



Audience & multimodal literacies

Most of the participating teachers in our research project provided opportunities for the students to perform their learning for an audience and/or had demands that students produce high quality learning artefacts that were using multimodal digital literacies. Put simply, if it is a worthwhile task then it should have an audience. The demand for an audience for sharing of student learning makes sense if students are expected to produce a high quality artefact from their learning that has high academic and or intellectual expectations. Teachers report that such practices increase the motivation and engagement of students, and that students produce higher quality work.

Finding an ‘authentic’ audience for student learning has been identified as a good strategy to motivate students to engage in rigorous learning activities. The term ‘authentic’ (Cormack et al 1998) here refers to forms of performance or demonstration of student learning achievements to audiences wider than the teacher and other students in the class. Various approaches have been developed including ‘exhibitions’ (Brennan et al 2001), use of multimedia presentations, developing artefacts that can be shown to wider audience such as a magazine, presentations to panels, group performances etc.

In related research, Zipin & Reid (2008) report:

... [with] an assessment approach that attached performative expectations to curriculum units ... is an antidote to teacher tendencies to allow ‘individual choice’ (understood as ‘student centered’) projects that do not converge toward collective learning community. Performance events also can be civic occasions for offering fruits of student learning about the locale back to people of the locale. (p. 540)

Innovative teachers are also now engaging with multimodal and digital technologies as a means for students to produce evidence of their learning. Such approaches enable creativity and support students who have traditionally struggled with pen and paper modes of assessment (Mills & Unsworth, 2017).

Brennan, M., White, V. & Owen, C. (2001). *Year 9 Student Exhibitions Pilot Project*. Canberra: ACT Department of Education and Community Services.

Cormack, P., B. Johnson, et al. (1998). *Authentic Assessment: Implications for Teaching and Learning*. Belconnen, ACT: Australian Curriculum Studies Association.

Mills, K. & Unsworth, L. (2017) Multimodal literacy. In Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education. Oxford University Press.

Zipin, L. & Reid, A. (2008) A Justice-Oriented Citizenship Education: Making Community Curricular, In J. Authur, I. Davies & C. Hahn (eds) *The SAGE Handbook of Education for Citizenship and Democracy*.