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**Hanging Out in *The Studio* to Challenge Xenophobia:
Consolidating Identities as Community Writers**

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Hanging Out in *The Studio* to Challenge Xenophobia: Consolidating Identities as Community Writers

Abstract

This article examines findings from a Scottish Social Innovation Fund project carried out in an after-school club known as *The Studio*. Researchers worked alongside artists to engage young people situated within their communities to challenge xenophobic discourses through the creation of positive narratives developed through story and arts-based activities. The work used 'deep hang out theory' to generate a complex account of how the participants mediated the cultural tools surrounding them to produce a community text. Through engaging in an arts-based process the young writers and illustrators developed a sense of belonging within their communities, taking an active, engaged stance as literacy producers of texts that challenged xenophobic discourses. The lessons learned in this informal space are of relevance across contexts where young people wish to engage in creating positive narratives of community cohesion.

Keywords: aesthetic process, xenophobia, children's literature, text producers.

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5 This article examines work emerging from an after-school club in Glasgow for
6 children and young people, *The Studio*, a welcoming space for developing self-
7 confidence and pursuing creative interests. Central to the work emerging from
8 this community space was the role played by arts-based practices, which have
9 been shown to encourage not only social and cognitive development but also to
10 generate initiatives that benefit the community (Heath & Wolf, 2005; Walmsley,
11 2018). As language and literacy researchers working alongside artists, we were
12 drawn to the ways in which children's literature used alongside arts-based methods
13 offered a metaphorical safe space for children and young people to understand the
14 role they could play in creating positive narratives in collaboration with their
15 community that would challenge xenophobia.
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25 This research was situated within a need to disrupt and challenge the pervasive
26 narrative that normalises xenophobic attitudes and behaviours in society (SG,
27 2016:4). In Scotland, the extended 2009 legislation on hate crime, has made it an
28 offence to engage in aggravated harassment based on race, religion, disability and
29 sexual orientation (Bracadale, 2018). The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal
30 Service of Scotland have reported that race hate crimes still account for the
31 highest number of crimes reported, standing at 3249 in 2017, continuing a
32 downward trend since a peak of 4547 in 2011/12 (COPFS, 2018). The Scottish
33 Government response to hate crime, prejudice and community cohesion has
34 acknowledged the need for educators to address issues connected to the increased
35 use of pejorative language used in the media to report on matters connected to
36 migration and the need to be aware that the reporting of international events
37 (especially those related to terror) often creates a backlash of hate targeted
38 randomly across communities, with perpetrators conflating religion and race (SG,
39 2016: 11). It has also been noted that the term hate crime obscures more
40 prevalent types of prejudice and prevents perpetrators addressing their behaviours
41 and attitudes, since they often do not consider themselves capable of having
42 committed a crime (ibid).
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57 An obvious place to situate research that responds to these issues would be within
58 a school context, especially since Scottish educational policy on *Promoting*
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3 *Equality and Diversity* explicitly calls for teachers to ‘develop children who know
4 discrimination is unacceptable’ but more importantly that ‘they know how to
5 challenge it’ (Education Scotland, online). The teaching profession in Scotland
6 places social justice at the heart of its values and asks teachers to personally
7 commit to ‘engage(ing) learners in real world issues ... (in order) to encourage
8 learning our way to a better future’ (GTCS, 2012:5). While schools actively work
9 towards addressing racist incidents through published programmes such as *Show*
10 *Racism the Red Card* (<https://www.theredcard.org/scotland>), many expressed
11 concerns regarding the confidence to tackle sensitive issues and determine the
12 best ways to incorporate anti-racist education into a busy curriculum at a local
13 level (SG, 2016:14). Many teachers feel they are working within a ‘bind of
14 instrumentality’ (Scott, 2010:2), restricted by measurable outcomes, pre-
15 determined outputs and testing. Our perspective as researchers was that *The*
16 *Studio* provided an alternative space that would be conducive to exploring the
17 complex issue of xenophobia through arts-based methods thereby encouraging
18 narratives that explored the complexity of difference. . Insights learned in this
19 informal space would provide valuable insights for tackling racism in formal
20 educational spaces.
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35 The children attending *The Studio* engaged with an aesthetic process (Thompson,
36 2015) that enabled them to transition from being readers and users of children’s
37 literature to producers of community texts (Serafini, 2012) and that offered new
38 perspectives and insights into their community identities. To research the process,
39 we chose to immerse ourselves in the everyday experiences (Walmsley, 2018:277)
40 of *The Studio* drawing upon the work of Clifford Geertz (1998) and his notion of
41 ‘deep hanging out’ to generate a complex account of how the participants
42 mediated the cultural tools (including children’s literature) surrounding them. In
43 this instance, hangout theory captured the day to day moments, the conversations,
44 the storytelling, the artwork, the starts and the stops, as the children engaged in
45 an aesthetic process that propelled their work as text producers forward.
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55 The fact that the researchers and the artist created the process together, guided
56 to some extent by the participants, marks this research process as different from a
57 more traditional ethnographic approach. We were not looking to follow a specific
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3 path or reach a specific aim but to open a space for different ways of talking,
4 creating and thinking. In other words, the lines between methodology and practice
5 became blurred as the research process, mediation strategies and text production
6 all became part of capturing ways of knowing and understanding. In a process that
7 was similar to the research intervention around the issue of xenophobia carried out
8 by Macarena García-González, Soledad Véliz and Claudia Matus (2019), where a
9 challenging picturebook and arts-based practices afforded opportunities to ‘think-
10 through and become-with aesthetic encounters’, we used the ‘aesthetic agentic
11 forces’ of the books as a ‘provocation’ (García-González, Véliz & Matus 2019: 3-4).
12 In our case, the children’s movement through the aesthetic process first involved
13 responding as readers and then as members of a community. Key to initiating the
14 aesthetic process was our collective understanding of the potential of children’s
15 literature to generate multimodal responses on issues that were of importance to
16 the children (Author 2, Others and Author 3).
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28 **Using Children’s Literature Within an Aesthetic Process to Challenge** 29 **Xenophobia** 30 31

32 Xenophobia results from unfounded fears and misinformation about others that
33 leads to a reduced view of the world. It can imply that where we are, is ‘here’, as
34 opposed to strangers or foreigners who are from ‘somewhere else’ and should not
35 be ‘here’. These perceptions create serious social problems that impact on
36 community cohesion, mental and physical health, and the educational futures of
37 marginalised groups. The sensitivities surrounding xenophobia make it a
38 challenging term for children to broach; therefore, we drew upon Sargent’s (2003:
39 233) notion of children’s literature acting as a safe space for readers/viewers to
40 engage in reflection, dialogue, growth and development. The multimodal
41 affordances of children’s literature provided a range of entries into this space
42 because they allowed engagement -often with complex topics- through aural,
43 visual, digital and other modes which may be more comfortable for certain
44 reader/viewers.
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56 As researchers immersed in the field of children’s literature we were aware of the
57 potential of children’s literature to reduce prejudice and educate about diversity
58 (Smith- D’Arezzo 2003); promote cultural concepts (St Amour, 2003); reflect life as
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3 we know it (Strehle, 1999); develop empathy (Cress and Holm 1998; Nikolajeva
4 2013) and confront global issues of injustice (Short, 2011). We understood reading
5 as an active process where texts can function as mirrors, windows and doors (Sims
6 Bishop 1997; Bothelo and Rudman, 2009; Author 3, Another and Author 2), allowing
7 children to see representations of themselves within the text, or alternative world
8 views through the characters, their contexts and their actions. When children are
9 able to see elements of a text that directly relate to their own lives they can
10 develop a sense of 'belonging', thinking themselves into the book, exploring the
11 values revealed in the text, understanding aspects of self that may have previously
12 been concealed (Meek, 1988:35). Surrounding children with such texts can lead to
13 an empowered sense of self and a greater understanding of one's own culture
14 (Gopalakrishnan, 2011). Texts that pose alternative views allow opportunities for
15 children to contrast what they see out of the window with what they see in the
16 mirror. This process of juxtaposition allows young people opportunities to shift and
17 reframe readers views of the world, allowing them to confront truths and
18 falsehoods, trusts and betrayals (Meek, 1998:29). This is akin to crossing the
19 threshold of a door; once the reader has metaphorically crossed, they are
20 propelled forwards towards personal or collective change, conceptually moving
21 readers to become active citizens in the world (Nieto, 2009:xi).

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37 Our approach to the aesthetic process follows James Thompson's understanding of
38 relational aesthetics based on the work of Nicolas Bourriaud (2002) where the
39 focus is on artistic practice as being social and public rather than independent and
40 private (Thompson, 2015: 436). It is a deep, extended process that is carried
41 forward through stages of preparation, execution and exhibition (Thompson, 2015:
42 437). Preparation should be approached openly, honestly and ethically with the
43 stance against xenophobia being clearly articulated. During the execution stage it
44 is important to remember that the aesthetic value is in the co-created moments of
45 'significance and affect' rather than the final outcome of the public exhibition, for
46 it is the process that models the more mutually sympathetic world that is sought
47 (ibid: 439); extending the safe space provided by the texts for participants to
48 listen and respond with attentiveness and patience, to all engaged in the process.
49 The exhibition offers opportunities for knowledge production during its curation,
50 as the narratives are reframed and clarified for public engagement and critique.
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The Research Context and Implementation of the Aesthetic Process

The study took place at the after-school club known as *The Studio*, based in the Partick and Anderston areas of Glasgow. Both areas consist of culturally diverse communities with Partick to the Northern part of Dumbarton Road and Anderston to the South, near the City Centre. The linguistic make-up of the groups reflected the cultural diversity of the areas, with a total of six languages spoken including English, Arabic, Icelandic, Persian, Urdu and Chinese. There were four groups, three of which were at primary school level of education and one at the secondary school level. One group consisted of homeschoolers coming from different parts of the city, while the other three included participants from local schools. Some of the participants were already participating in *The Studio's* activities and some were recruited through word of mouth and leaflets that were handed to local Primary schools. Sara Pinto, a resident artist, ran the activities with the help of volunteers from the MEd in Children's Literature and Literacies at the University of Glasgow. As researchers, we helped, took notes and contributed ideas, with Osman Coban doing most of the 'hanging out' at *The Studio*.

During the preparation stage, Sara Pinto worked closely with the research team to discuss and plan the approaches to be used whilst working with the children. Memos were kept and used to reflect on the process, highlighting points for intervention or a change in approach during the execution stage, such as the opening of two further groups or the use of specific children's literature texts. A range of books were used to generate responses and demonstrate to the children the range of mediums and styles used by authors and illustrators. These included: *Apples & Oranges: Going Bananas with Pairs* by Sara Pinto (the resident artist), *Little Mouse's Big Book of Fears*, by Emily Gravett, *The Arrival*, by Shaun Tan, *Wishtree* by Katherine Applegate (See Appendix for the descriptions of the books and the rationale for choosing them).

One of the outcomes of the project was an exhibition. The purpose of holding an exhibition was threefold: first, it acted as a testament to collaborative creation (Thompson, 2015:439) between the young authors and illustrators and the communities where they lived; second, it provided a space and opportunity for the attendees to engage and experience the work of the young authors and illustrators

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3 with a view to entering into further dialogue regarding the themes of fear and
4 difference and third, it linked the exhibition with the Scottish Refugee Festival.
5 The exhibition was held in a location midway between the two venues in order to
6 allow access for both communities. Under ideal conditions, the young authors
7 would have been involved in the setting -up of the exhibition, but time and access
8 to the venue meant their involvement was at the curation stage where they made
9 decisions on what pieces of work to be included in the exhibition. This stage of the
10 aesthetic process provided a vehicle for the participants to engage in relational
11 solidarity with their community around the theme of xenophobia. Everyone
12 involved in the project was invited to the exhibition and as researchers we
13 attended, continuing to hang out and document the process.
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23 **Research Methods and Analysis**

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26 Human production is often measured in terms of success and failure, whereas this
27 research moves beyond this binary to dwell in a space that exists beyond an
28 obsession with results, satisfaction, deliverables and quantification of human
29 flourishing. It becomes a symbolic space in which to create a complex account of
30 how *The Studio* group mediated the cultural tools surrounding them (Stetsensko,
31 2017) to produce a community text. Our role as researchers was to dwell in the
32 zone, allowing the group to define what they do, helping them question and
33 extend their practices, recording events as they unfolded, engaging in ‘a practice
34 of observation grounded in participatory dialogue’ (Ingold, 2007:87).
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42 It is noteworthy that we talk of dwelling, for the etymology of dwelling can be
43 found within the current German word for the verb to build, ‘bauen’. This has
44 origins in the Old English and High German word *buan* which means to dwell. This
45 meaning encompassed the whole ‘...manner in which one lives one’s life on earth,
46 so I dwell, you dwell is synonymous with I am, you are’ (Ingold, 2000:185).
47 Dwelling in this sense is significant for it allows us to capture the sense of being,
48 experiencing ‘moments of affect’ (Medina and Perry, 2014:120; Author 3 and
49 Another) when the organised arts-based activities gave rise to feelings, beliefs,
50 emotions and embodied responses, that took the children away from the stresses
51 and strains of their everyday lives and allowed them the space to explore the role
52 of being authors and illustrators. The research process diagram demonstrates the
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3 ways in which ‘hanging out’ allowed us to see a different view of what counted as
4 success, as the affective moments became sites for change (Medina and Perry,
5 2014:121) that enabled the children to develop a sense of belonging within their
6 communities. These points of *being* consolidated into points of *doing* as these
7 young text users became active, engaged literacy producers (Serafini, 2012).
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12 **Insert research process diagram near here.**
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15 The study was reviewed and approved by the University of Glasgow ethics
16 committee. Because the study involved vulnerable groups, it was explained to
17 parents and participants in detail with written consent being taken from
18 participants and their carers. The research process diagram shows the ways in
19 which data was collected across the aesthetic process which included memos and
20 minutes from team meetings held during the preparation stage; observation
21 memos of *The Studio* sessions, samples of the children’s artwork; photographs and
22 recordings of on-going team meetings held during the execution stage;
23 photographs, visitor feedback and the gallery plan from the exhibition stage; and
24 recordings from the post-event reflective discussions. The scope and modality of
25 the data invited a thematic approach to analysis which acknowledged the
26 collaborative way in which all the data had been created. Themes relating to the
27 use and production of texts were noted and cross-referenced to the moments of
28 consolidation discussed above to reveal that ‘things started to happen’ when the
29 children attending *The Studio* created a group identity that spurred on a collective
30 design process and production of a community text. The stories surrounding these
31 ‘moments of affect’ are discussed below with an emphasis on their contribution to
32 creating a positive narrative of community cohesion to counter xenophobia.
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47 **Emerging Stories**

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49 The stories emerging were generated by the move from the children being *texts*
50 *users to text producers* (Serafini, 2012). The carefully selected texts provided
51 ‘great jumping in points for ideas’ (reflections from Sara), but not all the books
52 attracted everyone’s attention. The age differences meant it was important to
53 select books that suited everyone in the group, making wordless narratives such as
54 *The Arrival* ideal because they allow readers to take on a co-authoring role,
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3 bringing their own words to the story, but with the support of visual scaffolds
4 provided by the illustrator. To deal with the absence of words, readers have to
5 draw on their imagination as well as their intertextual and cultural knowledge, and
6 when this co-authoring process is carried out within a group, the collective
7 meaning-making encourages readers to think about language, visuals and how
8 narrative is constructed (Author 3 and Another).
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14 **Insert illustration 1 near here.**
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17 While the texts were helpful as a springboard, Sara Pinto was crucial in being able
18 to demonstrate both narrative and illustrative techniques, providing additional
19 tools for the children to express themselves and allowing them to develop
20 confidence in using different mediums to tell their stories. Given the enthusiasm
21 with which they approached the activities, Sara suggested that they consolidate
22 their identities as writers and illustrators and create a ‘society’; a recognised
23 public face for interacting with the local community.
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26 ***The formation of the Young Writers and Illustrators of Glasgow Society***

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31 **Insert illustration 2 near here.**
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35 Sara facilitated the formation of the Society working with the participants to name
36 the *The Young Writers and Illustrators of Glasgow Society*. She helped them design
37 a logo to mark their identity and create a manifesto to mark out the group’s
38 purpose. Manifestos are declarations of the views and beliefs of a group, critiqued
39 by Noddings (2013) as examples of verbal intentions which can be made without
40 any subsequent action. In this instance, we used the term to convey a sense that
41 these ideas were actions in waiting. The manifesto not only highlighted the
42 children’s views of inclusion and literacy, but also demonstrated their acceptance
43 and confidence in themselves as writers. The statements shown in Figure 1
44 highlight the hopes and intentions of the participants, echoing the importance of
45 welcoming everyone to the group and finding a space for telling stories. A degree
46 of ambiguity was expressed regarding the role of mobile phones, with some
47 participants acknowledging the ways in which they could be used to generate ideas
48 that could be written into their stories, while others wished to express their
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3 identity as writers by suggesting that they did not spend all their time on their
4 phones.
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8 **Insert Figure 1**
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10 ***The public work of the Young Writers and Illustrators of Glasgow Society***
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12 After forming their Society, the young members wanted to interact with the
13 community and act on their intentions to tell stories. They did this through
14 community walks, setting up interactive street stalls, holding a public exhibition
15 and using social media.
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20 **Insert illustration 3 near here**
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23 In Anderston, the Society spent time introducing themselves to local shopkeepers
24 and inviting them to their planned exhibition. These spontaneous conversations
25 broke down barriers, causing the shopkeepers to reflect on the expectations they
26 had of local school-aged children, for they had not expected such friendly and
27 purposeful behaviour from school-aged children. Osman who accompanied the
28 children on these visits noted that these impromptu visits often ended with the
29 shopkeepers introducing themselves to the children. In Partick, Sara let the shop
30 owners know beforehand that the group were coming. The group visited the shops,
31 informing staff about their new society and inviting them to share their stories.
32 They used the question from Sara Pinto's *Apples and Oranges* book, "How are you
33 and I alike?", as a trigger and noted down the responses which were later
34 illustrated back at *The Studio*. Sara's reflections about one particular girl's
35 excitement during these visits demonstrated the ways in which community
36 involvement motivated the Society's members:
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48 When we started going out into the neighbourhood she took it very
49 seriously. She had her own notepad [and] as we went to from shop to shop
50 she recorded what she saw in the windows. ... I felt like she was doing
51 something she would have never have done in any other circumstances.
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56 The girl planned to use the recorded information to create a community map that
57 would tell the stories of all the shopkeepers working in the shops.
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3 In Anderston, they put a table out on Argyle Street and read Sara's book to
4 passers-by, inviting them to participate by answering the same question, 'How are
5 you and I alike', and adding an ending to the line ' We both don't' for inclusion in
6 the community book to be created for the exhibition. People responded with
7 delight, adding their endings such as: 'We both don't wear bird's nests on our
8 heads'; 'brush shark's teeth'; 'eat grass'; ride llamas to work'. This humorous
9 take on difference provided an open and non-threatening way for bringing these
10 the community together. The children returned to The Studio and selected from
11 these ideas in order to create an illustrated book for the exhibition. The positive
12 interaction increased the Society's enthusiasm and energy to continue their work.
13 Sara noted that one of the participants asked when the Society would start again
14 after the summer break; she felt that 'given the opportunity this girl could build
15 on this experience, moving forward in her aim to become a writer'.

16
17 The young writers and illustrators were able to receive feedback on their work
18 during the public exhibition. The messages recorded in the 'Visitor's Book'
19 revealed heartfelt responses such as: 'I cried a lot! Great work everyone!' or 'I am
20 lost for words, wonderful! Gives hope for future for our young folk'. These
21 expressed the emotional impact made by the writing and demonstrated a breaking
22 down of intergenerational barriers.

37 38 **Insert illustration 4 near here**

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40 The public and young members also shared their feelings on social media. The
41 following quote from one of the parents' Instagram account summarises the
42 importance of publicly sharing the creative work in terms of recognition for what
43 the group had achieved and as a means of challenging some of the problems faced
44 by diverse societies:

45
46 Emotional and uber grateful today for the beautiful people in our lives.

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48 Recently they have been learning about xenophobia, looking at challenging
49 it, via the medium of stories and illustrations exploring fear. Today an
50 exhibition was held to share the children's work with the community. It was
51 beautifully done. When speaking with Sara, I was genuinely touched when
52 she expressed how important she feels it is for children to feel respected
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3 and valued, and that their voice has importance! Very thankful for Sara and
4 her passionate and sincere team. Mucho Love!’ (Kate)
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7 The parents of the Society members were also excited about the initiative and
8 enquired about when activities would be renewed. Several exhibition visitors
9 expressed an interest in bringing their children to join the Society, reminding us of
10 the precarious nature of working in contexts that need to competitively bid for
11 funding.
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16 A final, serendipitous opportunity allowed the work of the Society to be displayed
17 in an exhibition on illustration and graphic design by young artists in Mexico City
18 through the Iberoamericana University. Knowing that their work would be seen
19 internationally was, of course, very exciting for the Society members and it also
20 led to visitors to the Mexican exhibition asking questions about how a similar
21 initiative could take place in that country. It was also an indication that the
22 aesthetic process used in this project that encouraged young people to engage
23 with their communities created a story that could be drawn upon to inform
24 community-based work in other contexts. The public facing activities of the
25 Society, interactive walks in the community, and the exhibition all made creative
26 use of space to bring sections of the community together allowing them to
27 constructively share stories of ‘how are you and I alike’. The children had ideas on
28 how such ways of working could be extended and used for mapping community
29 stories.
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41 42 **Inclusive Ways Forward** 43 44

45 Key to strengthening the capacity of these young people to engage with their
46 communities and enact their potential as authors, illustrators and active members
47 of a society that valued storytelling was the time, space and commitment of the
48 resident artist. This was only made possible through additional funding provided by
49 the Social Innovation Fund, which enabled Sara to work in collaboration with the
50 youth groups attending *The Studio*. Maintaining such spaces and allowing time for
51 researchers to work in collaboration with artists and community groups is essential
52 if we are to notice the critical moments of affect when they occur. In a society
53 driven to measure, it is important to realise that so much of what humanity is
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3 looking for, will never be found when we keep our eyes trained on the outcomes
4 and forget about the process. When young people are engaged in becoming ‘Young
5 Writers and Illustrators’ they can begin to see how their narratives are valued by
6 society and through this they gain self-esteem and confidence in telling and
7 sharing their stories. The importance of generating new stories of cohesion is
8 important for any community experiencing the negative impact of xenophobia.
9 These stories become toolkits that allow young people and their neighbours to
10 construct and interpret the world allowing positive visions that celebrate
11 community integration and the possibility of envisioning a future (Selbin, 2010:26)
12 free from hate crime and prejudice.
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21 The Scottish Government have already noted in their response to the Report of the
22 Independent Advisory Group on hate crime, prejudice and community cohesion
23 that Education Scotland should explore the potential of youth work as a model of
24 peer-led intervention in tackling hate crime and prejudice (SG, 2017:9). The
25 multimodal approach adopted throughout the sessions provided equal
26 opportunities for all groups, regardless of background and literacy level to find or
27 regain meaningful ways of contributing their stories. This inclusive route could be
28 adapted to different educational contexts, responding to the literacy needs of
29 both individuals and groups working with their funds of identity (Esteban-Guitart
30 and Moll, 2014), including digital practices. We would argue that the aesthetic
31 process could provide a model of youth work that could be undertaken in spaces
32 where third-party organisations, schools and parents could continue to collectively
33 create authentic community texts. The reach of the Young Writers and Illustrators
34 of Glasgow Society could be expanded, and an intergenerational dimension
35 developed that would encourage text creation for all. The inclusive nature of the
36 process the youth groups went through is expressed in the words of their own
37 manifesto: ‘We want to tell our stories. We want to inspire young minds. All young
38 people welcome’.
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Acknowledgements

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Author 3, 2 and Another

Author 3, Others and Author 2

Author 3 and Another

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Appendix

List of Books, Rationale and Reflection

Title, Author and Year	Synopsis	Rationale and Reflection
<i>Apples & Oranges: Going Bananas with Pairs</i> by Sara Pinto (2008)	This is an absurd and funny book about sameness and difference, which ends with the question: 'How are you and I alike?' The answers to the questions raised in the book about similarities between objects are phrased as 'They both don't' and draw on the illustrations for full comic effect.	As well as providing opportunities for the artist to discuss the watercolour techniques used to create her humorous illustrations, the book created spaces for children to explore the ways in which our differences can unite us. This book took on a central role in terms of inspiring text production.
<i>Little Mouse's Big Book of Fears</i> , by Emily Gravett (2008)	This picturebook was a Kate Greenaway Medal winner in 2008. It depicts a mouse reading a book about the different objects that a mouse may fear, such as a knife, spiders or a toilet. The illustrations are humorous and Gravett uses a range of meta-fictional devices to grasp the readers' attention. The text ends with an illustration showing the feet of a human standing on a chair in fear of	Our rationale for selection was grounded in the book's potential to directly generate discussion of fears and phobias.

	the mouse.	
<i>The Arrival</i> , by Shaun Tan (2007)	A wordless graphic novel which depicts the story of an unnamed protagonist arriving in a strange city with nothing more than a suitcase. He must find shelter, food and a future for his family while negotiating his way through the barriers caused by vast cultural and linguistic differences. Tan created the visual text by juxtaposing 'the familiar or normal with the exotic or weird' (Tan 2012:22), producing a text that draws us all into a world that looks familiar yet strange. The central character survives his journey and thrives thanks to acts of kindness by understanding empathetic strangers.	The wordless nature of the book encouraged the young participants to talk about the themes related to migration, language barriers and friendship.
<i>Wishtree</i> by Katherine Applegate (2017)	Using an oak tree as a focalizer, this novel looks at the waves of immigration into a community. The age of the tree allows it to shine a light on the ways in which communities are shaped over time by these waves.	The extended passages of writing are written from a historical perspective and prompted responses from the children on themes connected to isolation and discrimination.

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Project Process Diagram without illustrations

Aesthetic Process	Roles and relationships	Cultural tools	Data generated	Children as consumers of texts
Preparation and on-going reflections	Forming groups, sending out invitations. Making clear that as researchers we are collectively working towards creating texts that challenge xenophobia.	<i>The Studio</i> space. The joint aims shared between the researchers, artists and children.	Memos of planning meetings, records of decisions made Post-event reflections	Researchers 'hanging out', observing, recording, writing memos and holding regular conversations to make sense of what is happening. Looking out for 'moments of affect' when the children expressed their feelings, emotions and embodied responses towards thinking about 'how you and I are alike' in a humorous way.
Execution	Sara Pinto working with volunteers from the MEd in Children's Literature to run the arts-based sessions. <i>The Studio</i> group invited parents, children and community to input into the process.	Children's literature used to explore fears and generate responses regarding 'how you and I are alike'. Sara Pinto working as an arts-based facilitator providing input on illustration. The creation of the manifesto. Joint text production with the community surrounding <i>The Studio</i>.	Memos created by researchers detailing the on-going stories of the groups. Art work produced by the children along with photographs of their work and notes on their responses to the art. Recording 'moments of affect' as children move from consuming to producing texts alongside the community.	
Exhibition	Movement of the work from the safe space of <i>The Studio</i> to a public audience involving the communities where the children lived. Building wider community relationships and discussions.	The exhibition space. The children's art-based responses to the theme under exploration. The community interaction.	The curated work – the public story being told. Records of the conversations held at the exhibition with members of the public or the wider families of the children involved. Visitor feedback.	Children as producers of texts displayed at the exhibition.



Figures

We are a World Sensation

We Plan. We Do. We Complete.

We're GOOD at making Stuff UP

We are aspiring young writers. We will talk to people we don't know.

WE ARE BECOMING THE PEOPLE WE WANT TO BE

We have fun & chillax. No pun is frowned upon (ha, good one)

WE ARE SHOWING THE WORD THAT YOU DON'T NEED YOUR PHONES

We believe EVERYONE has the right to TELL THEIR OWN TALE

Everybody Welcome and Nobody Looked Down Upon

We believe confidence is not 'they will like my book' BUT 'I'll be fine if they don't'

WE BELIEVE WRITING is creating our own WORLD on PAPER

We have fun with language. We can write stories on our phones. We love being read to.

We want to tell our stories. We want to inspire young minds. All young people welcome.

WE don't' make mistakes. We make happy accidents.

Figure 1: Manifesto

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Illustrations

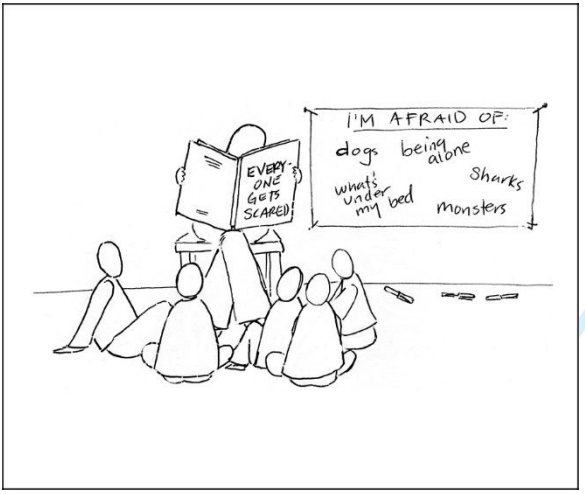


Illustration 1: Children as text consumers



Illustration 2: Creating a Manifesto

For Review Only

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Illustration 3: Working with the Community



Illustration 4: The Public Exhibition

For Review Only