

The Creative Education

Exploring the role of creativity in education by Sarah Pearson

Lloyd Webber: EBacc is 'Crazy!'



Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber, hit musical writer

Schools around England continue to fear the latest decisions being made by Education Secretary, Michael Gove, as he continues his restructuring of English state education. Gove's recent retraction of his initial proposal for the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), still leaves Britain's highly established and respected patrons of the Arts concerned. At the end of last year, Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber and his brother Julian, wrote a letter to 'The Times', condemning Gove's decision not to include a 'sixth pillar' of the EBacc, which at the time, did not include a creative subject. "We know the importance of creative subjects in school, in teaching and in learning...we must continue to ensure that children receive a full rounded education...", Lloyd Webber expresses in the letter. Although Gove's denounced system has currently gone quiet, campaign group for saving creativity in schools, 'Bacc to the Future', fear it may still resurface. They stated that EBacc league tables still exist and *only* count Maths, English, Sciences, Languages and Humanities, resulting in the imminent demise of creative talent to the UK. Cellist Julian Lloyd Webber referred to the EBacc as 'crazy and bizzare'.

Why include Dance and Drama?

Education consultant, Jennifer Marshall, spoke to Dance teacher, Kylie Pollock, from an inner London secondary state school, to understand the benefits that creative subjects such as Dance give today's pupils. "It expands [a child's] creativity and expression...and [some children] show an extreme talent in something that isn't necessarily compulsory", said Pollock. Trainee Drama teacher Rochelle Wrong, from London's School of Speech and Drama, explains: "It doesn't help that children are not being encouraged to take the more creative subjects, the subjects they can use as a release, the subjects that are there to help young people express themselves, in a way that sitting in a Geography lesson simply doesn't provide".

Research has shown that only 5% of information is retained from lecture alone, whereas 'hands-on' practicen helps the learner retain up to 75%. With drama being in the 'active' category, the subject increases pupils' ability to learn in both creative and academic subjects.

There doesn't seem to be a lack of praise with regard to creative subjects in terms of their learning benefits, but when it comes to teaching Dance and Drama in English secondary state education, provision is poor.

When examining the timetable of Year 7 and 8 pupils from the inner London sec-



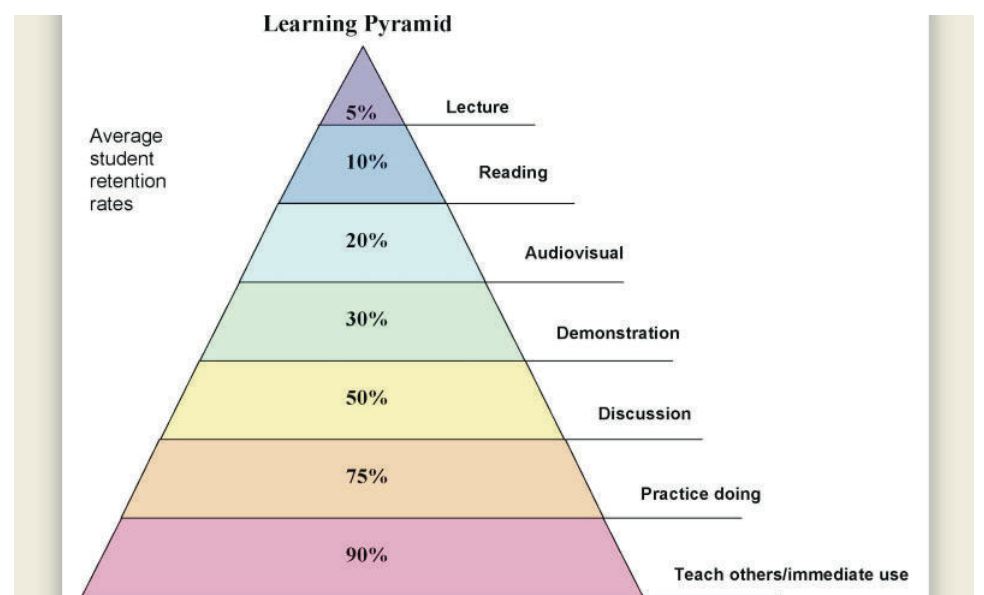
Education Secretary Michael Gove

ondary state school, it showed that Drama was taught for two hours every six weeks and Dance was taught for a total of eight hours per year. This school had chosen to incorporate Dance and Drama into the timetable, yet this is not compulsory. According to the Department for Education website, a school can choose whether or not to include these subjects. Interestingly, only the creative subjects fall into this non-compulsory category, while all their other named subjects are mandatory.

We asked the teachers of Dance and Drama whether they felt that their subjects were given support by the school, apart from the problem caused b the lack of teaching hours available. Responding in a somewhat embarrassed tone, Pollock responds: "Unfortunately no, quite often the core subjects very much take over. I've had students pulled out of... Dance lessons that are at GCSE level because they're having extra core subject lessons...I feel that, quite often, we are

swept under the carpet". Trainee Drama teacher, Rochelle Wrong also spoke of her experiences within an English state school. Explaining the process of the Heads of Department promoting their subject to Year 9 pupils, who would soon be making their subject choices, Wrong witnessed the Head of Drama being dismissed from the process. By way of an explanation as to why Drama did not have this opportunity, resulted in a member of the Senior Leadership team said: "Sorry, we ran out of time and couldn't fit Drama in". Wrong states, "To me this speaks volumes about the expectations of the Drama department...and shows no desire to increase or maintain numbers of students studying the Performing Arts at the school".

Article by Sarah Pearson



Maine University, Learning Pyramid

Maths vs Arithmetic

With Dance either being rejected from a school's curriculum entirely or barely being accommodated, could the education system make an attempt to 'free up' teaching space for the creative subjects, Dance and Drama? We asked whether other subjects should sacrifice their timetable space. According to the National Curriculum, the three subjects with the highest allocation of teaching time are the core subjects, Maths, English and Science. The recommended number of teaching hours per week for these subjects is three hours each, totalling 108 hours per academic year. But how would this work? Surely everyone agrees that the core subjects are entitled to such a large proportion of a child's education due to their relevance and because they are essential life skills. Maths teacher Sara Roberts explains: "Maths is an essential life skill which is relevant to everyone's future. We use it all the time." Education Minister Elizabeth Truss says: "Whatever subject and job you do, it is there... we are so determined to make sure that the next generation is fluent in the language of maths, the universal language of the modern world."

Indisputedly, maths is part of our day to day lives. But does actress Kate Winslet use maths to the same degree as physicist Stephen Hawking - both highly successful in their own right? Kate Winslet aspired to be an actress from a young age, and stated: "I always wanted to be an actress for as long as I can remember". Ms Winslet may well have benefited from 'Arithmetic' lessons at school, as opposed to the standard Maths classes which include lessons on trigonometry and Pythagora's theorem. Arithmetic lessons would concentrate on the essential life skills such as addition, subtraction,

gent society." So, would a basic knowledge of maths lead to an unintelligent society? That would depend on how we perceive intelligence. Education expert Sir Ken Robinson argues that our society has come to base intelligence on academic ability alone. He says, "our education system is predicated on the idea of academic ability. Yet there are so many highly successful individuals who are not academically capable. Or maybe they are, yet they do not consider academic areas to be of interest to them and have chosen a creative path...My contention is that creativity



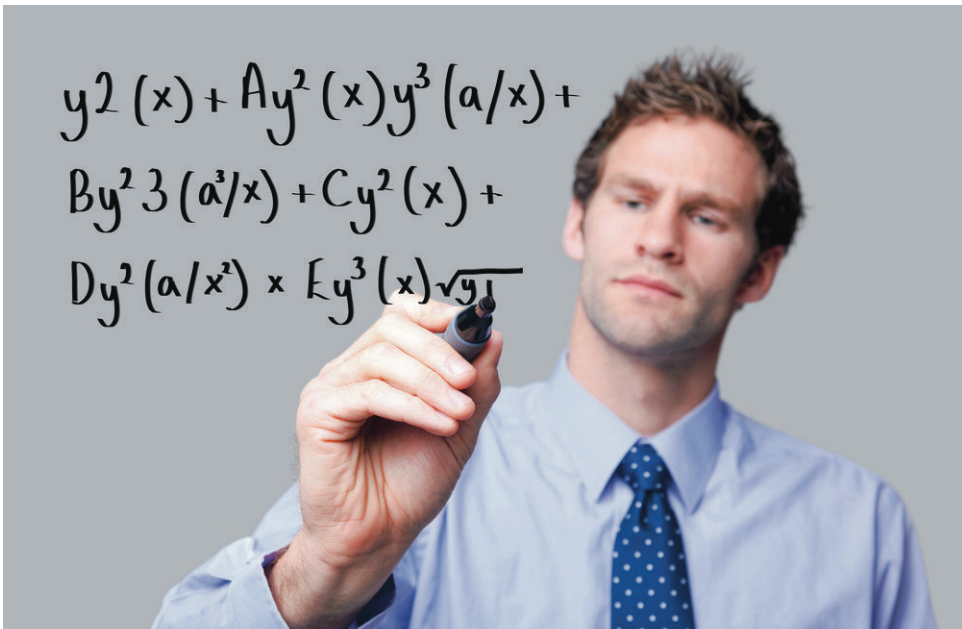
Kate Winslet " I always wanted to be an actress"

now is as important in education as literacy, and we should treat it with the same status." University student and dancer Liam Conman agrees: "Academic ability is just one form of intelligence." Speaking of the abilities of a dancer, he states: "She is super sensitive to physical detail, 100% body aware...extremely kinaesthetically intelligent...[and]she can also understand and interpret extremely complex

"We would be left with an unintelligent society"

time signatures, and transform artistic concepts into physical art."

Regardless of whether some people do or do not agree with the content of some subjects, there is still an apparent lack of Dance and Drama being taught in Secondary State schools. Or is there? Vice



Principal Darren McDougal of Feltham Mount School, London explains that Drama is incorporated into the English curriculum: "We must make sure the English schemes of work build in enough drama work...exploring text, looking at different view points within a text...and using drama to explore these things in English." However, trainee Drama teacher, Rochelle Wrong, does not believe this to be adequate: " An English teacher is not a Drama teacher. They do not possess the same skills or subject knowledge. Knowing Shakespeare plays doesn't make you a Drama teacher. Pupils need specific time dedicated to each subject and Drama is being degraded by putting it into the same category as English. An English teacher has chosen to teach English and therefore does not have the passion needed to teach Drama. How can they inspire pupils when it is not even the subject they have been inspired to teach?"

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There is still an apparent lack of Dance and Drama being taught in secondary state education. Or is there?

	1	2	3	4
Age	5 – 7	7 – 11	11 – 14	14 – 16
Year groups	1 – 2	3 – 6	7 – 9	10 – 11
Core subjects				
English	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mathematics	✓	✓	✓	✓
Science	✓	✓	✓	✓
Other foundation subjects				
Art and design	✓	✓	✓	
Citizenship			✓	✓
Computing ⁴	✓	✓	✓	✓
Design and technology	✓	✓	✓	
Foreign languages / modern foreign languages ⁵		✓	✓	
Geography	✓	✓	✓	
History	✓	✓	✓	
Music	✓	✓	✓	
Physical education	✓	✓	✓	✓

The proposed structure of the new National Curriculum showing no inclusion of Dance and Drama

Have your say by voting in our poll:

Do we put too much emphasis on academic ability?

Yes - call 08776 44001
No - call 08776 44002

Latest in Arts cuts: Is this the deepest?

With the cost of going to university now set at a maximum of £9000 a year, obtaining a degree has never cost so much. Yet in order to achieve his dream of becoming a Dance teacher, Andrew Parsons has had no choice but to pay up. But what happens when University is over? In order to receive his QTS (Qualified Teacher Status), Andrew must complete a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), costing an additional £9000. An alternative course of action was, until 2013, to be considered for the Graduate Training Programme (GTP) which trains graduates to become teachers on the job. The trainee earns as they learn at a reduced teacher wage. In 2013, a new training programme was introduced. Called the Schools Direct Training Programme, it is similar in concept to the GTP. Andrew Parsons researched the Schools Direct Training Programme and discovered that this was not an option for him. "I spent ages researching all the establishments that offer Dance on the Schools Direct (Salaried) programme. There isn't one. Not one, across the whole of Britain! Dance is the only subject offered on the Department for Education website that isn't on the salaried Schools Direct programme. There's no way I can afford a fourth year of education at £9000 and what really annoys me is that if I wanted to do an-

other subject, I would get paid to do the teacher training!" Indeed he would. Should Andrew have chosen to study Physics, Chemistry or Maths, the Government would subsidise him with a possible £20,000 bursary, which is not available to students pursuing QTS in Dance or Drama.

Can only the rich afford the Arts?

In response to last year's English Baccalaureate proposal, Ipsos Mori research reported that 27% of schools withdrew subjects that would not be part of the new scheme, including Dance and Drama. Actor Jude Law spoke of his fear that the Arts may become something only the Middle Class can enjoy. "The Arts must not be allowed to become a middle class pursuit." So does class have an impact on whether or not children have access to the Arts? State schools are not obligated to include the subjects Dance and/or Drama in their curriculum. Though many may recognise the merits of these subjects, their presence does not affect the outcome of league tables and they are therefore not a priority.



Hillview School for girls, Kent

Dance is the only subject offered on the Department for Education website that isn't on the Schools Direct programme

		High priority specialisms	Medium priority specialisms	Other secondary specialisms and primary
Training bursary	Outstanding potential (1 st)	£20,000	£13,000	£9000
	Good potential (2.1)	£15,000	£10,000	£5000
	Satisfactory potential (2.2)	£11,000	£9000	£4000
Example subjects		Mathematics, physics, chemistry	Modern languages, IT, design and technology	

Department for Education: Bursaries for teaching training. Other priority Secondary subjects include General science, business studies, citizenship, applied science, health and social care, leisure and tourism, media studies, psychology & social sciences

Money can buy a child private dance lessons and a private education. Without the 'guiding hand' of the National Curriculum to adhere to, private schools are

The Department for Education released a statement saying: "The English baccalaureate does not prevent any school from offering GCSEs in art and design, dance, drama and music. We have been clear that pupils should take the GCSEs that are right for them."

"The Arts must not be allowed to become a middle-class pursuit."

free to teach what they choose and when they choose. But what of those who can not afford to send their child to ballet lessons or weekend trips to the latest touring theatre company? Where else do these children learn to appreciate the Arts, if not at school?



Jude Law

Britain's creative economy

Britain relies heavily on the creative industry, as it brings in a annual income of £16 billion. Theatres, museums, art galleries, dance and film all contribute to our culture, rich in creativity. Thousands of tourists step into Britain, eager to see a West End show, visit Shakespeare's Globe Theatre or visit the 'house with the

ed to watch a live theatre performance to review as part of their course, and the Drama department were not provided the funds or extra staff to be able to take them." explains trainee Drama teacher, Rochelle Wrong. In addition, Dance teacher Kylie Pollock states: "Quite often, excursions and events that are going on

"Britain's creative economy will be destroyed within a generation"



The Globe theatre attracts audiences from around the world

blue door', where Hugh Grant first kissed Julia Roberts in 'Notting Hill'. But are we at risk of losing this heritage and consequently damaging our economy? Martin Roth, director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, thinks so: "The UK is one of the greatest creative nations in the world, as exemplified during the Olympics this summer, but if subjects such as art, design, music, drama and dance are pushed out of the curriculum, Britain's creative economy will be destroyed within a generation."

Children living in Greater London are at risk of never visiting their own city and subsequently never seeing live theatre, if they do not have the opportunity to go with their school, and this is becoming a very real possibility. Should schools choose to remove Dance and Drama from their curriculum, as is perfectly acceptable in keeping with the National Curriculum, teachers have no reason to attend theatres and the like. Visiting theatres with a hundred or so pupils is an expensive business and one that is sometimes avoided, even if Dance and Drama is on the curriculum: "There have been occasions when GCSE level pupils need-

within the school will be timetabled during practical dance... lessons."

Speaking of her experiences of taking Year 11 Drama students to see pieces of theatre, Rochelle Wrong states: "[The students] had no experience of theatre etiquette. They spoke throughout the performance, 'whooped' as though they were watching a basketball game and got up in groups to use the bathroom. This is why it is crucial that children are taken to the theatre from a young age, otherwise we are at risk of losing a generation's appreciation of theatre altogether." Money may well play a part in whether parents can afford to take their children to the theatre at a young age, therefore they are depending on schools to fulfil this function.

The Government is cutting its funding to the Arts on a vast scale. The New Vic Theatre in Newcastle-under-Lyme is just one of many to have had its funding reduced by £69,000 over the next three years, with the intention of a complete withdrawal in 2016.

According to the Department for Media,

Culture and Sport, the creative industry currently employs 1.5 million people in the UK. With more and more funding being withdrawn from this industry, inevitably a growing proportion of the country will find itself out of work. Companies will have no choice but to produce performances with very small casts. However, the Daily Mail theatre

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critic, Quentin Letts, doesn't believe that lower budgets will result in poor productions, stating: "The artistic urge is still going to be there, and the artistic urge finds a way of getting out."

The Department for Media, Culture and Sport do not share concerns regarding the demise of the British Arts industry, stating "The creative spirit is thriving in Britain and you only have to look at the spectacular Games Opening Ceremony and Cultural Olympiad of last summer to recognise that. Although we are in tough economic times, the government is absolutely committed to safeguarding the arts and creative excellence. We will have given the arts £2.9bn over this parliament and we increased the arts and heritage funding from the National Lottery from 16% to 20% each."



Notting Hill: The house with the blue door

