

## Dimboola Memorial Secondary College

### Background

The AIS program supports partnerships to deliver strong artistic and learning outcomes. Through the Strategic Partnerships Program, grants of up to \$6,500 are provided for a professional practising artist to work in a Victorian school for up to 20 days.

The AIS program generates active successful, confident and creative learners. This is achieved by creating a framework, with support, for individual schools to provide rich learning programs tailored to the needs of a target group of students thus supporting personalised learning, and creating authentic learning opportunities embedded across the VELs.

### Summary

Artist Michael Shiell worked for 20 days at Dimboola Memorial Secondary College with Year 9 and 10 students to create ephemeral art works that deepened the students' understanding of their relationship with the environment.

The first part of the project saw students working directly in the environment as Michael led the students through a series of workshops assisting them to explore and reflect upon their relationship to the changing environment. The second part of the project involved students documenting the ephemeral art works they had created.

The program was successful at targeting the cohort of students who had been identified as being disengaged from their learning by creating meaningful learning experiences.

Debbie Moar  
Project Coordinator and Art Teacher



It was the best possible professional development that I could have done.

Sally  
Bingham

Throughout the process, students were asked to critically reflect upon their own work applying the elements and principles of Art. The works in their sketch books were annotated to reflect their aesthetic decisions. This working documentation eventually evolved into a range of finished pieces including photographs, linocuts, reduction prints, etchings, sculptural and assemblage works, textile works, artist books, installations as well as photo mosaics. The project culminated in an exhibition of student work.

### Purpose

- To engage a cohort of identified disengaged students by creating meaningful learning experiences.
- To implement VELs at level 6 across the curriculum.
- To provide a rich learning environment for teachers involved in the project.
- To embed POLT 4.6 within the school- *The teacher uses strategies to foster imagination and creativity.*
- To address DEECD initiatives such as Literacy/Sustainability Education and Values education.

The project was embedded in the school curriculum through VELs at level 6 in the following domains: Interpersonal Development,

Personal Learning, Civics & Citizenship, The Arts, English, Communication, Design Creativity & Technology, ICT, Thinking Processes.



This particular project worked really well with the VELS curriculum. It gave the students the opportunity to think in a very different creative way.

Sally Bingham, Art Teacher

#### Challenges and Issues

Dimboola Memorial Secondary College is situated in a Wimmera township of 1,600 people, 25km west of Horsham. The school has an enrolment of 200 students. One third of families attending the school receive an Educational Maintenance Allowance. The whole school community therefore has significantly limited access to the Arts in terms of resources and "real-life" experience.

The project provided the school with an ideal way to address this challenge. It provided rich arts learning experiences for students and professional development for teachers.



#### Learning Outcomes

"The project challenged the student's preconceived ideas about art and encouraged self direction in their work. It helped to make art more relevant to them by making the students appreciate and respond to their familiar environment in a different way." - Debbie Moar, Teacher

I reckon it's a lot better for your learning because it's sort of going away from the structured approach of normal lessons and sort of taking you out into the real world and doing more sort of real life stuff with art rather than just confining it to the classroom and just what you do in the classroom.

Participating student

#### Conclusions and Next Steps

The ongoing benefits of the program have seen an increase in the confidence of both students and teachers to work with a self directed unit of work in Art in Year 10. The proposal of students putting on an exhibition of artworks each year has also been taken up and there are plans for an exhibition of new student works in 2009.

#### Attachments and Links

- FUSE Teacher Learning Resource  
<https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/pages/Teacher.aspx>  
Learning Resource ID 955WUD
- DVD with 3 film clips – a project overview and views from the teacher and from the artist.
- Three film clips on the Arts Victoria website  
[http://www.arts.vic.gov.au/content/Public/Funding\\_Programs/Education\\_Partnerships/Artists\\_in\\_Schools.aspx](http://www.arts.vic.gov.au/content/Public/Funding_Programs/Education_Partnerships/Artists_in_Schools.aspx)
- Two Units of Work- Environmental Art, Level 6 and Environmental Poetry Level 6

The fact that I feel confident now to go out and teach a unit on this theme means that it makes life and teaching so much more interesting for me.

Sally Bingham, Art Teacher