facts and details related to any topic" (p.5) (in other words to avoid surface factual learning), and to "induct students into the skills of interpretation, communication, negotiation, and reflection" (p. 5). This kind of learning "engages the whole person in depth of cognition, social and emotional maturity, and self-knowledge" (Lovat, 2005, p.5). We argue that storytelling provides teachers valuable opportunities for allowing learners to engage in interpretation, communication, negotiation, and reflection to gain deeper insights into matters under discussion. Narrative inquiry provides students with means to construct knowledge by examining and reflecting on how stories connect to their lived experience (Chan, 2017). However, sharing stories with students requires planning, and purposeful guidance informed by clear objectives and effective pedagogical strategies if students are to meaningfully engage with them (Strangeways & Papatraianou, 2016). Furthermore, Strangeways and Papatraianou (2016) argue that narrative inquiry also develops perceptual skills in problem solving and understanding other perspectives and making sense of experience.

## **Definitions and the Context**

### **What are Values?**

Defining values can be a challenging task as the definitions may vary based on the context in which they are used or the disciplinary lenses used to conceptualise understandings; thus, there is no consensual definition of what constitutes values. In psychology, “values are the motives for action, and, as such they ultimately determine the specific consequences...” whereas in sociology and anthropology “values are considered to be the basic determinants of social action...” (Hechter et al., 1993, p. 1). Different cultural and social groups have different values, and they interpret values differently according to their cultural backgrounds. Values are not neutral they are diverse and contested especially in the context of a multicultural and multifaith based society like Australia is in the 21st century. However, it is important to note that some “values are likely to be universal” (e.g., freedom, equity, compassion etc.) they are grounded in universal human needs, such as social needs, survival needs and welfare needs (Schwartz, 2012, p. 4). Thus, there can be commonality and universality in values structures though they are labelled or interpreted differently by different groups of people within contemporary Australian society. Community values such as respect and tolerance of other viewpoints are important in the context of a pluralist democratic society.

An ongoing debate is if or how values shape one’s behaviour, and how values are constructed individually, socially, or politically. Another debate is focused on whether values are homogenous to a particular culture or have universal application across cultures, religions, and societies. As Oyserman (2002) argues, values lead to individual and collective actions. Social structures mirror the values as they are “repository of values” (Oyserman, 2002, p. 16152) and they have a strong influence on generating individual dispositions for adopting values. Despite a lack of strong empirical research evidence on direct impact on values education, explicit attention to teaching values has yielded some promising results and many schools prioritise and promote fostering values (Lovat, et al., 2011). Research also indicates that values link to prosocial behaviour which positively impacts on increasing achievement in education (Nielsen, 2010; Taylor et al., 2017). Therefore, the profound need for values education is reflected in the design of the Australian Curriculum (Mitchell, 2012; Taylor, Taylor & Hill, 2019).

### **Values Education and the Australian Curriculum**

The Australian Curriculum promotes the role of values education; however, the difficulty lies in the way it incorporates values into the three-dimensional curriculum and its rationale for values education. Even though the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians has influenced the construction of the Australian Curriculum (MCEETYA), the Australian Curriculum does not encapsulate values as explicitly as the Melbourne Declaration. It can be argued that unlike in the Melbourne Declaration, values in the Australian Curriculum are not represented transparently in its three-fold overarching goals: confident and creative individuals, active and informed citizens, and successful learners (ACARA, 2019). Values education in curriculum is complex, and though it can occupy a prominent role (Mitchell, 2012) it can be obscured in the given and the hidden curriculum. (Taylor, Taylor & Hill, 2019).

Values have a significant role in the Australian Curriculum design and its related elements are clearly visible in several domains of the Curriculum. For example, aspects of values are located in the four of the seven general capabilities: Ethical Behaviour,

Intercultural Understanding, Personal and Social Capability, and Critical and Creative Thinking (ACARA, 2019). The cross-curricular priorities also involve addressing Australian Values (such as compassion, fair go, equality, freedom etc) and extending students’ horizons through an understanding of Australia’s original custodians, the Indigenous people and their histories, promoting environmental sustainability and connecting to Asian cultures. An examination of the eight learning areas also shows that some learning descriptors aim to develop students’ affective skills. Particularly, in major strands in the Humanities and Social Sciences Curriculum such as History, Geography and Civics and Citizenship, a large scope of the Australian values is covered. These skills can also be harnessed effectively to increase students’ awareness and engagement with values when they are part of a strategic pedagogical approach.

One of the general capabilities, ‘personal and social capability’ encompasses students’ “personal/emotional and social/relational dispositions, intelligences, sensibilities and learning” (ACARA, 2019, n. p.). The Curriculum also identifies four areas of developing this capability: self-awareness and management and social awareness and management. These are further elaborated in the Curriculum by providing elements and elaborations (from 1a, 1b to level 6) to enhance students’ development of social emotional capability by an understanding of social awareness and management from F to 10. Table 1 demonstrates the attributes that are listed under each area of this capability in the Curriculum.

Individual		Social	
Self-awareness	Self-management	Social awareness	Social management
recognise emotions	express emotions appropriately	appreciate diverse perspectives	communicate effectively
recognise personal qualities and achievements	develop self-discipline and set goals	contribute to civil society	work collaboratively
understand themselves as learners	work independently and show initiative	understand relationships.	make decisions negotiate and resolve conflict
develop reflective practice	become confident, resilient and adaptable.		develop leadership skills.

**Table 1: Elements of the learning continuum of Personal and Social Capability in the Australian Curriculum F-10**

The Australian Curriculum also states that “personal and social capability skills are addressed in all learning areas and at every stage of a student’s schooling. However, some of the skills and practices implicit in the development of this capability can be most explicitly addressed in specific learning areas” (ACARA, 2019, n.p.). This means teachers have the responsibility to see how they can engage with values in their teaching of all subject areas and learning opportunities.

Another area in which values are embedded in the Australian Curriculum is in the general capability of Ethical Understanding. As stated in the Curriculum it is expected that “students develop ethical understanding as they identify and investigate the nature of ethical concepts, values and character traits, and understand how reasoning can assist ethical judgement” (ACARA, 2019, n.p.). Values and interpreting values are a core part of ethical understanding and practice. This capability is intended to foster “personal values and attributes such as honesty, resilience, empathy and respect for others’, and the capacity to act with ethical integrity” (ACARA, 2019, n.p.). There are four elements that are interrelated,

and students continue to increase ethical understanding as they mature by their chronological age. That continuum, as depicted in the curriculum, is shown in Table 2 below:

<b>Understanding of ethical concepts and issues</b>	<b>Reasoning when making decisions and acting ethically.</b>	<b>Exploring rights and responsibilities of individuals</b>
recognise ethical concepts	reason and make ethical decisions	examine values
explore ethical concepts in context.	consider consequences reflect on ethical action.	explore rights and responsibilities consider points of view

**Table 2: Elements of the learning continuum of *Ethical Understanding* in the Australian Curriculum F-10**

One of the other general capabilities, intercultural understanding, caters to developing student’s values towards “their own cultures, languages and beliefs, and those of others” (ACARA, 2019, n.p.) and “intercultural understanding involves students learning about and engaging with diverse cultures in ways that recognise commonalities and differences, create connections with others and cultivate mutual respect” (ACARA, 2019, n.p.). In the Curriculum, students have the capacity to develop such understanding and dispositions to cultivate values such as curiosity, care, empathy, reciprocity, respect and responsibility, open-mindedness, and critical awareness, and develop new and positive intercultural behaviours. The learning continuum is shown in table 3 below:

<b>Recognising culture and developing respect</b>	<b>Interacting and empathising with others</b>	<b>Reflecting on intercultural experience and taking responsibility</b>
investigate culture and cultural identity	communicate across cultures	reflect on intercultural experiences
explore and compare cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices	consider	challenge stereotypes and prejudices
develop respect for cultural diversity	develop multiple perspectives empathise with others	mediate cultural difference

**Table 3: Elements of the learning continuum of *Intercultural Understanding* in the Australian Curriculum F-10**

Further to such general capabilities, some aspects of values education are also embedded into the core subject areas of education, particularly Humanities and Social Sciences curriculum and the cross-curricular priorities where Australia’s priority areas for developing students’ knowledge and understanding of Indigenous perspectives, environmental sensitivities and Australia and its Asian neighbours. The structure of the Curriculum allows flexibility for teachers’ and entrusts their abilities to unpack and integrate values effectively into their classroom experiences and practice. However, this does not guarantee that every teacher sees the hidden purpose of the curriculum for a such a valuable area of education, which can contribute to addressing major issues within our schools such as bullying, aggressive behaviour, racism and discrimination.

Values education is integrated in Australian schools as evident in the Curriculum design and related policy documents provided for teachers. The Australian Government, National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools was introduced in 2005 to support teachers to understand and teach Australian values (Australian Government, 2005). While the introduction of this framework was useful, there was a disconnect between this document and the Australian Curriculum (which came later) due to the expectation that school leaders and teachers were accountable for embedding these values into teaching and

learning and provide opportunities, guidance and support to foster these values among students.

### **Current Pedagogies for Fostering Values**

The current literature advocates for teachers to have the knowledge and capacity to implement meaningful values education (Brady, 2011; Taylor, Taylor & Hill, 2019). There is a recognition that a natural learning philosophy needs to be supported and implemented by specific pedagogical strategies such as the community enquiry approach and Positive Behaviours for Learning (PBL).

Earlier research has suggested that teachers and schools play a limited role in inculcating values, scholars such as Talcott Parsons argued that families act as ‘factories’ that shape one’s personality (Parsons & Bales, 1995, p. 16). There still exists “a de facto pessimism” (Lovat, 2009, p.1) for values education yet many scholars today seem to believe that teachers can make a difference in the way students develop cognitively, emotionally and socially (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Hattie, 2004; Lovat, et al., 2011, Weissberg, 2019). Therefore, it is important to examine the ways in which values education can be enhanced and developed in school education.

The prominent French sociologist, Emile Durkheim identifies the need for a natural approach that posited the idea that “the class is small society” (Durkheim, 1961, p. 148) where students can generally implicitly acquire moral and ethical behaviour. Natural learning involves the need for modelling good behaviour so students can be influenced to act with greater ethical integrity and authenticity. While this functional view is still relevant, it cannot be taken for granted that every teacher can influence students to be morally responsive. The natural approach does not provide much structure and guidance and its effectiveness can entirely depend on the teachers’ and school community and their interest in values education. The Positive Behaviours for Learning approach (Beamish, & Bryer, 2019), which is a program that enhances student participation is used in many Australian schools. The purpose of this program is to discourage problem behaviour by introducing positive behaviour to help students to identify acceptable behaviour, in doing this student are challenged to examine their own beliefs, motives and values.

While the natural learning approach can assist in fostering values, classroom-based pedagogies also play a critical role in the implementation of values-based education and realising its benefits. The community of enquiry approach (Fisher, 2003) is a process driven approach where students become more rational and create perspectives about values through discussions which generate a caring classroom climate. Fisher claims that this enquiry in a community “has a dual aspect: a rational structure for effective thinking and shared ideas, and a moral structure of mutual respect and shared democratic values” (Fisher, 2013, p. 54). In this process of enquiry students make meaning via discussion with others about topics selected by teachers or by the students themselves. A community of philosophical enquiry can become the “context for a particular and powerful kind of moral conversation” (Fisher, 2013, p.54). This pedagogical method has the potential to integrate students’ awareness and participation in values related activities and conversations by providing them with opportunities to critically examine issues and form viewpoints based on values.

## Narrative\Approaches

In the literature narrative approaches are underpinned by the conviction that a careful alignment of pedagogical approaches can be efficacious in enabling student learning about values. These approaches also have to be tailored for the cultural and learning contexts they are practiced in and include opportunities for students to engage in meaningful thinking about values. Studies suggest that deeper thinking and reflection can enrich students' engagement with values through narratives which carry ethical dilemmas and issues. Studies also suggest that processes premised on collaborative and dialogue further enhance student learning through storytelling. There is broad agreement that narratives and ethical problems which are connected to students' lived experience are more effective and appropriate than manufactured or decontextualised learning content.

A plethora of learning outcome-based approaches have been developed by scholars to foster values, yet there is little research on how teachers implement them in practice (Strangeways & Papatraianou, 2016). For example, Berkowitz (2011) presents a series of activities such as peer interactive strategies, moral dilemma discussion, character studies and various other activities. Halstead and Taylor (2000) provide a comprehensive review of literature of pedagogical approaches used. They identify different types of approaches underpinning the ways values are inculcated among students. Such approaches include embedding values into civics and religious education, national curriculum subjects such as English and History, co-curricular activities, and whole school approaches. They also indicate the use of discussion based or story-based approaches such as circle times, are popularly used in teaching values. Halstead and Taylor (2000) believe that the quality of values education can be further improved by "carefully thought out and targeted research" (p. 190) and practice. This sentiment is also echoed by Strangeways and Papatraianou (2016) in relation to pre-service teacher education programs.

Storytelling or narrative approaches take various shapes and suggest diverse pedagogical structures. Storytelling is a universally accepted teaching and learning culturally inclusive technique which is also embedded in the 8 ways framework by Yunkaporta (2010) for teaching Australian indigenous students. The 8 ways framework shows evidence of the importance of stories as stories have a long history in human learning. 'Circle time' is a popular method (Damon, 1991; Emilson, & Johansson, 2013) used in early education contexts to allow students to talk about values and appropriate behaviour and consequences. In circle times, young children discuss problems (tell and listen) they encounter on a day-to-day basis with potential ethical solutions. Research demonstrates there is significant impact of 'circle times' in student learning (Lang, 1996; Housego & Burns, 1994). However, scholars have alerted that students' contributions in circle times discussion can be superficial, if they are not encouraged to think carefully to build on what has been said before (Halstead and Taylor, 2000). Thus, the effectiveness this approach can depend on the teachers who use it effectively in their teaching. The different approaches to storytelling evident in the literature indicate that narratives can be a powerful vehicle for allowing students to discuss and think about values but only if they are underpinned by effective pedagogical strategies (Strangeways & Papatraianou 2016).

Approaches to storytelling can also be used to develop students' ethical understanding and engagement with moral dilemmas and issues. Bleazby (2019) proposes a program named the 'Philosophy for Children', which is underpinned by Dewey's ideas on developing ethical understanding through dialogue and shared understanding. This approach, as Bleazby suggests, involves a process of moral problem solving through an inquiry approach (see p.7 of Bleazby's paper for the suggested process). As per experiential learning theory "the learner must think on and be open to experiences in depth, conceptualise experience by comparing

other experiences in terms of similarities and differences, develop problem-solving and decision-making skills” (Coskun & Oksuz, 2019, p. 43). Deep and reflective thinking about narratives and lived experience allow students to form their own understanding and make reasoned ethical decisions informed by core values.

The Ethical Dilemma Story Pedagogy (EDSP) by Taylor, Taylor & Hill (2019) allows students to critically reflect on their decision making in science classes. In this approach, students are presented with an ethical dilemma for further analysis and discussion and then they are asked to make decisions on behalf of the characters in the story using a collaborative inquiry approach. This approach rests on social constructivist principles and can be used in any year level. Similar storytelling approaches are used in community health programs and in their study of digital storytelling, Gubrium et al. (2019) claim that “storytelling approaches allow for complex and contextualized communications” (p.1). Similar interactive literature-based approaches are used in psychology research and practice to bring about their patients’ change through storytelling and this kind of therapeutic interaction is named as ‘Interactive Bibliotherapy’ (Lucas & Soares, 2013) and it brings “about therapeutic interaction between the participant and facilitator” (Hynes, 2019, p.1). Stories help “to promote emotional, social, and cognitive development of children guide children’s thinking, shape their behaviour, and even help solve problems” (Lucas & Soares, 2013, p. 138). This process is associated with reading and dialogues to promote students’ comprehension and then provide insights into matters of concern. ‘Interactive Bibliotherapy’ is provided to address certain behaviour to sensitise students towards social emotional learning. This method involves intentional dialogic interaction to allow students to think about their behaviour and the actions of others. Such explicit interventions are effective, and stories can be memorable and provide stimuli for discussion. As Irwin (1996) argues “people make sense of their lives by plotting their actions and the sequences of the events that make up their lives in stories” (p. 105). As suggested in the Australian Curriculum (see table 1-3 above), through stories teachers can integrate the competencies that are desirable in developing individual awareness and social awareness. In doing this, students are more equipped to interpret, analyse and share their ideas about a range of values and ethical principles that are embedded in stories.

Research studies also support the effectiveness of storytelling in engendering behaviours and dispositions in children which connect with their lived experiences. Koivula, Turja and Laakso (2020) analysed data from their storytelling with 5 to 6-year-old children and found that though children had knowledge of responsible behaviour, they were unable to execute them in their play and they find it is useful to support children in “social emotional reasoning” (p. 163). This study reinforces the need for supporting children with developing not only knowledge but also the ability to transfer that knowledge into real-life practice, which can be challenging. Therefore, explicit pedagogical interventions are critically important in guiding and building students understandings of values and behaviour through storytelling.

### **A Social Constructivist Approach to Values Education**

The literature reviewed identifies the key features of the constructivist approach in empowering learners to engage with values, including building learning through experience, cultural knowledge and participation in social processes. In order for these components of learning to occur studies indicate that student negotiation and interactive dialogue are vital for the construction of ethical awareness and knowledge.

The review of approaches used in fostering values, as discussed above, shows the power of the social constructivist approach in nurturing values, particularly in the early years

of education. Discussion, interaction, scaffolding and negotiation of meaning are integral in the social constructivist approach, where knowledge is constructed based on one's culture, society, and experience (Blue, 2012). This supports Vygotsky's idea that learners "learn as a result of social interactions with others" (Tracy & Morrow, 2006, p. 108). Knowledge is dynamic and is constructed through interactions. The educators play a vital role by offering their learners a suitable platform, sufficient resources, and dialogues where necessary. Hence, 'dialogic reading' (Watkins, 2018) "empowers readers to position themselves as participants in making meaning together with the text and its authors, rather than remaining as mute outsiders to the reading process" (Yang & Wilson, 2006, p. 264).

As Watkins (2018) proposes, external environmental aids such as illustrations, picture cues or prompts serves as important aids for learners to create knowledge through interpretation and analysis. They create knowledge through their socio-cultural lenses. Rosenblatt (2019) argues that the "meaning does not reside readymade" either in readers or in texts, but reading is a by-product of "transaction" that happens between the reader and the text (p. 455). However, young learners may not have sufficient socio-cultural knowledge to engage with the reading; hence, teachers' scaffolding, or necessary interactions are vital in helping them gain deeper insights into societal values. Values need to be negotiated by allowing them to critically reflect on the issues confronted in the stories and make sense of them. Hence, dialogues and negotiation play a significant role in the social constructivist approach and this is different from merely explicitly telling students about something. There is a fine line between explicit approaches where teachers tell students explicitly which require no negotiation and social constructive approaches where the process evolves with discussion.

The proposed model suggested below in this paper has considered the importance of dialogues, scaffolding thinking, and negotiation of meaning in the meaning-making process of storytelling. The proposal below outlines a structured and practical approach to achieve this. The model is underpinned by a range of learning principles which are designed to support and guide the engagement of young students through narratives. The objective of the model is to foster a deeper awareness and understanding of values to ensure students achieve wisdom to critically reflect on their behaviour and others to influence their future actions and behaviour.

### **The Proposed Pedagogical Model**

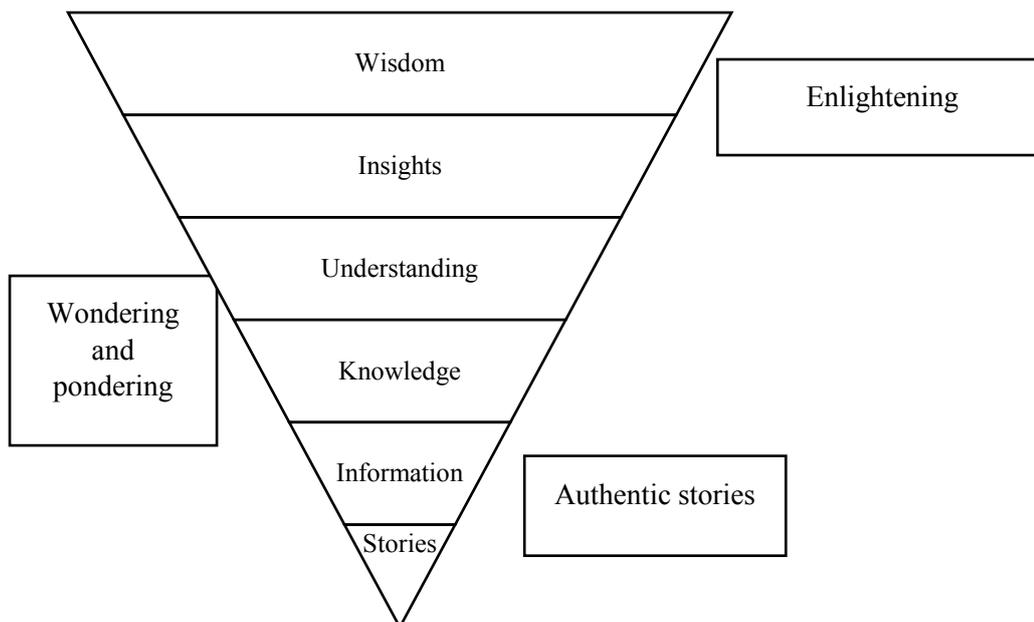
As with the 'Interactive Bibliotherapy' approach, the constructivist approach which has been referred to in this paper throws light on the need for storytelling used by teachers' based on effective scaffolding as an intervention to foster values. It also provides teachers with a suitable intervention for values education as outlined in the Australian Curriculum. Children's literature used in this framework can be used to teach literacy skills and thus literacy can be integrated into the design of the learning experiences. The stories can be used to help to "identify themselves with similar characters" (Lucas, and Soares, 2013, p. 139). The proposed pedagogical model was developed based on five principles that resonate with the constructive learning paradigm.

1. Learning is promoted when students are confronted with real-life encounters (authentic experience); experts argue that learning makes sense to students when they can connect their learning to real-life situations and their experiences (Bruner, 1990).
2. Learning is promoted when students are curious to examine or exploring a scenario or a problem (wondering). This is a basic premise advocated by inquiry learning experts (e.g., Dewey, 1916; Murdoch, 2015). This principle connects with the above principle

- 1 to engage students in exploration and inquiry provide them ownership and authority in learning.
3. Learning is promoted when students interrogate their own thoughts, thoughts of others' and deeply engage in thinking (pondering) Research supports the need for providing thinking time for students to activate their cognitive functions when engineering effective discussions to help students to make sense of the world (Dewey, 1916; Wiliam & Leahy, 2015). Children are active, and organic beings who need freedom and responsibility (Dewey, 1916; Murdock, 2015).
4. Learning is promoted when students are scaffolded to find real life solutions through themselves (this is to allow students to reflect on their understanding of the topic) (enlightening). This principle highlights the need for students reaching at their own conclusions and they interrogate their thoughts to make more sense of the world and people through interactions with their teachers. Research in psychology shows that communicated sense making is a useful endeavour in negotiating meaning (Kellas et al., 2020).
5. Affective skills become a part of their moral repertoire (wisdom); Research suggests that children's lived emotional and social experience will influence their later moral decisions and judgments (Narvaez, 2010). Children who receive the right experience can use "emotions effectively to think out problems, showing superior social skills, moral reasoning, and intelligence" (Narvaez, 2010, p. 80).

In this form of storytelling, students should be able to connect stories with themselves as the stories illustrate ethical problems in life. To do this they ask questions, and this leads to their thinking being facilitated, and they get an opportunity to unpack the deeper messages which can be stored in their repertoire. One might argue that young children are incapable of such levels of enlightenment or developing executive functioning skills, but we argue otherwise. Such an argument is informed by child development and research evidence and therefore, teachers need to be strategic in using the dialogic pedagogies for purposeful dialogues that trigger students' affective centres of the brain (Soto, 2019). This process of grappling with the core messages from stories can be facilitated through class discussions. Tables 1-3 above show how the model fits in with curriculum recommendations proposed strategies for developing self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social management.

The framework described above adopts the taxonomy presented in figure 1 below.



**Figure 1: The taxonomy of wisdom**

**Principle 1 (Authenticity)**

Learning is promoted when students are confronted with real life encounters where their perspectives are challenged (intellectual depth as discussed in Lovat, 2005). This proposition highlights the need for exposing students to authentic stories, where they encounter values in real-life instances. It is important to “address real-life situations that children might be experiencing and help them to analyse and learn how to cope with problems” (Lucas & Soares, 2013, p. 138). The use of modern children’s literature where the stories represent real-life encounters is a necessary component to achieving this objective. These stories need to be carefully written to avoid incorrect or unintended negative messages which may be implicit in them. The stories written for this purpose need to be scrutinised for their clarity of values and the moral messages. It is also important to remember that stories are intersubjective and that they mean different things to different people because each person interprets stories through the lens of their own experiences. However, pondering about such perspectives is indeed worthwhile to allow students to draw insights by interrogating their own thoughts.

This principle (authenticity) is used in the selection of stories. We argue that story selection needs to be purposeful and careful to avoid confusion and unwanted emotional reactions. We propose that the stories need to be authentic and dramatise real encounters. However, narration needs to incorporate the techniques used in children’s literature. So, it will have “effective prompts for encouraging children’s creativity, potential trouble spots such as aggression in stories, and ways that storytelling can enhance home-school relationships” (Wright et al., 2008, p. 363). Such stories can provide an effective platform for students to think deeply and critically about human behaviour to increase their understanding of values through engagement with narrative.

### **Principle 2 (Wondering, Curiosity)**

Learning is promoted when students are curious to examine a scenario or a problem (this drives effective communication or inter-relational capacity). Igniting students' curiosity contributes to transforming learners into a different mode of thinking by creating an openness to discover new perspectives and viewpoints. Curiosity allows students to utilise their metacognitive abilities to wonder and think deeply about the situation provided and identify key values.

Once the suitable story is selected, it is now a teacher's role to make the story memorable to learners by making it accessible slowly through a critical inquiry approach. The sequence in which stories are presented along with appropriate prompt questions enables and activates students' executive functioning skills as they are thinking while listening to the stories. The process requires that students halt, think, and read further. Our suggestion is for the teacher to read the most important part of the story and pause to get students to wonder. Wondering allows time for thinking and this is an important stage before they can articulate what they think as questions. Before questions are asked providing them time to think is vitally important as every student gets a chance to activate their thinking skills. Often, teachers tend to speed up this process and there is insufficient time for students to think deeply and critically. Thus, we propose teachers allow students time to think before they articulate their thoughts as in comments or questions.

### **Principle 3 (Pondering, have Questions)**

Learning is promoted when students interrogate their own thoughts, the thoughts of others' and deeply engage in thinking. This also drives effective communication and inter-relational capacity. The thinking process involves students' abilities to see how they can translate what they think of a situation into their own language and discuss with other students to understand their perspectives and raise questions about the situations. They can also examine the values which may present different perspectives and ways of understanding these in a real-life context. Hearing and discussing different perspectives is very important as it can create broader awareness and empathy (Koivula, Turja & Laakso, 2020). The discussion processes need to be teacher directed but students are active participants and are encouraged to question and critique the messages identified in the stories.

### **Principle 4 (Enlightening, contemplate)**

Learning is promoted when students can see life solutions through reflecting on their own experience (this is to allow students to reflect on their understanding of the topic and is an example of the mirror metaphor). Enlightening is to "give (someone) greater knowledge and understanding about a subject or situation" (Online Cambridge Dictionary) the teacher being an educator can allow students to understand the situation by prompting them to see the purposeful messages of the narrative. This occurs when students experience and contextualise the messages in their own eyes, not the teacher telling them about them. This process helps to make their understanding of their own and others values more meaningful and long-lasting. There is a fine line between teachers explicitly telling the message and students drawing the message for themselves with teacher scaffolding their thinking. This distinction is one that teachers must be conscious of and refine through professional practice.

When students can see the deep message, they can transfer their understanding into their own way of presenting it. Doing this will help them internalise concepts further and apply them into their lives. In a classroom environment, students can transform the message

in their own way: by writing a story, drawing a picture, acting it out, creating a song or a poem and any other mode of expression. Figure 1 shows the taxonomy of developing students' wisdom.

#### **Principle 5: (Transferring and applying)**

Learning is promoted when students are encouraged to see in stories related actions in real-life. This connection is holistic as it allows for a synergy of the elements: intellectual depth, inter-relational capacity, and self-reflection. In this stage of storytelling, students should be able to examine the scenarios even further by evaluating the entire encounter. This is an opportunity for them to evaluate the consequences of actions (verbal or physical) that can inflict pain on others and vice versa. Our emotional control can be relative and dependent upon the circumstances we are in and the options available. Yet, sustainable emotional control is the strength to be mindful and rational, to be conscious of our personal wellbeing and the wellbeing of others. However, teachers need to be strategic in having these purposeful dialogues that trigger students' affective centres of the brain promoting emotional reactions. Dealing with this can be facilitated through class discussions and open and respectful dialogue. The need for ethical understanding and the importance of morality can be further enhanced through these discussions. The ramifications of inappropriate behaviour need to be identified to encourage positive behaviour based on values.

The model resonates with Lovat's principles of quality teaching. We argue that students develop intellectual depth in the first level of reading responding and thinking, and in the wondering and pondering stages. Once they get enlightened with the meaning of the affective element of the message, they can cultivate inter-relational capacity, which then leads to responsive value laden behaviours. Students can also acquire the capacity for self-reflection and self-awareness. These steps are not necessarily linear or systematic but occur as students develop their intellectual depth further with an appropriate action being reflected in real life circumstances.

#### **Limitations of the Model**

While we are optimistic about this approach to fostering values, we are also aware of the limitations that can impact on the quality of teaching. The effectiveness of this approach is also dependent upon teachers' abilities to guide classroom dialogues assisting students slowly develop value laden behaviour; students need to be engaged in listening, contribute their ideas and reflect on them. Teachers require patience and critical aptitude to respond to students' questions in a manner that sustains and nurtures the students' interest in the story and the key messages it contains. Teachers need to be attentive to the learning process and exercise vigilance to ensure the discussion and activities stayed focused and directed at achieving high levels of student engagement.

#### **Conclusion**

This paper has attempted to critically examine the prominent place that values education occupies in Australian school education. It has firstly outlined the place of values in the Australian Curriculum and then appraised different pedagogical approaches. The discussion has revealed the complexities that teachers may experience in comprehending the given and the hidden curriculum to effectively foster values in teaching. The analysis has

examined academic literature on fostering values in classroom settings to ascertain a better picture of the conceptual and pedagogical landscape of this field. The prominent pedagogical models discussed in literature are aimed at engendering students' awareness and interpretation of the affective domain and the importance of understanding their place in real life situations. However, their remain disjunctions and challenges for teachers to engage with and implement these in classroom settings. Hence, the need for an evidence-based practice where teachers have clear learning outcomes for fostering values and social emotional learning is vital for making a positive difference in student learning (Koivula, Turja, & Laakso, 2020).

This paper has argued that the expectations for teachers to embed and foster values without adequate guidance overburdens them and their role in this process is ambiguous. Research demonstrates that teachers can construct their own versions of the hidden curriculum based on their orientations, attitudes, and individual preferences (Brady, 2011). Brady also argues that teachers need to have their own values fostered for effective teaching by co-constructing values with their learners. We have advocated that teachers have three different influences that determine their practice: individual values, professional values, and social values, which are not the same. More research into teachers' views and practices would benefit from developing good practices in values education. It is important to have teacher ambassadors for values education who have the cognition, interest and viable approaches to instilling values that can transfer across to the real world. There is a positive correlation of students' acquisition of positive values to their level of educational achievement and motivation (Lovat, et al., 2014, Willms, 2000). Therefore, providing fruitful opportunities for students to acquire values with deep insights to influence their behaviour in the classroom and beyond is a paramount responsibility of a teacher. The challenge remains to develop more relevant and effective pedagogical repertoires to bridge the gap between aspirational goals for values education and educational practice (Strangeways & Papatraianou, 2016).

As the pedagogies for values education can be ambiguous and lack clear guidelines it is largely incumbent on teachers' views, backgrounds, and pedagogical dispositions to instigate effective teaching and learning in this area. Hence, this paper has proposed a model to foster values for primary school students through engagement with children's literature based on constructivist learning principles. This proposed macro-operational model is systemic, reciprocal, and sequenced according to key learning principles. In the proposed model, values are negotiated through effective dialogue and exploration: they are not forced upon students or dictated to them. As suggested, this model provides opportunities for teachers to reflect on their approaches to storytelling and trial the proposed approach in their classes. The next phase of investigation will involve empirical research to understand how the model works in practice and to gauge teachers' views about it. Having empirical research findings can further help researchers to ascertain the efficacy of the model to enhance and refine its effective application. As values education continues to occupy a prominent place in the Australian Curriculum and has been shown to have direct benefits for students in regard to social, emotional and cognitive functioning, it is important to develop a repertoire of sustainable and effective pedagogical approaches. This paper argues that a narrative constructivist approach to embedding values in classroom learning is a viable and powerful way of engaging students in developing their wisdom.

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