

Belinda's got a bletherbox: A telling tale of one teacher's talkative take on reading instruction

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In (re)imagining education research, my project and presentation depart radically from academic writing (DRAW). My PhD investigates teachers' enactment of the Australian Curriculum: English demand for students to engage in reading for enjoyment (RfE). The aim of my study is to provide invitational and inspirational stories of the vital role teachers play in this critical endeavour. My thesis has been created with a pleasing, poetic pastiche for the purpose of enjoyable reading. I DRAW on the work of Laurel Richardson (2000) and other scholars who advocate for new writing practices in qualitative research; with strong scholarly commitment to substantive contribution.

My narrative research focuses on teachers' practice in the middle and upper primary context; a well-documented drop-off point in reading. My study stories the scope of support provided in promotion of student engagement in literature. Specifically, it seeks to ascertain engagement in which the purpose is primarily aesthetic. In this presentation, I take a children's read-aloud approach to offer different ways of thinking about reading instruction. I demonstrate the delight|full work of Belinda, one of four passionate teachers who took part in my study. She enacted *book blether*—a highly significant but somewhat undervalued practice (Cremin, 2020), as transformative pedagogy.

I use Dewey's (1934) theory of aesthetic experience to make meaning of Belinda's work with her Year Three class of mostly very chatty children. With Dewey, I explore the aesthetic nature of Belinda's dialogic approach to student engagement in reading for enjoyment. I emphasise the educative value in *the beauty* of book blether. In this presentation, I perform the re-storying of Belinda's practice to express rather than state; embody rather than explain, the rich experience of reading enjoyment. In (re)imagining research, I find what appears to have disappeared almost entirely from educational discourse—a lost language of students' aesthetic development.

In (re)storying Belinda's beauty|full work, I restore a missing puzzle piece to the ongoing problem of poor literacy outcomes. In this, I provide the pertinent part of a (re)newable framework I have developed to support student engagement in reading for enjoyment alongside some of a 21st Century RfE pedagogic creed I have created for advancing instructional practice. It is time to stir the sacred sparks and fan the fulfilling flames of that which makes us human.

In the Dewey sense of (re) imagining, (re)thinking and (re)working, this presentation does more than describe reading as aesthetic experience, it constitutes one. Enjoy!