

Max Literacy Awards 2023

Evaluation report and case studies

“I have enjoyed expressing my opinions and imagination through art AND creative writing. It has also been interesting to explore other people’s pieces and become inspired by them. It has been a new experience for me and I have found it incredibly interesting.”

Student, Pershore High School (Meadow Arts project)

Ellie Coleman, External Evaluator

Final report June 2024

Engage
Bringing people
and art together


MAX REINHARDT
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nawe national association of
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“Thanks for the opportunity, it’s been wonderful to be able to take some time (and funding and capacity) to look at this developing work more closely and with some dedicated time and through the lens of a national project.”

Gem Smith (Take A Part)

1. Executive Summary

Key outcomes

- The projects have all offered opportunities for the participants to connect with new cultural venues and sites
- The projects offered many positive outcomes in terms of learning new skills for participants
- The projects improved participants wellbeing and connection to others
- Participants' confidence improved as a result of being involved in the projects
- The writers brought a new approach to creative writing for the participants
- The projects have supported participants' cultural literacy
- The projects have provided opportunities for participants to develop their emotional literacy and self-reflection skills
- The projects have allowed partners to better understand the importance of care and participant wellbeing in their work and develop skills to support this in future work
- Overall relationships between the professionals involved were positive
- Professional relationships built or developed as a result of this programme are planned to be continued through future collaborations
- Longer term legacies from the projects will have broader reaching outcomes
- The learning from the projects will be used by the partners to further develop their work with children, young people and families, or their own practice.
- Writers gained or developed skills in linking writing to visual arts
- Projects all addressed topics that are particularly pertinent and relevant to the broader sector

Key learning points

- It is important that all project partners are aware of expectations around their roles, particularly commitments regarding time scales, planning and reflection
- Communication between the professionals involved is very important in terms of good planning, delivery, and outcomes
- Building trust and good relationships with participants over time allows for better outcomes and learning to take place
- Activities have greater impact when they are repeated with groups over several sessions
- The time and capacity of the professionals involved should not be underestimated at planning stage
- The engagement of education staff with the activities allows learning and approaches to become embedded within the education setting
- The diverse skillsets of the writers was very important in developing the learning of the young people
- Process, learning and problem solving to overcome barriers is as important as final project outcomes
- Visits to new places and working within different contexts or parameters allows for greater freedom of expression by participants
- When mutual trust is established, participants are more likely to participate and share personal thoughts and feelings with others
- Flexibility in the project structure and consideration of participant needs creates outcomes that are more responsive and relevant

“For me it’s brilliant hearing what’s happened-I’m really impressed. The challenges are as good as the best moments I think actually. They feel incredibly pertinent in terms of the issues that the partnerships have been dealing with with those young people.”

Jane Sillis (Director, Engage)

Key recommendations summary

Professional development:

The report findings indicate that the two most significant challenges for professionals working on the project were around communication, with the multiple partners involved, and capacity to deliver the project alongside other professional commitments. There was also sometimes confusion around roles (including expectations of individuals in these roles) and terminology in relation to the project.

In order to mitigate these challenges the following could be considered for future cohorts:

- Expectations in terms of preferred communication methods and working styles/structures identified early in the project to ensure better communication between partners
- Clear, focussed expectations and delivery frameworks produced to support collaborative planning and delivery
- Post session reflection sessions built in as part of the project structure- particularly between education settings and writers
- All partners in the project, not just lead organisations, to agree on the aims of the project and how collection of evaluation materials will evidence each of their agreed outcomes (and therefore the impact of their project overall), to ensure a commitment to this across the team
- A timeline produced and shared with all partners of the MaxLiteracy programme structure including key dates and deadlines for documents and evaluation data.
- A document produced that clearly explains the expected format and function of the resource, case study and any other key outputs.
- Continuation of a reflective practice model to be applied to future cohorts

Peer learning:

- Further opportunities for all partners, from across the 3 projects, to meet to discuss challenges, shared themes and approaches to be built into future programmes at an earlier stage and throughout the duration of the project delivery to ensure more effective peer to peer learning experiences.
- The timing of peer learning sessions to be revised in line with partner availability- likely that this should happen during working hours as opposed to as evening sessions.
- Longer term legacies regarding professional learning from this year's projects to be shared as part of the programme for next year's programme

Emergent writer/mentoring:

- Greater clarity on the definition and role of the mentor and what this entails
- Further consideration during project planning process of the implications on capacity that an additional partner in the project brings. This should also be reflected in the budget plan at application stage.

- Ensuring that both mentors and mentees are paid for this element of their role. Again to be considered in both planning and budget at application stage. Guidance on this to be offered by MaxLiteracy Awards programme support team where appropriate.
- Mentoring to be added as a topic to the peer learning programme to explore best practice and share learning from this iteration of the awards

Project team support:

- Clearer understanding of roles and responsibilities would be useful for future iterations to ensure that all involved in the project clearly understand who is responsible for each part of the process. This is particularly important when not only the cohort of partners, but also many of the support staff change with each award.
- Clearer delivery timeframe with associated deadlines shared with partners to understand pressure points through the project and when they will have to provide certain data/documents by.

Participant learning and development:

In initial meetings that partners highlighted that the participants in the project should be seen as an additional partner and it was therefore important to include their voices in reflective work and creative outputs. Where learning has taken place outside of school settings (and therefore it is not relevant to track participant progress against curriculum related benchmarks) this is also a useful indicator of participant learning and progress through the programme.

Participants have certainly influenced the development and delivery of the projects this year through partners adapting their approaches to meet their needs and recognising when to change tack in order to respond to areas of interest. Participants voices have also been included in creative outcomes. However, with regards to evaluation measures pupil voice has not been as straightforward to capture across some of the projects. In order to better include participant feedback directly, the following approaches could be included in future iterations of the MaxLiteracy Awards programme:

- Inclusion of pupil voice through audio recording in response to survey questions- less onerous process than note taking or paper surveys for facilitator
- Skills of evaluator utilised to generate creative evaluation methods which sit within the project delivery structure, for example which feel as though they are an extension of the creative workshops.
- Self-reflective activities for participants to be embedded at regular intervals in the project delivery

Care and wellbeing:

The projects have all been able to offer ways to consider and support the wellbeing of participants, however this has been challenging to quantify with some groups particularly in those where there are language barriers. In order to more effectively track this-in addition to looking at creative outcomes, self-reflective activities undertaken by participants and observations by those who know participants-the following tools/measures, suggested, but not formally implemented as part of Nottingham Contemporary's project this year, could be useful to explore:

- [Leuven Scale](#)
- [5 Ways to Wellbeing](#)

Partners also mentioned that professional advice and training (from mental health practitioners or organisations) in this area could be a useful consideration for future cohorts if participant wellbeing is seen as being a significant project outcome

2. Introduction

The MaxLiteracy Awards programme was initiated by the Max Reinhardt Charitable Trust (MRCT) and is run by Engage (National Association for Gallery Education) in partnership with the National Association for Writers in Education (NAWE). The programme aims to support a greater understanding of, and visibility for visual arts and writing practices with children and young people. It seeks to achieve this by bringing together children and young people, writers, learning settings, galleries, art museums and visual arts venues. This is the fifth time this Award has been held.

In 2023 arts and cultural organisations in England were invited by Engage to submit proposals to support a creative writer to work with children and young people, through a learning setting (or youth support service), and a gallery/museum/visual arts organisation. In July 2023, three visual arts organisations were selected for an Award, to support activity which took place between Autumn 2023- Spring 2024.

Awards were made to:

- Meadow Arts (Worcestershire)
- Nottingham Contemporary (Nottingham)
- Take A Part (Plymouth)

Programme aims and objectives:

There were **two new areas of focus** for this iteration of the programme, which built on recommendations from previous programme evaluations:

- The introduction of the opportunity for an emerging creative writer to work with the creative writer, to build professional skills and relationships. The Awardees could choose whether or not to include this element in their project, and received an uplift in their funding to support this additional area of work.
- A focus on supporting the CPD of the partner organisations, and connectivity between partners through the programme, in order to develop best practice and maximise project impact.

In addition to this, the specific **objectives** for this iteration of the Awards were:

- To develop, deliver and evaluate participatory practices and pedagogies in art-based writing (writing about, writing with, and writing as art).
- To understand how art-based writing and creative literacy may improve the life-chances of children and young people, for example through literacy learning, cognitive development, and wellbeing

- To develop sustained geographical partnerships, peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and cross-sectoral exchange (e.g., with educational, youth and health sectors).
- To support visual arts engagement practitioners within organisations to lead their Award and test art-based writing/creative-literacy approaches within participation and engagement activity.
- To support creative writers to collaboratively work with visual arts engagement practitioners and a learning setting on an art-based writing or creative literacy project, taking inspiration from the venue’s visual art collections, displays or buildings.
- To widely share resources within the arts and education sectors, including at a final sharing event, to encourage and promote the use of galleries, art museums and visual arts organisations as a context for art-based writing and creative literacy work.

MaxLiteracy Awards support team:

Veronica Reinhardt- Funder (Max Reinhardt Charitable Trust)
 Anne Caldwell- (NAWE)
 Claire Collison- Max Literacy Coordinator (NAWE)
 Ronda Gowland Pryde-MaxLiteracy Programme Coordinator (Engage)
 Hannah Gaunt-Creative Producer (Engage)
 Ellie Coleman- Freelance External Evaluator

MaxLiteracy Awards partners:

Lisa Jacques- Learning Programmes Manager (Nottingham Contemporary)
 Sandra Austerfield- Schools Programmer and EAL specialist (Nottingham Contemporary)
 Amanda Spruyt- Head of Learning (Nottingham Contemporary)
 Peter Rumney- Writer
 Johnathan Cutting- Lead Teacher (NEST)

Emma Bowen- Learning and Engagement Manager (Meadow Arts)
 JLM Morton- Writer
 Alex Hodson – English Teacher (Pershore High school)
 David Reid- Lead Art Teacher (Pershore High school)

Gem Smith- Head of Engagement (Take A Part)
 Shelley Hodgson- Community Engagement Producer (Take A Part)
 Peter James- Writer/illustrator
 Laura Horton- Playwright
 Kath Johnson- Teacher and Art Lead (Prince Rock Primary School)
 Naomi Whitelock- Teacher (High View Primary school)

3. Evaluation background and approach

The **evaluation purpose** was as follows:

- To evaluate how well the three projects meet the overall aims and objectives of MaxLiteracy Awards 2023-24.
- To assess the experience of the visual arts engagement colleagues, participants, creative writers, learning settings and other project partners of the programme.
- To assess the quality of the briefing, training and opportunities to share practice for the creative writers, teachers, visual arts engagement colleagues and other partners.
- To assess the quality of the resources produced as a result of the three MaxLiteracy Awards.
- To write a series of case studies drawing from each of the three projects.
- To consider areas which went well and other areas that could be improved.
- To make recommendations which may inform future MaxLiteracy Awards.

To support the evaluation of the programme, the External Evaluator drew up a **logic model** (a systematic way to present and share an understanding of the relationship between the resources, activities and changes or results a project aims to achieve) with partners. The External Evaluator also created a specific evaluation plan for each of the projects. This was devised with the lead organisations, covering evaluation methodologies to be used for each project. These individual plans were necessary due to the wide variety of project approaches and participant needs (see appendix A) . In most cases the External Evaluator made revisions to the specific evaluation plans as projects progressed, at the request of the lead organisations. The revisions were in line with the encouragement of reflective practice that was laid out at project inception. Subsequent changes were made to reflect the learning that occurred through the projects, for example in experimenting with the best methods for collecting the voices of young people involved in the projects. Young people in this instance were not directly interviewed about their experience of the project, however their views are reflected in comments captured from sessions, simple surveying, the work they produced and observations collated by the project partners.

Overall, the evaluation sought to capture the difference each project made, how it contributed to the overarching aims and objectives, and learning gathered to inform the development of partnerships, project legacy and further iterations of the MaxLiteracy Awards. Data collection methods included:

- Reflective conversations with members of each partnership
- Data collected from education settings, writers and cultural venues.
- Surveys at the beginning and endpoint of projects
- Sharing and Reflection session
- Case study report of each project

LOGIC MODEL MAXLITERACY AWARDS 23/24

INPUTS/RESOURCES	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
<p>Funding/Investment- MRCT, In kind contributions from partners and other organisations</p> <p>Staff time (planning, project management, delivery, evaluation)- Engage, Awardees, Partners</p> <p>Skills, Knowledge and Insights- Creative Writers, Awardees, participants, NAWA, Engage, Teachers/group leaders, MRCT</p> <p>Spaces- digital and physical for sessions, visits (galleries, visual arts organisations, museums, public artworks, public spaces), CPD workshops</p> <p>Evaluation plan</p> <p>Marketing/dissemination plan</p>	<p>Visits to venues and locations</p> <p>CPD sessions</p> <p>Workshops/creative activities</p> <p>Partnership development</p> <p>Sharing events/sessions</p> <p>Feedback/data collection</p>	<p>No. of workshops</p> <p>No. of CPD sessions</p> <p>No. and profile of participants engaged</p> <p>No. of creative practitioners</p> <p>No. of organisations involved</p> <p>No. and type of groups involved</p> <p>No. of media articles/reviews, social media imprint etc</p> <p>No. and type of other partners involved</p>	<p>All partners gain better understanding and practical experience of how art-based writing and creative literacy can improve the life-chances of children and young people.</p> <p>All partners create sustained geographical partnerships, and cross-sectoral exchange, including better knowledge of each other and development of effective collaborative working practices</p> <p>Arts organisations improve their professional practice and gain practical materials for future creative and literacy projects.</p> <p>CYP and families develop skills and understanding in art-based writing and creative/visual literacy</p>	<p>Arts organisations/partners develop replicable models of best practice, and toolkits, to support work around creative literacy in the wider sector.</p> <p>Strategic collaborative partnership working is enhanced and implemented in future projects</p> <p>Greater visibility of visual arts and writing practices</p>

			<p>CYP and families broaden their cultural experiences (i.e visit new places, new connections, new approaches)</p> <p>CYP and families wellbeing and sense of connection to one another and/or local area is improved</p> <p>Creative writers gain new skills and tools in connecting creative writing and visual arts.</p> <p>Creative writers gain new skills in mentoring and supporting emerging writers</p> <p>Learning settings/professionals gain increased understanding of how creative writing can improve literacy.</p> <p>Learning settings/professionals observe increased student engagement in arts and increased awareness of creative careers.</p>	
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4. Projects

a) Project Summaries

In the following section I have provided a short summary of each of the projects in order to provide context to research findings, full details of the projects can be found in the case studies section of this report (see page 61).

Meadow Arts

Project Partners: Meadow Arts, Pershore High School (Year 9 and 10 students), Creative Writer (JLM Morton)

Note: No early career creative writer for this project

Key question or area of enquiry:

- Supporting health and wellbeing of young people, particularly focusing climate change and environmental concerns
- Development of practical process for cross-curricular and cross-departmental practice between Arts and English departments in secondary school
- Exploration of using both contemporary art and a specific outdoor context/venue as a catalyst for creative writing

Project Summary:

Meadow Arts worked with Pershore High School, collaborating on a co-designed response to a public artwork that inspired young people to articulate their ideas, worries and concerns around climate change, using contemporary visual art as the catalyst.

Pershore Abbey was the partner venue. Students visited [Deluge](#), an artwork produced by artist Hilary Jack, commissioned by Meadow Arts. The work explores global climate change and local flooding. Deluge comprises 2 strips of LED text, which scroll. The top line will describe recent flooding events in Pershore (from newspaper headlines) the bottom describes references to flooding from manuscripts, folklore, and archive papers going back centuries.

JLM Morton (creative writer) worked with Year 9 and 10 students to explore the concepts within the artwork and the context of the venue. Care was an important element in the project, particularly in creating and holding a safe space for pupils to explore their feelings. Collectively, the partners produced a learning resource that can be used by others to creatively respond to public artworks in non-gallery settings, developing analysis, critical thinking, and creative expression skills. An extensive curriculum focussed resource (Art department) has also been developed by the school which will provide a model for cross- departmental working on this topic in future and will be used by subsequent year groups.

Nottingham Contemporary

Project Partners: Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham Education Sanctuary Team (NEST) part of Hospital and Home Education Learning Centre, Creative Writer (Peter Rumney)

Note: Early career writer TBC (delivery of this element will happen after this report is submitted)

Key question or area of enquiry:

- How do we welcome and support young people to make a new home in our towns and cities?
- How do we develop so that young people feel they belong in our arts and cultural spaces?

Project Summary:

Nottingham Contemporary worked in partnership with NEST, a specialist provision for newly arrived young people, including refugees and asylum seekers. Aged between 15-19 years, often with complex needs; students at NEST develop their English language skills and access support to build a new life and sense of place in the city. This project sat within the wider umbrella of partner collaborations with NEST and city partners through wider city projects such as the Art of Belonging City Pledge.

Students visited the city's museums and galleries as sites of inspiration for writing; moving around the city exploring exhibitions and collections together with writer Peter Rumney. The sites included: [New Art Exchange](#), [Nottingham Castle](#), [Lakeside Arts](#) and [Wollaton Hall](#) . The venues and exhibitions provided sites of inspiration and points of connection to different ways of approaching themes of home, belonging and identity. Following each site visit there was a follow-up writing session at NEST, to develop and refine creative writing responses. The creative writing responses produced included English and other languages to reflect the diverse range of languages spoken by the participants. The group also produced creative visual responses such as clay sculptures.

Student wellbeing was of great importance in this project and the project team had training in trauma informed practice. The project focussed on social discourses of writing, embracing personal connection and identities. This form of writing seeks to model support, emphasise process, build community and celebrate success, and was therefore appropriate to the young people who participated in the project.

The programme developed the team's understanding of writing practice and pushed their inclusion practice, specifically their ambition to be part of collective, city-wide solutions. The activities, strategies and literary approaches explored during the project will have a long-term impact on NEST and become an embedded aspect of the curriculum

Take A Part

Project Partners: Take A Part, Prince Rock school and High View school (Crazy Glue art group) , Creative Writer (Simon James)

Note: Early career writer (Laura Horton)

Key question or area of enquiry:

- To learn and understand how taking a creative approach to literacy can grow the confidence of parents and children with low literacy levels; developing a model of practice that can be shared with other groups and organisations
- How introducing literacy and writing to Crazy Glue groups can support the programme to grow/develop a new facet.

Project Summary:

Building on a previous project and the growing appetite for creative writing at Prince Rock School with the Crazy Glue art group (children and parents), Take a Part worked with writer Simon James to co-create a story about a local greenspace, using creative writing and art as the driver for the project. The project built on a model developed previously with the group, with a specific aim to develop the relationship to writing and literacy in groups that might not normally consider themselves writers or have a lack of confidence around literacy.

The partners worked together to understand the process of using picture books and drawing as a way into developing writing/storytelling; learning about what aspects of the collaboration make the programme most successful. The group worked with Simon James and Gem Smith (TAP) to creatively write and draw together, producing an original story (also turned into a short film featuring voices of participants) inspired by their local green space. Through this process, using a live action research approach, partners developed a model of best practice for creative literacy projects working with families with low levels of literacy.

This model was further tested with a second partner school, High View, who worked with emergent writer Laura Horton. The second group produced work inspired by their local environment which was informed by Laura Horton's expertise as a playwright, with activities including improvisation and character development. The groups shared their learning and experiences with each other. The writers utilised shadowing and mentoring opportunities built in through the programme, and their professional learning and development through the project was another important element. A toolkit was developed as a result of learning that occurred through the project which focused on how creative approaches to literacy can support families to engage.

b) Shared aims and intended outcomes

The projects in this year's MaxLiteracy programme were very different to one another in terms of project team partners, venue (two of the lead organisations did not have a permanent venue) and approach. The different ways in which the brief was interpreted with such varied but equally meaningful outcomes was mentioned by several members of the broader MaxLiteracy Awards project team.

"It's interesting to see that there is no single solution, people are sharing ideas. People can take this learning and do what they want with it. There's clearly something very particular to the place that each of the partnerships has been developed in, which is really bringing such colour towards what is emerging." Jane Sillis

It was also noted by the broader MaxLiteracy Awards project team that the projects each dealt with pertinent issues that are particularly relevant at this moment in time. Significantly the approach developed by the partners for each of the projects was responsive, and open to a co-creation process. Whilst high-quality artistic outcomes have been achieved by the participants, the process and learning was held up as being the most important outcome of each project for the partners. The legacy of the projects will also be key to reflect upon in future, as many of the projects used the MaxLiteracy Awards programme as an opportunity to test approaches that they wish to apply to future projects.

"The projects are all hugely unique and 'of the time'. It's really interesting to see." – Ronda Gowland-Pryde

"I think it's important that the complications are not ironed out and cleaned up in the final resource- that's what makes them so exciting. There's the temptation to do something that slots into a pre-existing mould and that's not what any of these projects have been about." Claire Collison

"The projects are topical and 'of the time'- Climate change, place, materials, issues faced by refugees and asylum seekers, community cohesion in the family groups. These are things that can be replicated by others in the country." Anne Caldwell

Due to the complexities of evaluating such varied projects with very different structures, the External Evaluator worked with the lead partners to create an evaluation plan based on the specific outcomes of each project (appendix A). However, the projects also all shared the following generic intended outcomes. Many of the more specific project outcomes contributed towards these in some way.

Shared generic intended outcomes

Participants

- Participants increase skills and confidence to express themselves and write creatively
- Participant wellbeing is considered, supported and improves over the course of the project
- Participants conceptual and visual literacy is enhanced (including skills in linking with the context of the venue or artwork).

Partners

- Partners develop sustained geographical partnerships, peer-to-peer learning and cross-sectoral exchange (e.g with educational, health sectors).
- Partners build better knowledge of each other and effective collaborative working practices: *each other's values, aims and operations and identify key success criteria for working together*

Writers

- Creative Writer and Emergent Writer both gain new tools to use when connecting creative writing and visual arts
- Where appropriate/relevant- Creative Writer gains skills in mentoring

c) Collated outputs

Individual workshops/sessions delivered	38
Visits to venues/sites (other than your own if applicable)	10
Public/sharing events	6
Volunteers involved	2
Artists/writers/creative practitioners involved	6
Children and young people involved	84
Parents/carers/guardians involved	15
Other partners/experts involved in delivery	4
Community groups participating	2
Schools/education settings participating	4
Other organisations/interest groups/services participating	1
Toolkits/resources produced	8
Teachers involved	5

This table outlines the outputs achieved by all three projects across this year's MaxLiteracy Awards programme. Further information on specific numbers and key stages of the young people involved are outlined in the project case studies.

d) Participant learning and development key outcome achievements

Evaluation measures:

Evaluation measures for recording participant progress were bespoke to each project due to the varied nature of the groups, participant skill levels and what was felt to be most relevant and appropriate to track by the partners involved. Some evaluation measures outlined at the start of the project did fall by the wayside due to pressures on capacity and condensed delivery schedules, a full list of these can be found in the evaluation methodology for each project (see appendix A). A further complexity in evaluating the change that happened across the project was that two of the projects worked with multiple or changing cohorts of student over the duration. Partly as a result of this, many of the projects relied on the observations of the partners, including writers and any teaching staff involved in the workshops, to inform their reflections on participant learning. Whilst this is not the most robust approach, with the short timeframes of these projects, working closely with those who already have established relationships with the participants is certainly a useful indicator of change. The work produced by participants was also used to inform the evaluation of this element of the programme and is a strong indicator of their engagement, enjoyment and development as a result of their participation in the projects.

Evaluation measures with regards to participant learning for each project were as follows:

Nottingham Contemporary:

- Observations recorded of progress by those who know the students. Jonathan Cutting and Peter Rumney identifying 'glow moments'.
- Frame template tool for student reflection on confidence and understanding (appendix G)
- Short 'exit ticket' type feedback (students to write something on a post-it note at the end of the lesson)
- NEST reading diagnostic and assessment for learning (EAL competency framework- assessment starting point English at start of 1 year NEST programme)
- Student speaking, listening and understanding- assessed termly against this (cannot be directly attributed to the work of this programme)
- Leuven scale (observational tool to track wellbeing)- *this was not formally employed*
- Creative outputs-*still being finalised at the time of writing this report*

Take A Part

- Comments from parents and children in relation to their understanding and engagement in the project
- Baseline family surveys (appendix B)
- Creative outputs

- Observations from session leads
- Self-reflective journals in which families draw or write how the project feels at the end of each session- *this was not formally employed*
- Word clouds (appendix C)

Meadow Arts

- Baseline pupil survey (appendix E)
- Mid-point and end pupil surveys
- Observations from session leads
- Creative outputs
- Student comments

Note: The baseline survey carried out with by Pershore High school participants showed a high level of engagement and enjoyment of creative writing (and art in most cases) at project start. The survey questions were changed for mid-point survey in line with JLM Morton's observation regarding student interest in poetry, however on reflection the other survey questions should have also been altered at this stage in order to better demonstrate the change that occurred regarding student's increased understanding of the interplay between art and writing.

Survey results did indicate a small change in student confidence in creative writing. 76% of students scored their level of confidence 8 or above when surveyed in Dec '23 and 80% attributed a score of 8 or above in Feb '24. Across all 3 surveys 93.5% indicated that they had learnt something new from the session. There is more information on student surveys in appendices E and F.

Summary:

Overall, the data that has been collected around participant learning and development suggests that there were many positive outcomes for participants. Having the opportunity to visit new spaces, engage in cultural experiences and work with professional writers has broadened their horizons, created new connections and inspired some development in terms of writing and speaking skills. The biggest positive outcome across all three of the projects was development of the confidence of participants. This has been achieved through the creation of safe spaces with caring facilitators and careful consideration and reflection of the needs of participants. The importance of this should not be underestimated in socially engaged projects, particularly which involve more vulnerable people. This also impacted positively on the wellbeing of participants. With all projects, there is an intention to build further on the skills, and opportunities developed as part of this programme, and the legacies created as a result of the projects, such as Senior Leadership Team at NEST wanting to embed the enrichment programme developed through Nottingham Contemporary's project as part of their curriculum, are testament to the positive impacts that both partners and participants experienced.

Outcome 1: Participants increase skills and confidence to express themselves and write creatively

- In all projects participants engaged with the activities
- In each of the projects support and activities were developed to be responsive to the participants involved and to their learning. There has been adjustment to expectations and project plans as a result of this. For example Peter Rumney and Johnathan Cutting reviewed, reflected and reshaped sessions on a regular basis, as a result of learning from previous sessions, in order to foster greater understanding and sensitivity towards students.
- All of those involved talked highly of the work that the young people produced and the creativity that they demonstrated.
- Participants were encouraged to self-reflect to highlight and embed skills and confidence development and demonstrate value. “To be fair I am keen on the drawing aspect, I am better at drawing and writing but I am good at stories when you can get to decide what’s going to happen” Child Take A Part project
- All the projects provided spaces and opportunities for participants to explore and express themselves more freely. By being taken to new places outside of a familiar structure or conventions participants were taken “out of their comfort zone” and new expectations and a sense of freedom of expression were created as a result.
- Participants have increased understanding regarding the relevance that visual art could play in helping to inspire and shape their writing. The ability of the writers to use unconventional approaches to the writing activities and linking this to different types of contemporary artwork has helped them to focus on seeing this as an inspirational opportunity. For example pupils from Pershore High were identified as already being competent and engaged with writing but many were not engaged with visual arts and lacked cultural capital. Exposure to different artworks and spaces has allowed them to see the links between artforms.
- Participants were encouraged to experiment with ideas without worry about “getting things wrong”.
- Participants have developed confidence in trying new approaches to writing. For example Pershore High school students were observed as being particularly engaged and excited to use different poetry formats such as conversational prose and found word poems. Exposure to new spaces, new writing forms, and working directly with a professional writer has allowed them to be more open to experiment, make unexpected links and extend their practice. Families in Take A Part’s project also tried new approaches combining drawing and writing. “I love writing and I like drawing and art but I’m not as good as I am at writing, but I’ll give it a go!”
- Repeated activities were recognised as being key in mastery of skills and increased confidence in all projects. For example families who had participated in Take A Part’s previous project already had a base of skills and a confidence in approach with regards to this project. The same was true of the students in the Nottingham Contemporary project who attended (repeated) sessions as part of more than one cohort. “Some students ended up in 2 or 3 visits- those students had more change.”
- Participants were supported to try new approaches and new artforms for example Take A Part’s group at High View school exploring dramaturgical practice.
- The projects have impacted on the levels of confidence around sharing work and ideas with others. In all projects there was an element of either performance (as with Take A Part’s group at High View school) and/or verbal sharing of ideas, with participants supported and encouraged to do so.

- Inclusion of participant voice in final outcomes was seen as being key in attributing value and acknowledging the work and ideas that participants had put into the projects. For example participant voices are included in the creative outcomes of both of Take A Part's groups .
- Students are somewhat more creative writers and thinkers. This is evidenced through the high quality, creative outcomes that all participants have produced and the observations collated from partners. It is challenging however to demonstrate to what extent their writing has been developed due to a lack of baseline data and whether it will have a long term impact beyond the length of the project. Legacy plans are in place for all projects however which are likely to provide further development in this area.
- Students from NEST have learnt new words in English
- Participants are more confident in accessing cultural spaces
- Participants were able to begin a task before being asked in Nottingham Contemporary's project demonstrating understanding and developed confidence in tasks.

Comments and specific reflections:

Nottingham Contemporary

"We explained 'confidence' in writing and speaking and gave examples, and explained the scale 0-5. Students drew a line from 0-5 on how confident they felt with speaking and writing at end of session. We saw some improvement in students' self-reporting of their confidence levels, but we didn't track or formalise the data. I also used short 'exit ticket' type feedback, when I would ask students to write something on a post-it note at the end of the lesson." Johnathan Cutting

"It was challenging to track student progress due to constraints re timetable at school, having a rolling cohort (6 week block), different approaches to sessions from Peter in line with which cultural venue and artwork the cohort accessed. We wanted to provide wider access to the programme with a range of students. " Johnathan Cutting

"At our session at New Arts Exchange, the girls didn't want to be in the space, whereas the guys who had been before shook my hand and got on with the task straight away. By the end of the session all the students came out beaming and shaking my hand." Peter Rumney

"The best evidence for change in confidence is looking at individual moments in observation. We have one student who struggles in writing in English, but he was fluent in the way he was writing through a scribe, regarding what he wanted to say. He could then transfer that into poem format. If you were just observing him you would think he was a confident writer. In his own perception (student) he could experience what it felt like to be a confident writer. This was supported by transcribing and copying words down. Through this scaffolding we supported him to record ideas and put them onto paper." Johnathan Cutting

Take A Part

“I would say from an observational perspective those that have done this work before were more able to contribute ideas, were more verbal and felt confident to voice opinions and contribute to the audio recording too. Sharing ideas within the group, in a writing based concept, also built confidence. I would say this evidence also comes through in the quality of the work produced.” Gemma Smith

“The High View group ended up creating characters (drawings) and recording monologues, for some this was a brave step, to firstly create their own text in this style but then to also read it- the fact that they stepped up to do so shows me how far they came on the journey with Laura their writer.” Gemma Smith

“The families in our group have worked together for a few months on this project and each week the confidence of some members has been improving. Some of the parents who attend either have low levels of literacy or are doing something really out of their comfort zone.” Kath Johnson

“The children in the group range in age from years 1-6 so there are opportunities to showcase a range of literacy levels. The project has given their parents opportunities to see how they use literacy in a way that they may not have seen before. Sharing ideas for the story and suggestions for the creative element has helped the children to develop their story-telling and story writing skills.” Kath Johnson

Meadow Arts

“By this session there had been a significant shift in students’ confidence, in terms of their willingness to share their writing with the wider group and their creativity and expansiveness of their responses to the prompt materials. Engaging with a source text from a young, contemporary poet expanded their conception of what might be possible in a poem and how they might write in a more conversational style themselves. Exposure to a broader range of influences helped the students widen their perspective on the potential of roles of art and text, particularly in relation to how we respond to climate change” JLM Morton (extract from blog piece on Meadow Arts website)

“I really enjoy art and writing because there are no bad or wrong ideas.” Participant

“I’ve really enjoyed the experience. It is very different from normal school but I’ve learned a lot.” Participant

“The one key thing that stuck with me was when some of the students commented on how learning outside of the classroom seemed to promote deeper thinking and a sense of individual growth. The routine of school can dull the senses and that the weekly writing with Alex and the new experiences this project has introduced has made learning richer and more empowering. They felt encouraged to be themselves.” David Reid

Outcome 2: Participant wellbeing improves over the course of the project

- Mutual trust was established between project partners/facilitators and the participants. Many partners (particularly the writers) spoke about specific points of connection made between themselves and participants in the project.
- Participant wellbeing was considered as a key element across all projects at the planning stage and revised as needed throughout delivery to reflect any particular needs that arose as relationships developed.
- Participants felt comfortable to share their personal ideas, emotions or stories with the writers and wider group as projects progressed
- Participant wellbeing beyond the scope of the project was supported through signposting to further resources, groups and courses of action particularly through the Meadow Arts project
- Professional development, in terms of how participant wellbeing is supported, is a legacy of all projects in some form
- A safe space/atmosphere in which individuals felt comfortable was created by facilitators across all projects. For example Simon James shared the following reflection: “The sessions create peace of mind- the families can get lost in being creative which mends and calms our minds as we work. The effects on the families are the most important things to me.”
- Content, artwork or themes to share were carefully considered in order to be sensitive to the experiences and needs of the participants. For example in the Nottingham Contemporary project “our choices about which art works to work with on gallery acknowledged that some exhibitions might potentially be challenging to the cultural or life experiences of some of the students and bearing this in mind.”
- Encouragement and support from the writer to the participants fostered a sense of wellbeing and increased confidence. For example Shelley Hodgson reflected on this experience “ ...being told by one of the shyest participants that they were approached by Simon and he said he really liked their drawing and what that comment then brought out in that participant. They have had quite a journey with us.”
- Participants in Nottingham Contemporary’s project felt more connected with and welcomed by cultural venues, beginning to improve their connection to the city.
- Participants in Take A Part’s project improved their connections with their family members as a result of being given dedicated time to do activities together.
- Participants in all projects made connections with others that they had not met/worked with before. Kath Johnson said “they have been working co-creatively with some other families they probably would not have connected with before.”
- Sharing of specific concerns and worries about climate change contributed to a positive and connecting shared experience for pupils in Meadow Arts project.
- Consistent attendance at sessions demonstrated that participants felt engaged, connected and invested in activities and valued the sessions. This was particularly demonstrated through Take A Part’s project with high participant numbers throughout despite some families having personal challenges to overcome in order to attend.

- Participants in all groups fostered a sense of connection to their locality. In particular a connection to natural environments was explored in two of the projects. Connection to locality and grounding oneself in a place often resulted in an increased sense of wellbeing. The creative responses from participants in whilst natural spaces shows their connection to these spaces. “Connecting their writing to a location in their community really helped the families feel they understood and owned the subject matter and themes of the piece as well as enabling them to draw on real life resources.” Gem Smith (see appendix D)

Comments and specific reflections:

Nottingham Contemporary

“Some thought has been considered in terms of exhibition content at different cultural venues – continuing conversations between Peter and Jonathan allowed for the navigation of different responses that could arise from certain exhibitions. Just as we had to be careful about how we encouraged the students to tell stories, our choices about which art works to work with on gallery acknowledged that some exhibitions might potentially be challenging to the cultural or life experiences of some of the students and bearing this in mind.” Lisa Jacques

“Considering sensitivities we made some changes in approach. At the start of the project we introduced 4 words-home, journey, arrival and belonging. We later removed the word home as we asked ourselves- was this helpful? Is it triggering? We removed some words due to feeling that everyone might not be comfortable. We refocussed on belonging which better matched their needs.”

“I can’t claim it has hugely influenced their writing/language skills- we have no control measure to isolate this project in itself to prove this. However, it has been successful as an enrichment project, going out to spaces, experiences with other teachers, being part of structure of city, feeling welcomed in the city, an understanding of job roles that are out there- going out into the world and experiencing interaction with other people.” Johnathan Cutting

“I think we’ve made connections with different settings and cultural venues. We wanted them to feel welcomed through us preparing the way through the process of getting there, transport, support, passes, being in the space welcoming them. Due to the efforts of us building those relationships, they could express themselves and ask questions in the spaces. They would then remember going to spaces and build connections. Knowing that their contributions were valued and they could occupy the space with their thoughts and feed into this. When we were in the spaces some of them did mention their journeys to the UK- this suggests they were feeling comfortable in the space.” Peter Rumney

Take A Part

"It's like creating magic- I can draw on moment of creating artwork in front of people, I can create a sense of connection immediately. People then do not feel intimidated to have a go, by me first demonstrating what I can do and sharing what can be achieved. There's also a connection going around room between people who are working on artwork or words. To share a specific example one of the group is quite a shy boy. He comes with his Dad. He doesn't fit very easily within school community, he's a bit of an outsider. I have made real attempt to share drawing with him. He knows that I also enjoy drawing in my studio at home- there's a connection there to something that we both enjoy." Simon James

"There is a family who come to the group. The kids are very happy, motivated and engaged, but their mother struggles. I make a point to make connection with her to ask her to put down her phone and find a way into things. I know that we've achieved that and can see the family talking together. She's finding something, she's lost the sense of coping and is just being with her children and everyone else and enjoying the process. She has done a page for the book this time which is a big thing for her (she didn't in previous project)." Simon James

"We had to overcome challenges to get to point where we were all unified and focussed on collective goal together. We were able to achieve this because they respect Gem, and know me, and they know how we work, so they are willing and interested to know what we have to offer. I like to provide a calm atmosphere. Our goal is to be together in the room, focussed, and with a great deal of heart. Prince Rock is one of the wilder groups so feels really important that this brought a sense of calm to their lives." Simon James

"It's nice to come to Crazy Glue because it gives me that slot of time that you would never allow yourself, because we are all so busy, so this is a nice escape from everyday life and having the opportunity to do different creative things, including writing, is really rewarding" Participant

"it's a really nice bonding process as a family to do it, so that's been really lovely actually to be inspired by the group to do those things which you remind yourself to do but you don't often make that slot of time to ACTUALLY do it" Participant

"Playfulness, just playing, creating and not thinking too much, peaceful, meditative, life affirming" Participant

Meadow Arts

“A key concern of our workshops was supporting young people to manage their responses to climate change. The students were open about their feelings of fear, hopelessness, anger and worry and our sessions thought through who they could talk to and nurtured a sense of agency by exploring the small actions they could take in their own lives to minimise climate change. Students thought that writers had a role to play in amplifying issues, telling stories about how things could be different, using their voice and their platform to change people’s behaviour. Our thoughts around this were channelled into ways we could work collectively to build connections and inspire activism. Christine Felce created the ‘Activist Alphabet’ as a result of her concern for the impacts of climate change. Using her screen-printed large-scale letters with slogans as inspiration, students made their own alphabet boards of text and visual images, personalising them to highlight their own concerns.” JLM Morton

“We did a placard activity with Y9 girls who said what they were really feeling ‘I hold on to things I don’t need to,’ ‘I push people away’ – showed a level of self-reflection that was striking.” JLM Morton

Outcome 3: Participants conceptual and visual literacy is enhanced

- Participants in all projects were supported to be better able to 'read' visual artworks through practical sessions (including visits to arts spaces) in which they explored meaning, process, concept etc
- Participants have gained new tools that they can use to explore visual arts- questioning, framing etc
- Participants in all projects used the knowledge and ideas gained from visits to contemporary galleries or artworks to create their own pieces based on similar themes, again demonstrating understanding of concept and process.
- Participants across all projects gained knowledge on how context influences experience and meaning
- Participants from Meadow Arts project increased knowledge on how visual artworks and text can be combined/overlaid to create new artworks and new meaning.
- Participants from Meadow Arts learnt about the power of visual arts and writing to encourage change and action- particularly regarding climate change
- Students in Nottingham Contemporary's project built on visual literacy gained from a gallery visit and used clay and drawing as a storytelling device to share difficult personal experiences
- Families from Take A Part's groups used drawing to communicate meaning. Both drawing and writing was utilised to shape the narrative for their characters and story in each creative outcome.
- In most projects the participants built on the work of others to produce new work- for example the cross curricular work that happened between students and the Art and English department at Pershore High school or the families from Take A Part's project building on the ideas of others to co-create narratives.
- In Nottingham Contemporary's project, communication through visual a medium was incredibly important as a tool for students to express themselves due to their limited skills in English. "We asked them to produce a sculpture related to the word 'home'. Showing understanding their creative outcomes were depictions of an eating ritual, a giraffe and a shelter, sheep, high-rise towers, shacks/rural setting, a tile from home."
- Participants' cultural literacy has been enhanced through exposure to culture, as well as to situations and settings in which many did not have previous experience. This is important in building their cultural capital and improving life chances.

Comments and specific reflections:

Meadow Arts

“There have been many special mini moments but really for me it is seeing students gain cultural capital interacting with the Artwork in an unusual location and engaging in a dialogue about Art and language with our writer Juliette and Emma Bowen from Meadow Arts on the meadow that opened up the students understanding of their own locality.” David Reid

“I have enjoyed expressing my opinions and imagination through art AND creative writing. It has also been interesting to explore other people’s pieces and becoming inspired by them. It has been a new experience for me and I have found it incredibly interesting.” Participant

“One challenge I have had as an art teacher is finding a natural process where the creative writing elements carried out by the students could evolve into the visual Art which complemented the text. There was a lot of playful interaction in getting writers to rethink how the text is presented but often there was a tendency for students to disconnect the two disciplines partly perhaps due to the academic institutionalisation of the subjects. The solution was resolved in part in carrying out the creative workshop once the written elements came into existence.” David Reid

Take A Part

“Members from the High View group visited MIRROR Gallery (situated inside of Arts University Plymouth) to see the work of Ben Sanderson. Sanderson’s collaged fabric pieces contained lots of literal and more abstract references to nature. The group took time to observe the works and then each selected their favourite aspects to replicate in their style on small pieces of paper. At the end of the session everyone’s drawing were placed together to create a collaged work (in reference to this particular exhibition, which featured old works of Sanderson’s that were re-purposed and re-configured in collages and weavings). The High view group also visited the Arts institute at Plymouth University as it was situated across the road. Many of the group had not been to either space before.” Gemma Smith

Nottingham Contemporary

“Using trauma informed approach we looked at narrative to make sense and become part of the process of coming to terms with traumatic experiences. It is quite tricky to distinguish between- tell me your story and tell me a story. We reiterated that it was ok to go into fiction- making their own choices (telling story which may at some level connect with their own experience) we don’t know level of this. One student chose to draw his village. We could see that he was not very happy, tired, worried, it was a delicate moment, trying to find right level to acknowledge what he was drawing without intruding.”

e) Professional learning and development key outcome achievements

Summary: In general partners worked well together and the effective nature of their partnerships is demonstrated by the intention of most to continue their collaboration in some way moving forward. There were hurdles in all relationships in the programme in relation to communication, clarity on roles and expectations, and issues with capacity. Peer to peer professional learning across the lead organisations involved in the programme happened later in the process and further opportunities to connect with each other earlier in the programme may have enhanced this opportunity, for example through shared themes across the projects such as **care and wellbeing** which emerged as a clear thread explored by all partners in this year's programme.

Reflective practice was incorporated into many of the projects and allowed for learning and redirection of projects to take place when needed in order to meet shared aims and objectives. Where there were already established relationships between partners, such as with Take A Part's project team members, there were less challenges in this area as the team were already better aware of the working practices of others, as would be expected.

Peer to peer learning has also been explored on page 49, regarding learning around programme structure and partner experience.

The experience of the creative writer and emergent writer (mentoring) is evaluated in more depth on page 54 of this report.

“I think we've all learned a lot on this project, which we'll take into creating even stronger projects in the future.”

JLM Morton

“Collaboration has been so valuable- one of most important aspects of the project”

Jonathan Cutting

Outcome 4: Partners develop sustained geographical partnerships, peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and cross-sectoral exchange (e.g with educational, youth and health sectors).

- At least one new partnership was formed between the lead organisation and others as a result of all three of the projects, Nottingham Contemporary and Meadow Arts each forged two new relationships during their projects.
- Take A Part's project was built upon a pre-existing structure with established groups, so although relationships were strengthened across the project, only the relationship built with emergent writer Laura Horton was a new partnership. On this point, Gemma Smith (Take A Part) reflected that "As an organisation we already have very strong relationships with the groups we are working with, so rather than new relationships this project has allowed us to work with established groups in newer ways, and I guess be a little more risk taking in our approach because we know that trust is there between us. "
- All partnerships had been able to work collaboratively to achieve their identified outcomes
- Peer to peer learning has been experienced across all partnerships
- Cross-sectoral exchange has occurred, in particular between education settings and writers. For example, Peter Rumney commented that his professional practice had been informed by observing Jonathan Cutting's approach to working with students from NEST.
- Where there have been challenges these have been addressed and often resolved through honest discussions between partners
- Regular communication was found to be key to good working relationships and building of confidence in the roles of the partners, this was not achieved consistently across the project's duration.
- Challenges in working with education timetables and structures were mentioned as affecting two of the partnerships
- All lead organisations plan to continue these partnerships in some way in future and some have already begun planning next phase of work. Emma Bowen (Meadow Arts) commented that "We are already working with the school (Persore High) on a further project on a co-commission of a co-created artwork."

Lisa Jacques (Nottingham Contemporary) specifically mentioned the citywide partnerships that will become an embedded and important legacy of their project. "Through the Art of Belonging Pledge [Art of Belonging Pledge | ChalleNGe Nottingham](#) we hope to build on the partnership with NEST through Creative Writing to be involved with city-wide partnerships and projects and continue to develop collaborations and partnerships with other organisations supporting refugee and asylum seeking communities."

Partnerships table

The following table outlines the number and nature of new partnerships formed by the lead organisations through the programme. It includes data collated through the partner surveys which were completed by each lead organisation.

Relationship	Take A Part	Nottingham Contemporary	Meadow Arts
Peers (organisations involved in the Max Literacy project)	N	N	N
Cross sector (schools/education settings etc)	N	Y- Languages and Heritage network at University of Nottingham	Y
Other local cultural venues or sites	N	N- But greater knowledge of wider work with refugee communities across the city	N
Creative practitioners/writers	Y	N	Y
City-wide initiatives	N	Y- Art of Belonging Cultural Pledge, New Art Exchange (NEST Students taking part in a workshop at the New Art Exchange's Voice Notes initiative 18 th April- an international creative writing and sounds art initiative celebrating the voices of young refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons from Nottingham and Slemani in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Compass Collective	N
Other...	N/A	N/A	N/A

1. In response to the question: **Have there been any particular challenges in working with other organisations/individual and what did you learn from this?**

Project partners indicated that it had been complex working on projects with multiple partners in terms of logistics, different working patterns and external pressures and expectations. Due to the relatively short duration of the project, often logistics had to be worked out through trial and error as part of the delivery process. Personal circumstances, illness and capacity (pressures of other work) sometimes created additional pressures as this impacted on the delivery timeframe and meant that sometimes others had to step in to offer support. The structure of education settings and how they run was mentioned as being challenging in terms of project structure in the Nottingham Contemporary and Meadow Arts projects and compromises needed to be sought in order for the projects to progress. Where partnerships were already more established such as with Take A Part's project, there were fewer challenges in terms of working in partnership, as structures had already been tested.

- Despite the challenges, 100% of partners found points of synergy with others and many commented that they valued the opportunity to work with people with different viewpoints and professional expertise to their own. The writers involved had all formed at least one new relationship, which they were keen to build on in future.
- 100% of partners indicated that they would like to maintain the relationships forged through the project in some way, and some have already begun this next phase of work.

Comments included:

"It has been more complicated than expected to work across the two departments in school and there hasn't been the opportunity for as much cross curriculum collaboration as we would have hoped. It has been difficult to work with so many people, two teachers, myself and the writer. It is impossible to even get a meeting with all 4 people in the room together." Emma Bowen

"We were already aware of the changing nature of the cohorts at NEST due to arrivals through the year and so had considered this in the way sessions were planned before the project started, and so invested in training and in the relationships and communication with Jonathan and colleagues at NEST. NEST were keen to involve as many students as possible, and we were keen to work over time with smaller cohorts. Together, we found a solution." Lisa Jacques

"Mainly my confidence and not knowing what to expect, but that got easier as time went on and I loved the experience." Laura Horton

"As the group has met on a monthly basis Gemma has been very good at keeping on contact and updating about sessions. Gemma, Simon and some other creatives have worked hard to keep them engaged and wanting to come each time.

Some of the parents aren't the most confident so can face challenges in sharing their ideas but this is something they have celebrated each session. Simon did feedback that the use of phones can sometimes hinder the participation of the families but once they are back on task they work well together. " Prince Rock school

Outcome 5: Partners build better knowledge of each other and create effective collaborative working practices: partners learn more about each other's values, aims and operations and identify key success criteria for working together

- Partners' professional practice had been furthered by the project in all cases. All partners identified specific learning points that they would incorporate into their practice going forward. "The experience of collaboration has been very useful-it has given me more confidence in doing this type of work but now could do it myself and lead some of those." Peter Rumney
- The participant-centred nature of the projects has provided partners with the opportunity to explore the specific needs of the participants involved
- In situations where the education setting had provided information about participants, or where there was already a relationship with participants, this had created a better understanding of how the writer and lead organisation could support the needs of participants in terms of their skills, interests and learning and therefore created more successful learning outcomes.
- Education professionals can better see the value of working with artists and writers and the opportunities that this opens up to their students. Alex Hodson described his experience of working with JLM Morton "Working with Juliette and seeing both her approach to creative writing and the response of the students to someone who isn't a member of staff. It's been a long time since I've ran a project with a visitor, so it was fantastic to give the students this opportunity to be impacted by someone from beyond the school gates and for them to see a professional writer in person."
- Regular planning and reflection sessions between partners has been key to maintaining relationships and ensuring that the projects are meeting the needs of both participants and partners.
- A new working model or methodology has been created collaboratively through two of the projects
- The collaborative working practices between writers and teachers have been a key factor in the project's success across two projects. "There were lots of moments of connection, but if I had to choose one, it was a very small and unexpected moment, working with David during the follow up workshop after the group visit to the Abbey/Meadows – hardly any students had turned up and I was feeling a little deflated by that but carried on anyway. We were using the idea of 'the power of three' or the 'sacred three' – past, present, future – and encouraging students to take three gleaming details that they'd gathered on the field trip and work these into a small poem. We looked at how small details can speak for the whole or bigger picture. David totally got it and was really enthusiastic about how an idea so seemingly simple could be so powerful. It made the session feel worth doing in spite of the poor turnout - David said it was an idea he'd use in his own teaching." JLM Morton
"The partnership and reflections between Peter and Jonathan have allowed for sessions to be planned linked to exhibitions and so that students were able to join for single sessions. It was also great to see some students joined for more than one session and Jonathan provided opportunity to develop writing ideas linked to cultural venue visits in between sessions. Having Jonathan lead these sessions in between has allowed students to continue exploring ideas, make connections, use points of discussion. This approach supports the embedding of creative writing practice as part of their enrichment curriculum." Lisa Jacques

- Learning from two of the projects will be disseminated to wider teams and other organisations. “Whole team training on working with asylum seekers and refugees –learnings from training to be shared in a team meeting to ensure this is disseminated not only with the learning team but also across the organisation in the hope we will continue developing partnerships and activities that promote the inclusion of asylum seekers and refugees in our future project planning. “ Lisa Jacques
- Learning from the projects has informed the development or continuation of work based on the projects delivered as part of the MaxLiteracy Awards programme in all cases e.g development of Pershore High school arts curriculum, a new enrichment curriculum for NEST, continuation of Take A Part’s Crazy Glue model. “Jonathan has discussed ways in which the activities, strategies and literary approaches will have a long-term impact on the NEST curriculum and become an embedded aspect of the curriculum – not just through enrichment but also through literacy pedagogies.” Peter Rumney
- The variety of voices and ideas (partners) involved in projects has resulted in more creative outcomes “ We had four people involved in the planning, each coming from a different direction. It was fruitful in terms of outcomes, but we were pulled in different directions, which in other projects I’ve had less creative voices involved. Less people involved means it is easier for projects to happen, but has been really useful in that we’ve got really unique outcomes. “ Emma Bowen

Partners were asked for their reflections in response to the following questions-

1. In response to the question **Do you feel that your work with organisations/individuals has or will directly impact your professional practice moving forward? In what way?**

100% of partners said that their work with other organisations or individuals, through this project, would impact their professional practice in some way moving forward. Learning has happened in all cases and will be applied to future working either with the partners involved in this project or into their wider professional practice.

Comments included:

“Yes definitely. It really cements for me that getting people engaged in the creative arts at a young age is so crucial, and also that this is the first time some of the parents have been creative and that does so much for self-esteem and connectivity.” Laura Horton

“Yes, I think I’m still absorbing what it means to work with schools and taking time to consider how I would do this again. I think sometimes my expectations are too high. The project has forced me to reflect on my own practices and what my process is which has been really useful.” JLM Morton

“Yes- building confidence and affirming value. Know that you are doing it well. Details about how Jonathan works in the classroom etc to take into my own practice. 2 day training re trauma informed practice- will be shared at a later stage- and will be radiated out through the city initiative. I still walk in thinking ‘ I don’t know enough’ I think I needed more input before beginning- starting too early. Later start would have meant more preparation.” Peter Rumney

“Yes, I think I will be less likely to take on such a big project that has such tight deadlines.” Emma Bowen

“ As the project is led by trauma-informed practice it has directly impacted the Nottingham Contemporary team. For example: whole team training (trauma informed practice and working with asylum seekers and refugees) to be shared across the organisation, wellbeing and support of NEST pupils considered in planning, embedding creative writing as part of NEST curriculum, future NEST cohorts to be able to access cultural venues in similar way and similar programme format, future training planned for evaluating young people’s voices within learning team.

2. In response to the question **Through the project have you created a model or methodology that you intend to replicate in future work?**
Please give further detail if possible.

All but one partner indicated that they had created a model that they intended to replicate in future work.

Comments included:

“I think that gaining a further understanding into how and why this model can work with these groups is really exciting for us as an organisation. To be taking our Crazy Glue family art group model and testing how that works in another way with an art form we often don’t go to (for fear that it will put families off) is exciting. It’s a new approach and way of working within a much more established model that we have. It’s exciting for us to think about how we can share this learning and share with other organisations approaches that can enable those that wouldn’t normally engage with writing to do so in a very gentle and approachable way...it’s exciting to be able to add that to our portfolio of practice.” Gem Smith

“Hopefully we can continue the work with our family art group. We are looking to invite new families as some of the current members are in year 6 and will soon be leaving for secondary school. Enabling them to work together and with their own families has been beneficial for some of our vulnerable families, who do not often get the opportunity to spend time chatting and creating together in this way.” Kath Johnson

“Yes- the resources. In terms of what contributed drawing down from previous work blending and knitting. How would apply to other groups (not young refugees) but maybe others with language difficulties.” Peter Rumney

“Yes. Ahead of the programme we provided additional training and resources to the delivery team in trauma informed practice with young refugee and asylum seeking communities. We will be building on and taking this knowledge into future work. We have developed practice and a greater understanding

of the importance of reflective, evaluative approaches when working with refugee and asylum seeker communities. Through this approach we have learnt and are using strategies to encourage participants to share languages to foster a sense of belonging and connecting multilingual communities through the idea of the 'Cultural Rucksack' or 'Funds of Knowledge'. We are also drawing on a model of peer collaboration – observations show that this can greatly support with connection to activities, bringing students in and language building. We are also developing techniques such as object-focused handling to develop language / ideas/ concepts before formal writing, and creative writing approaches, e.g. use of text portraits, collaborative drawings to provide stimulus for literacy.” Lisa Jacques

3. In response to the question **What 2 areas of learning from the project so far would you most like to share with others?**

Partner comments were as follows:

- The importance of a wellbeing and trauma informed approach and an ongoing dialogue the young people themselves and the people who support them
- The importance of approaches based on visual and sensory elements, peer to peer activity and the use of own languages and multilingualism to support a sense of connection and belonging

Lisa Jacques

- That cross curriculum working in a secondary school is time consuming
- That you can use visual art to inspire the making of creative writing to inspire the making of new visual art

Emma Bowen

- I think there's something around how you produce work like this and the need to understand the needs of a school on the ground when collaborating with them and then also being able to support the needs of the writers/creatives that you are working with.
- And then collectively what we have been testing by looking across two groups is what the ingredients are that make this model and approach to developing collaborative pieces of writing inspired by art and with art as a driver so I think there's a 'how to' type guide potentially, or a sharing of 'the ingredients' that make these type of projects work.

Gem Smith

- The value of staff partnership. That the school were prepared to take on project. In our case both myself and Nottingham Contemporary had worked with NEST previously so there was already a trust established between partners. On a big project this is very important.
- The principles behind it- some of which we had at the beginning and some which developed later- hold up.

Peter Rumney

- The challenges of cross curricula working – pay attention to planning from the outset and don't try to wing it!
- Don't be afraid to introduce students to new and unusual forms of creative writing – they will rise to the challenge with curiosity and insight!

JLM Morton

Outcome 6: Creative Writer and emergent writer both gain new tools to use when connecting creative writing and visual arts

- The projects have built the confidence of the writers to connect visual arts to their creative writing
- The writers have experimented with new approaches which will influence their own practice and work with participants in the future. “I’ve loved combining images, audio and written word and would definitely combine more of this when I teach.” Laura Horton
- The writers were responsive to the cultural settings and sites, this resulted in the development of new ways of working and for existing approaches to be used in new ways.
- The writers learnt to adapt their approach and practice to meet the needs of the groups. “We produced a sheet with translated key words for the students (8-9 different languages spoken across the group). We considered how the use of words is different across different culture and languages- for example the word ‘paradise’. We found there were crossovers between words in some languages which helped with peer to peer understanding.” Peter Rumney
- All writers developed their knowledge and working practice around the importance of care and wellbeing when working with participants. “It’s about care- how you work with young people in a way that recognises the role of care when talking about climate change. We did address in some of the workshops where they could get support, help one another, where they could get an outlet.” JLM Morton
- The importance of working with professional writers and the different dynamic that they introduced was noted by other partners “What struck me throughout the project was the richness and expertise of the project leaders where ideas were always stimulated by the verbal and visual materials that were generated. I was constantly inspired by the resources and concepts introduced to the creative writers that Juliette created which highlighted and introduced me to exciting new Art practitioners and ways of thinking; I was also hugely enriched by Emma’s depth of visual knowledge and ideas that encouraged me to find new ways of helping students create work that they would not have normally been able to do in traditional lessons as easily.” David Reid
- Where education professionals had been involved in delivery alongside writers, or observed sessions they gained skills or new perspectives in facilitation. “The school told me how great and inspiring they found working with Juliette- they had gained different approaches to their practice.” Emma Bowen
- An open and experimental approach that did not conform to the structure of education settings was important to writers in order to encourage participants to be more open. This in turn has helped his has helped them to extend the learning and create new tools and ways of working.
- In Take A Part’s project the combination of writing and illustration was understood as being an essential component of their programme going forward.

“I’m proud of what we’ve been able to achieve given the logistical challenges! To have a toolkit at the end that’s got a wider application is a great outcome.” JLM Morton

“I think it’s a genuinely inspired programme and feel very grateful to have been involved.” Laura Horton

Recommendations:

- The partners suggested that further training regarding working with vulnerable people or dealing with sensitive subjects could be useful if relevant to future projects or cohorts
- Expectations in terms of preferred communication methods and working structures could support better communication between partners in future projects
- The partners suggested that future projects would benefit from very clear focussed expectations and delivery frameworks to support co-construction of learning, encourage collaborative planning and delivery and ensure the right environment for professional learning and development.
- Post session reflection sessions were seen as being important and impactful in terms of discussing any issues with project delivery and revising project focus as necessary. A balance needs to be struck in this area however, as one partner commented that there was too much undirected reflection as part of their experience of the project this year
- Evaluator to ensure that all partners in the project, not just lead organisations, agree on the aims of the project (there were some projects in which the lead organisation and education setting had slightly different understandings and emphasis) and how collection of evaluation materials evidence each of their agreed outcomes and therefore the impact of their project overall.
- Further opportunities for all partners, from across 3 projects, to meet to discuss challenges, shared themes and approaches to the project to be built into future programmes at an earlier stage and throughout the duration of the projects to ensure better peer to peer learning experiences.
- More support for writers to overcome the logistical challenges of working within education settings and structures
- Further consideration of the additional work and capacity that working with large or multiple cohorts of young people brings to projects

f) Legacy and resources

In all projects legacy and longer term impact was highlighted as an important element. Due to the short term nature of these projects many of them were designed to sit within broader strands of work in order to become better embedded and more impactful. I have summarised the nature of these longer term strands below and suggest that the MaxLiteracy support team check back with partners as part of next year's programme for an informal progress report on the work that has been influenced by the MaxLiteracy awards programme, as there is likely to be more demonstrable change over a longer time period.

More detail on the resources developed by each organisation can be found in the case studies section of this report.

Take A Part-

- Results from Take A Part's action research project based on the programme that they developed as part of the MaxLiteracy Awards programme
- Ongoing work with the Crazy Glue groups
- Resource and sharing of this with other organisations

Nottingham Contemporary-

- Student outcomes- the students' creative outcomes have yet to be finalised at the time of writing this report as a further cycle of work will happen to develop this further. Initially it was assumed that the process and experience would be of most value to students, however some students later showed a particular interest in producing something more developed. Student outcomes will be available at the end of July.
- Links to wider city initiatives- The project sits within the wider umbrella of ongoing partner collaborations with NEST and city partners through city-wide projects including the Art of Belonging City Pledge and University of Nottingham and Challenge Languages and Heritage network.
- Development of enrichment curriculum for students at NEST- based on the impact evidence, the SLT at NEST have agreed to embed this programme into the curriculum at NEST from Sept 2024, with Jonathan being the key lead.
- Trauma informed practice and staff/writer learning regarding work with asylum seekers and refugees- the team have developed their understanding of the connections, possibilities and methods of supporting young people who are new to the city, work which they intend to develop and embed across the wider team
- Resource

Meadow Arts-

- New arts curriculum developed by David Reid (Perschore High school) to be implemented with further groups of students
- Resource

5. Programme Structure

In addition to reviewing and measuring the achievements and learning points from each of the projects, the External Evaluator was also asked to evaluate the experience of the three partnerships in the Max Literacy Awards programme this year. This included the quality of the briefing, training, and opportunities to share practice for the creative writers, teachers, visual arts engagement colleagues and other partners.

In addition to these more general points, the External Evaluator was also asked to review two newly introduced areas of the programme, which were as follows:

- The introduction of the opportunity for an emerging creative writer to work with the creative writer, to build professional skills (e.g mentoring) and relationships.
- The introduction of a peer learning programme- 3 sessions which focussed on supporting the CPD of the partner organisations, and connectivity between partners through the programme, in order to develop best practice and maximise project impact. Aiming to connect with previous cohorts to inspire this year's cohort and share learning.

Data on the structure and partner experience of the awards programme has been collated through surveys and reflection conversations with partners. All partners were asked the same questions to enable a comparison to be made between their responses regarding different areas of the programme structure. Comments have also been included from conversations with individuals from NAWE, Engage and Max Reinhardt.

a) Support and expectations:

Partners were asked to reflect on the support that they received and whether their expectations pre-project matched with their experience of the programme. As a note, the structure of support staff for the Max Literacy Awards programme this year was slightly different to previous years with two freelance programme coordinators (Ronda Gowland-Pryde for Engage and Claire Collison for NAWE) being brought in to provide support on particular elements of the programme and ensure a consistent point of contact for the project partners and writers. Partners were not asked to reflect specifically on this element, it was introduced mainly as a practical addition, however general comments on the level of support that partners received are mentioned below on which this will have a bearing. In addition to this I have collated comments from Claire and Ronda to reflect on their roles and any learning to consider for future on page 58 of this report.

1. In response to the question **Were there any areas of the programme that you felt you would like more support in?**

100% of partners indicated that they felt well supported by the team. Some expressed a preference and gratitude for the relatively 'light touch' approach taken by the team. Many of the partners added a caveat to their answer which included ways that this experience could be improved in future. Comments included:

"No, I think the approach they have taken has been very generous, enabling us to get on with our proposed projects and knowing and trusting that we will deliver good work." (Gem Smith)

"No, I think I've been brilliantly well support throughout" (JLM Morton)

"Everyone has been amazing, so supportive and communicative" (Laura Horton)

"The support has been there, but I didn't realise from the start that all the support was there." (Peter Rumney- NC)

There were a few areas mentioned however, which could improve the experience of future cohorts. These included:

- Clarity of roles of the support team (NAWE, Max Reinhardt, Engage, external evaluator) and what they can offer support with
- General communication across the team
- Clarity of deadlines and content requirements
- Better clarity regarding semantics. There was some confusion regarding the difference between the 'report', 'case study' and 'resource' and the purpose of each of these. There was also some confusion about what was meant by 'peer learning' which in the context of the programme referred to specific sessions in which learning was shared.

2. In response to the question **Have your perceptions of the Max Literacy Awards programme changed since the start of the project?**

The majority of partners indicated that their perceptions and expectations of the programme had not changed over the course of the project. Where expectations had changed, these were in relation to the complexities of project management and delivery and the refinement of project objectives, as opposed to perceptions of the Max Literacy programme itself. Comments included:

"No I don't think so, it feels as though the project is playing out in the way we had anticipated. (Gem Smith)

“As the project developed, and as a result of conversations between NC, NEST and Max Literacy the research question has changed - This has enabled a more focused and specific response to the students at NEST and opportunities to share in future as part of a wider city commitment to creating a sense of belonging for asylum seeker and refugee communities in relation to creative practices and writing.” (Lisa Jacques)

“I didn’t know anything at all about ML when I joined the project and my focus has been very much on the school and Meadow Arts but I’ve learned much more from the workshops and meetings we’ve held. I think MaxLiteracy is a very innovative funder of projects that dare to do things differently – working with marginalised groups, working in a cross disciplinary way, opening up opportunities for children to engage with literacy through unexpected entry points. The project seems to be generously / properly funded, ensuring that all stakeholders are well supported and given enough time to produce high quality work. I really admire that.” (JLM Morton)

3. In response to the question **Do you feel expectations regarding project delivery and evaluation were in line with your understanding at the start of the project?**

The majority of partners indicated that their expectations and understanding were in line with their experience of the MaxLiteracy Awards programme. As a caveat to this, partners mentioned that the project delivery was more complex and demanding in terms of their capacity than they had originally anticipated. Partners from the Meadow Arts project particularly commented on this aspect, although it was also mentioned by partners from across the project teams. Specifically the demands of project management and delivery, with the addition of expectations of content creation and data collection from the MaxLiteracy Awards programme, condensed into a relatively short delivery time frame was a cited as being a challenge for most of the projects.

Partners supported each other well throughout this however, checking in on the wellbeing of other members of the partnership, and being honest about their limitations and commitments with the MaxLiteracy support team, which is a testament to the relationships that have been forged through the process. As with other areas of the programme, the learning from these experiences will shape future work.

Comments included:

“Yes, it always felt clear and open.” Laura Horton

“I think there were more expectations put on me than I had anticipated. The delivery of the project alone has been a challenge with the number of people involved and the coordination and trying to manage everyone’s ideas, but then with lots of additional asks from MaxLiteracy that you wouldn’t ordinarily have for a small funded project. Such as the sharing days, the evaluation collection etc.” Emma Bowen

“I believe the families have engaged well and have enjoyed participating. I think that some of the admin involved has added some extra pressure for the artist and Gemma our facilitator.” Kath Johnson

“Stress levels were greater than my expectations, depth and quality of work and depth of interaction exceeded expectations. School commitment also exceeded my expectations.” Peter Rumney

“I expected more of this project personally but that may be because I’m less experienced in working with schools – I would have liked to have done more workshops and worked with the students in a more developmental way. The ad hoc nature of the project and the lack of advance planning for workshop timings made this impossible to do.” JLM Morton

Summary:

Overall, project partners felt well supported throughout the programme and knew that they could access help from the MaxLiteracy Awards support team. Their perceptions of what the programme was and would entail had not changed over the course of the programme. However, there were some challenges in terms of managing project delivery and expectations. Communications and understanding across such a complex programme with so many partners and project team members will continue to be challenging. Further clarity in terms of roles and responsibilities and the other suggestions (some of which were put forward by the partners and MaxLiteracy support team) below could help to make this work more efficiently in future iterations of the awards.

Recommendations:

- Through guidance documents and inception meeting, ensure that roles and responsibilities of MaxLiteracy Awards support team, expectations regarding content (and who produces what) and deadlines are made clear. This was provided to partners as part of the programme this year, but perhaps improvements to this guidance could be made to ensure greater clarity.
- Guidance to also include a description of any key documents required- for example a summary of the purpose and application (i.e where will these feature and who will access them) of the ‘case study’ and ‘resource’.
- Timetable provided to all partners which outlines key dates and deadlines for content submission, events and data required for evaluation purposes. This should provide a clearer structure for partners to be able to plan when considering ‘pinch points’ of the project within their wider workload.
- With regards to the selection process of projects, MaxLiteracy Awards support team to use learning from this year’s cohort to give particular consideration as to whether appropriate capacity has been allocated by the lead organisation in terms of project delivery.

Project Management

All partners indicated that their projects had broadly gone to plan at both the mid-way and final points of evaluation. This was asked in the context of the aims and objectives as well as the general project plans that were shared at the start. Nottingham Contemporary, in particular made a number of revisions to their aims and research questions at the mid-way point in order to better line up with the reflective practice and learning that had happened in the early part of the project.

The following areas of each of the projects were revised as part of reflective practice and learning:

Nottingham Contemporary

- The research question changed at mid-point to enable a more focused and specific response to the students at NEST and opportunities to share in future as part of a wider city commitment to creating a sense of belonging for asylum seeker and refugee communities in relation to creative practices and writing.
- Additional cohorts/numbers of students to the original plan were introduced to line up with education setting goals and preferences. There was a slight adjustment to the pattern of workshop delivery also in order to fit in with student enrichment sessions.
- Mentoring and emergent writer strand did not happen as part of the project but will happen later on as part of legacy work. This was due to the delayed start of this area of the programme and organisational process (more detail in section xx)
- Revised which exhibition to visit due to sensitivity of subject matter. Passed it on to the education setting (who have more experience in this area) to make final decisions on what content would be appropriate.

Meadow Arts

- Some changes were made to workshop timings and delivery in relation to coordination and practicalities of getting sessions into the school timetable
- The most significant revision made was the intention to work fully collaboratively across Art and English departments– the timetable did not allow for this to happen so an alternative approach was taken
- There was less cross curriculum collaboration in general as part of the project than initially intended

Take A Part

- The only revision made was not being able to bring both groups together to share experiences through the process due to capacity.

Challenges encountered by partners:

- **Professional advice and support regarding participant wellbeing-**

Across all three projects the partners involved mentioned the fact that they were working with vulnerable people or dealing with sensitive/complex issues and a times were unsure if they were doing the right thing in terms of the support they were providing for participants around this. Peter Rumney in particular expressed the following with regards to working with the participants in their project as many had been through traumatic experiences:

“Ideally I would have wanted dedicated input from 3rd party (mental health organisation) in the room to better understand what we were doing. Jonathan consulted with a counsellor and we had trauma informed practice training, but I feel I would have developed work and learnt more from having a person in the room.”

- **Time to create bespoke resources-**

In Nottingham Contemporary’s project the difficulty around trying to engage participants who spoke a number of different languages was a challenge. To help to connect with students and ensure their learning and involvement key words and ideas were translated into a number of languages spoken by the participants. This was mentioned as being a time consuming element and also slightly unpredictable as to whether the correct translation had been achieved, however it was seen as being impactful and empowering for students.

“Although this has been time consuming it has also had great impact on the initial sense of connection to an activity when students initially arrived and the use of these throughout session and how ideas were developed through an activity. It was felt that it was worth the time to do this but needs to be considered by those wishing to translate should other venues/practitioners aim to do this.” Peter Rumney

- **Capacity to focus on collection of evaluation data-**

This was a challenge across all projects and should be considered in terms of future evaluations of the programme in terms of support in order to achieve this.

“Nobody had the time to do the journals as the sessions were so involved creatively and as facilitators supporting both the artists and participants and ensuring the project was heading in the right direction meant taking dedicated time to focus on the evaluation became a real challenge within our sessions, I think if someone had been dedicatedly only focussing on this within the sessions then it could have been more possible but we had a lot we wanted to achieve in the time which meant everyone's energies went into the writing and creating.” Gem Smith

- **Cross-departmental or cross venue working-**

This was a particular challenge in Meadow Arts’ project and meant that adjustments to expectations had to be made.

“Cross-departmental working, on a logistical level working out how to do that was a big challenge. Schools have got used to working in silos. In a time limited project it was a challenge for everyone on how we could get ourselves together. Working in two different depts with a huge amount of responsibility and trying to even get those two teachers to have conversations was tricky.” Emma Bowen
Peter Rumney also mentioned this as a challenge in relation to working across 4 different cultural venues.

- **Capacity of project partners-**

This was mentioned by everyone involved in the project as being an issue which at times caused frustration and project delays.

“Managing workload of project on top of pre-existing workload has been a challenge.” David Reid

“ It’s hard to ask teachers to do more when they are already snowed under” Emma Bowen

- **Distractions and behaviour of participants-**

This was particularly mentioned in relation to Take A Part’s project, but I would speculate that it was a factor to some extent across the projects.

“People were often ad hoc about whether they were able to come along to the sessions. Mobile phones and babies were both a distraction in the workshops. We had to overcome distractions to get to a point where we’re all unified and focussed on a collective goal together. However, it’s always achieved and the work is always done.” Simon James

c) Peer Learning Sessions

This was a new element of the programme this year. Three online sessions were delivered on Zoom, each focussed on a specific topic and sessions were open to the current cohort of organisations as well as alumni. The sessions were recorded to allow wider access for those who could not make the live session. The sessions focussed on supporting the CPD of the partner organisations, creating connection between partners through the programme in order to develop best practice and maximise project impacts and connection with members of previous cohorts to share previous learning.

In order to reflect on this element of the programme a post session survey was sent to all attendees. Further comments were collected through partner surveys and during the Sharing and Reflection session. Unfortunately there was a relatively low response rate to the surveys, with only 40% of attendees completing the surveys for each of the sessions, so this data is not as robust as anticipated, but does hold some useful indications in terms of what was successful. In addition, through discussions during the Sharing and Reflection session the peer learning was explored more thoroughly with the group, with feedback gathered and recorded to inform the development of this element of the programme.

Themes and attendance numbers:

Session 1- Health and Wellbeing- 10 attendees including Max Literacy/NAWE/Engage team members

Session 2- Arts Award- 11 attendees including Max Literacy/NAWE/Engage team members

Session 3- Sharing and Reflection - 16 attendees including Max Literacy/NAWE/Engage team members

Summary of findings:

- Through peer learning sessions the majority of participants gained new knowledge (or refreshed prior knowledge), some gained new skills, some developed their networks
- The elements they found most interesting/useful were- learning from others about their experiences, practical modelling/case studies, general informal discussion with peers.
- The majority were unsure if they had made any new connections with others through these sessions- they thought the opportunity for creating new connections could be improved through longer breakout sessions, more people attending sessions, more general discussion.
- 100% of participants indicated that they would take future action of some type as a result of attending the sessions.
- The timing of sessions (early evening) was mentioned as being a barrier to some, due to childcare issues and being at end of working day. The best attendance was seen in the session which took place during working hours.

Survey responses

The following are the collated responses from the post session surveys that participants completed for both Session 1 and 2. As Session 3 was centred around reflection and sharing, participants were not asked to complete a post session survey, but were asked instead to reflect on peer learning as a session discussion activity.

1. In response to the question “Did you experience or learn something new from the session?”

83.5% of respondents indicated that they gained new knowledge

67% of respondents indicated that they gained new skills

49.5% of respondents indicated that they developed their networks

2. In response to the question “Which parts of the session did you find most interesting or helpful in relation to your own practice?”

Comments from partners included:

- Looking at case studies
- General discussion and presentation by artist
- Presentation and conversation
- Practical modelling
- Hearing about others experiences

3. In response to the question “Were you able to make new or further connections as a result of this session”

32% of respondents indicated *Yes*

49.5% of respondents indicated *Not Sure*

16% of respondents indicated *No*

- 1. In response to the question “Would you like to make or maintain connections with peers through this programme/future sessions? If so, can you think of any ways that we can better support this?”**

80% indicated that they would like to make or maintain connections with peers.

Responses indicate that this could be better supported through:

- Longer breakout sessions - however this would impact on the whole session time.
- Yes, would be great to have more people at the session if possible!

- 2. In response to the question “If any, what are the next steps/actions you will take as a result of attending this session?”**

100% indicated that they would take some type of action as a result of attending the session. Comments on the types of actions included:

- It has reminded me of how successful the MLA project was and made me start thinking of ideas for future projects combining writing and contemporary art.
- Think about photography and creative writing
- Already have proposed training for our School Programmer and have highlighted AA to our partner organisation NEST
- Discuss Arts Award provision as part of my GAC resources

- 3. In response to the question “Is there anything we could improve? For example content, session timing, length of session, how participatory the session was?”**

Comments from partners included:

- It was really succinct and good timing with length of session. I felt everyone was there to help and support. and the space allowed for those who had more experience with AA than others
- Maybe less formal/planned? Not sure the break out group was that productive. For me, the facilitated open discussion and Q&A was the more interesting/useful
- Timing. It was challenging to attend at end of work day and during family time (I am sure this is always a challenging issue)

- Would be great to have more little treats to meet with others involved in person so we could chat, create and think up new ways to move forward/new ideas. Meeting up in person really important for more relaxed ideas generation.
- Think meeting in person in the new year could be really important- getting cohort together before project is complete to share ideas/learning/process etc.

Additional comments on peer learning:

“Personally I found twilight sessions difficult to attend due to childcare- I did try to attend but just wasn’t practical. Also, this today has been really useful in finding out what people’s projects were, but would have been useful to have the same sort of sessions but shorter, earlier on- maybe in January just as a touchpoint of where people were at in the projects.” Emma Bowen (Meadow Arts)

“Reflecting on the project today made realise how much further we’d got and how much we’d done compared to what we thought we had.” Juliette Morton (writer)

“Today has been really really useful. I’ve also made a list of what to share with the other organisations to help to support them, and had this come a bit earlier we could have drawn on other people’s experiences in relation to ours too.” Lisa Jacques (Nottingham Contemporary)

“I did attend one of twilight sessions and was a useful over view and concretised what we were thinking about. I was also able to speak to the writer and hospital school involved in a previous project. It was good to make that connection and I have followed up with further meetings and that is ongoing. It was useful that they were there and ready to support. It was useful that they were a similar type of provider, it would have also been good to hear from other providers as well. Timing of those sessions was ok. I liked that it was early in the programme to set the scene and give concrete examples of what I might have been doing.” Johanthan Cutting (NEST)

“The peer sessions allow themes to come through that everybody is working on, particularly with this cohort looking at care or trauma informed practice. For future projects if those themes are considered from the beginning, collaboration can come through together. Not just artist/educator but also participants of the projects and how they are considered within that as well in terms of those points of connection.” Sandra Austerfield (Nottingham Contemporary)

“I only attended one of the sessions as childcare at that time is challenging. I agree with what others have said. One person from each project having the opportunity to check in with each other could have been really helpful. From how useful today has been it would have been really useful thing to do. Peer to peer in our team the learning we’ve undertaken it has been really valuable.” Gem Smith (Take A Part)

Recommendations:

- Timing of the sessions should be reviewed with future cohorts to ensure it works for the majority of participants. It should be acknowledged that this is always an area that will be challenging with a larger group of people with a range of commitments and working patterns.
- Continuing to open these sessions to alumni of the Max Literacy programme to ensure that learning is shared between cohorts and relationships are built and strengthened
- Creating at least one additional informal session (at mid-way point of delivery) for project partners to discuss their projects and share challenges and learning with one another. Shared themes and areas of connection could also be made at this stage to allow support and sharing across the programme. This was suggested as an idea for this year's cohort, but it was felt that it may be too much of an ask on partner time and capacity to include this as an additional session.
- Maintain the Sharing and Reflection session for future cohorts. This was seen by this year's cohort to be the most useful of the Peer Learning sessions.

d) Emergent Writer/Mentoring

The introduction of an emergent writer to the projects was a new addition to the MaxLiteracy Awards programme this year. The opportunity was made to all lead organisations to bring in an additional early career writer and with this an uplift of £1000 on the funding that they would receive for their project to support the delivery of mentoring for the writer and fee for the second writer. This addition created the opportunity for a mentoring/mentee relationship to be developed between the creative writer and emergent writer and for skills and learning to be exchanged in order to support the emergent writer in their professional development.

Meadow Arts

Meadow Arts chose not to bring in an emergent writer on their project for the following reasons:

- They did not feel that they had the capacity or budget to support an additional writer.
- It was their first time working with JLM Morton, who was recruited after their application to the MaxLiteracy Awards programme had been submitted and they wanted to establish this relationship.
- They felt it was an additional variable that wouldn't work for them as part of the project development at the early stage of the relationship with both the writer and school

Nottingham Contemporary

Nottingham Contemporary intended to work with an emergent writer on their project. However, they were unable to deliver on this as part of their project and will instead develop this opportunity as one of the legacies of their project. This was for a number of reasons including:

- Institutional procedures around placements. Nottingham Contemporary have an established process for recruitment of work placements, this includes placements having to go through selection and interview process in order to demonstrate a fair and transparent system.
- Duty of care with regards to the person recruited into the placement. They were concerned that they did not want it to be a tokenistic placement.
- It took longer than expected to work out who the placement was for e.g what is their role, how do they benefit from it.
- Short timeframe of the project. Institutionally Nottingham Contemporary's processes didn't align that quickly with the length of the project.

Nottingham Contemporary staff also commented that:

“This was certainly a missed opportunity for us. We want to take it forward and work with the toolkit and Peter and cultural settings and take that work placement there. The model of the mentor-mentee is of great interest to Peter and would be something to consider in the future.” Lisa Jacques

“In future iterations of the MaxLiteracy Awards perhaps in the peer learning aspect, mentoring could be something to look at for future projects. How happened before and learning for that going forward.” Sandra Austerfield

Take A Part

Take A Part recruited playwright Laura Horton as their placement emergent writer to work with writer and illustrator Simon James. The structure of their project and the action research approach that they had designed created a strong opportunity to involve an emergent writer. The function that the emergent writer fulfilled was in the creation and delivery of a sister project to the one that was being run by Simon James. They had the confidence to bring in a second writer due to the well-established relationship with Simon James. Take A Part specifically wanted to find out whether the approach that they had developed with Simon James and the Crazy Glue group from Prince Rock school would work as effectively with a different writer, with a different artistic discipline. Practically Laura Horton attended two of Simon James’ sessions to observe his approach to working with the group. He then attended one of Laura Horton’s sessions to observe and offer advice.

Learning points from the delivery of this element of the project were as follows:

- The budget was very tight. It was important that the two writers were paid for enough time to get to know each other and establish a trusting mentor/mentee relationship. Gem Smith expressed that it was a challenge to find additional money and time for both writers in addition to their payment for delivery of their workshops.
- Gem Smith’s capacity was also stretched in her role as a producer and overseeing the programme. She had not anticipated the amount of additional time that this would take in the project to ensure that both writers felt well supported.
- Laura Horton’s practice does not involve art/illustration so Gem Smith (TAP) attended some of the sessions with the High View group to support on this element. Art has been identified as being absolutely key to the success of the project as this is the ‘way in’ for many of the families involved.
- It was positive to bring in an emergent writer on this type of project, to hone their skills in socially engaged work. Gem Smith made the point that there are not enough socially engaged practitioners in their region, so skilling up a new practitioner in this area has been a worthwhile pursuit.

Reflecting on his learning from this element of the project writer Simon James commented that:

“I think we’ve found that it works best with writer/illustrator being one person as opposed to being a playwright. That’s what the programme is set up for. It’s been a useful experiment. It’s been a learning curve and that’s really what it’s all been about.”

Laura Horton made the following reflections in response her experience in key elements of the programme:

Partner relationships:

“I would really love to stay in touch and I’d be open to what that looks like. Whether that’s asking Gem to keep participants in the loop with any workshops or theatre events I think they might like, or finding ways to collaborate with Simon in the future.”

Project delivery and process:

“In the sessions I’ve seen of Simon’s work it was lovely to witness how his project progressed. It was also great to have to freedom to lean into our own skillsets, creating different outcomes.”

“What I thought was really lovely, was that for some of the children who struggled to write, we were able to show them they could still come up with interesting stories through improvisation, through talking to their peers and recording their thoughts and monologues.”

“It’s been so fluid and process based, so the project and ideas have evolved as we’ve gone on, that’s worked so well, playing into the interests of the group, but also enabling adaptation. It’s rare to have that space.”

Mentoring:

“It’s been lovely getting to know Simon and learning more about his career and success and the process involved in the stories and images the group created.”

“I’ve definitely picked up tools from observing Simon and the methods he used to teach the sessions. It’s been so lovely to see different ways of facilitation.”

Learning:

“Not to be too prescriptive and to stay open to change – the participants really inspired me with their imaginations and that took the group outcomes in a different direction.”

“I think what’s been wonderful about this project is that there has been space to play and explore. I have different working methods and skills to Simon, and I was able to play to my own strengths in a really galvanising way.”

Summary:

As a new element of the programme some useful learning points have been collated to inform future iterations of the awards. Challenges such as capacity and budget have been mentioned, but the experiences of Laura Horton as the mentee on the Take A Part project have shown that it was a valuable experience for those involved, which has improved professional practice and created new relationships. The recommendations below may help to strengthen this area with future cohorts.

Recommendations:

- Clarity on the definition and role of the mentor and what this entails as suggested by Claire Collison as part of discussion around mentoring.

“I think it would be helpful to have a working definition of mentoring - how it is different to, say, shadowing, or placement, or internship. I believe, as the word implies, it involves someone who mentors, and this role is remunerated”

- Further consideration during project planning process of the implications on capacity that an additional partner in the project brings. This should also be reflected in the budget plan at application stage.
- Ensuring that both mentors and mentees are paid for this element of their role. Again to be considered in both planning and budget at application stage. Guidance on this to be offered by MaxLiteracy Awards programme support team where appropriate.
- Mentoring to be added as a topic to the peer learning programme to explore best practice and share learning from this iteration of the awards
- Legacy work to be collated from Nottingham Contemporary as this develops, to add to the learning points gathered

f) Project Management- MaxLiteracy support team

As previously mentioned- two new freelance roles were introduced as part of the support team this year. Claire Collison (NAWE) and Ronda Gowland-Pryde (Engage). The following outlines their reflections on their roles, any challenges and considerations for future.

Claire Collison (NAWE) asked that I share the description for her role as a reference point:

Max Literacy Coordinator, NAWE August 2023 – May 2024

1. Duties of the Contract

Entering this contract, Claire Collison agrees to undertake the following duties:

- Support award venues with the appointment of creative writers
- Offer guidance to the creative writers through the duration of the project
- Alongside Anne Caldwell, support the Awardees and Creative Writers with the delivery of a mentoring/placement opportunity for an emerging writer for two of the awards.
- Work with venues and the MRLA Coordinator to collate ideas for the projects' resources exploring creative writers working with visual arts venues, museums, galleries and schools, to be shared online
- support Anne Caldwell and the MRLA in the design of materials to be published online e.g. on setting up literacy/creative writing programmes with visual arts venues, museums, galleries and schools and case studies from the three Awards and editing materials etc
- Participate in the evaluation of the project

Claire mentioned the following challenges as part of her role:

- The original selection of projects where there was no writer per se, and no specific art to respond to
- The target audience of the final resources, and their usability
- The mentoring opportunity not being better utilised

Ronda Gowland-Pryde shared the following comments:

"I think there could have been more clarity about the different roles and responsibilities. One main reflection from my end is that I think the awardees had a lot of points of contact, which is good, but also probably made it a bit overwhelming if meeting with lots of different team members. I struggled trying to meet/catch-up with the cohort leads and was conscious of other meetings that were happening with other team members."

“I think going forward, whilst it's great to have some flexibility, there does need to be a set of guidelines which we should be followed. This includes the programme plan, resourcing and budgets.”

“On a personal note, I felt as though my role was more administrative, which included the drawing up the agendas for when we jointly met with NAWE and creating additional agreements. All fine, but again, the roles really did/do need defining in terms of how they intersect, who does what and the mandate that we have in terms of decision making.”

Evaluation-

Similarly, I wanted to reflect a few observations and challenges with regards to the evaluation process as points of consideration for future programmes:

- It was difficult to track progress against academic milestones or more formal measures across any of the 3 projects in this year's award- family groups, students with limited English (part of intensive programme of ESOL hard to quantify specific improvements in their language and attribute this to the project), changing cohorts, groups of young people who already had interest and well developed skills in creative writing and those meeting outside of school settings.
- As a result of the point above and also due to nature of the project- creative outcome focus, short time-frame- I chose to focus mainly on qualitative measures in order to communicate the narrative and experiences of all those involved in the projects which I felt was appropriate given the nature and ethos of the programme.
- As part of planning the methodology for each project I suggested some more creative evaluation measures which I thought would complement the creative activities happening within the groups and with an aim of tracking progress and participant experience less formally, however, due to other pressures on teams and condensed timeframes unfortunately many of these were not taken forward by project partners, but perhaps they are worth considering for future cohorts.
- Communication with partners was very challenging at times- as mentioned by Ronda Gowland-Pryde and several of the partners on the projects. Having a large number of people involved, all with different working patterns and external pressures made communication difficult. For example I did not receive any direct input from two of the teachers involved.
- Partners found it was challenging to collect data and comments from participants at the same time as being involved in the delivery of sessions, perhaps closer consideration by evaluators for future cohorts could be given to support this. This is a challenge when evaluators are not physically present at workshops, events etc.

Recommendations-

- Clearer understanding of roles and responsibilities would be useful for future iterations to ensure that all involved in the project clearly understands who is responsible for each part of the process. This is of course particularly important for this project in which not only the cohort of partners, but also many of the support staff change with each award.
- Clearer delivery timeframe with associated deadlines shared with partners to understand pressure points through the project and when they will have to provide certain data/documents by.
- Guidance document with previous examples (links to) with regards to the resource, who it is for etc.
- Guidance document with previous examples (links to) for the case studies and the template to be shared with partners at project start to set expectations around this.

Meadow Arts

Key stages: 3 and 4

Lead Organisation: Meadow Arts

Lead people: Emma Bowen

Creative writer: JLM Morton

Emergent creative writer: N/A

Education setting: Pershore High School

Education setting lead person/people: David Reid (Lead Art Teacher), Alex Hodson (English Teacher)

Headline text:

A cross-curricular project exploring the themes of flooding and climate change through creative writing and visual art making with students from Key Stages 3 and 4.

Summary-

20 students (years 8-10)

2 teaching staff

1 writer

7 workshops delivered

The Challenge

The project was developed in response to a student wellbeing survey that Pershore High school conducted. The survey demonstrated the need for a project that supported the mental health and wellbeing of their students, enabling them to express their thoughts and feelings using visual arts and creative writing, especially when exploring emotive topics such as climate change. The school were also interested in addressing a “lack of cultural capital” within the school population, with pupils having limited access to cultural activities and opportunities.

In addition the project provided Meadow Arts with the opportunity to address one of their organisational challenges, through the development of a practical resource to support young people’s engagement across any of their exhibition programmes, in any of their varied locations. As a contemporary visual arts organisation with no venue, Meadow Arts exhibits artworks in unusual places, often in rural settings across Herefordshire, Worcestershire, and Shropshire.

The Approach

Meadow Arts worked with Pershore High to pilot a practical process for cross-curricular and cross-departmental practice between the Art and English departments. They worked with a mixed group of students from school years 8-10, many of whom were confident in their writing skills, taking part in an extra-curricular creative club, but less confident or engaged with visual arts.

JLM Morton was selected as the writer on the project due to her own practice as a poet and non-fiction writer, which is rooted in her connection to water, rural language and spaces.

Students visited the artwork ‘Deluge’ by Hilary Jack, a piece commissioned by Meadow Arts, on display at Pershore Abbey. The large-scale artwork explores climate change and flooding using found text from global news reports on floods and mythological narratives, presenting them on parallel, scrolling LED panels, similar to a tv news report.

The students were encouraged to explore the space and concepts, and question how interpretations of the work could be affected by the context it was shown in (a religious space). They collected found words, took photographs and made notes on their thoughts and responses, to be used as a source of inspiration for creative writing. Students also visited the flood plain meadows alongside the river Avon to explore a hyper-local real world example of flooding in their own community, and made creative writing responses to their experiences in the moment.

JLM Morton led a series of creative writing workshops in school using a variety of writing techniques and provocations. Students responded strongly to the themes of climate change and flooding in their local area. Almost all students identified climate change as an important and worrying issue to them and they appreciated the chance to explore this in a safe environment. The opportunity to open a dialogue with others and express their thoughts creatively supported their wellbeing through the identification of shared concerns about this topic.

Through the project, Alex Hodson the English teacher, and Head of Art David Reid, created an extensive visual art curriculum using the work of Hilary Jack as a starting point. David supported the students to use their written work and take it through a series of visual art processes in order to create their own text based visual art works inspired by the work that they had seen.

Learning

- Students

Students developed their skills and confidence through the project. They learned new ways to explore art work in unusual places and to find creative ways to do research in preparation for writing. Concrete skills and new techniques were learned in both art and creative writing e.g. learning to do cyanotype, increased conceptual literacy, and exploring new ways to write and approach the subject of climate change. Some of the most effective activities were felt to be in response to poetry themed around the same concerns as *Deluge* by Hilary Jack. The work that the students produced as a result of being involved in the project was seen as being excellent and a rich mix of programming was provided.

The project created a space for students to discuss their understanding and concerns around climate change. It was surprising to all partners in the project the levels of anxiety amongst students in response to this topic. Care was an important element in the project, particularly in creating and holding a safe space for pupils to explore their feelings. As a result pupils were very open in discussing how they felt. As well as addressing issues through creative activities and discussions, students were provided with practical support and advice on how they could support one another, take local action to address climate change and were given examples of the methods that writers and artists employ to use their voices to influence others. The school intend to do more work on supporting pupil wellbeing in relation to climate change in future.

I enjoyed what we did today. Although I am more of a writer I really liked the activity and I'm quite proud of how my slide came out.

I've really enjoyed the experience. It is very different from normal school but I've learned a lot.

I have enjoyed expressing my opinions and imagination through art AND creative writing. It has also been interesting to explore other people's pieces and becoming inspired by them. It has been a new experience for me and I have found it incredibly interesting.

- Partners

New partnerships were created through the project, and there are already plans to continue this collaboration in future. The project delivery was seen as being more challenging than originally anticipated due to the complexities of working across two departments in a secondary school. Timetabling when working across different year groups was also seen as being complex to navigate at times. As a result there was less cross curriculum working than originally planned, however the project was viewed as a very useful pilot with many learning points to take forward into refining cross curriculum programming at the school. The staff were inspired by this way of working and by having multiple voices and viewpoints involved in the project. As a direct result of learning from this project, the art department have produced an extensive curriculum focussed toolkit to deliver this project with future cohorts of students from the school.

The one key thing that stuck with me was when some of the students commented on how learning outside of the classroom seemed to promote deeper thinking and a sense of individual growth. The routine of school can dull the senses and that the weekly writing with Alex and the new experiences this project has introduced has made learning richer and more empowering. They felt encouraged to be themselves.

David Lead Art Teacher- Pershore High school

Legacy

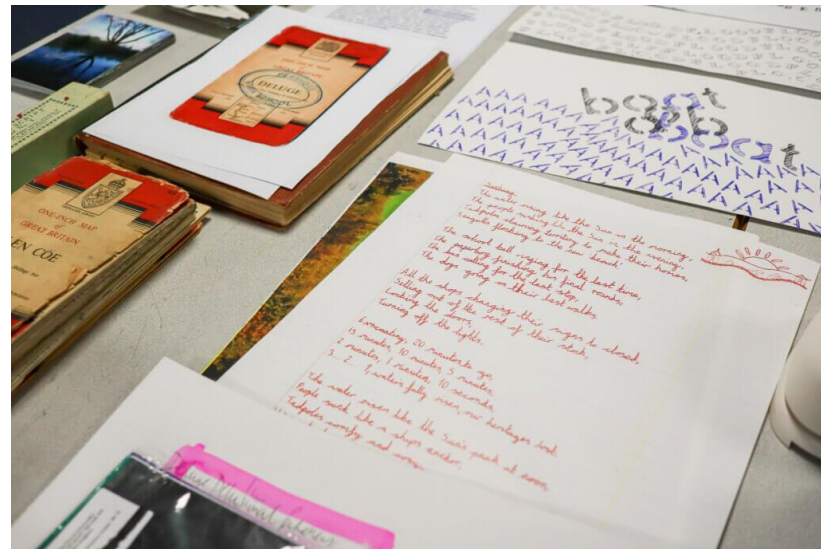
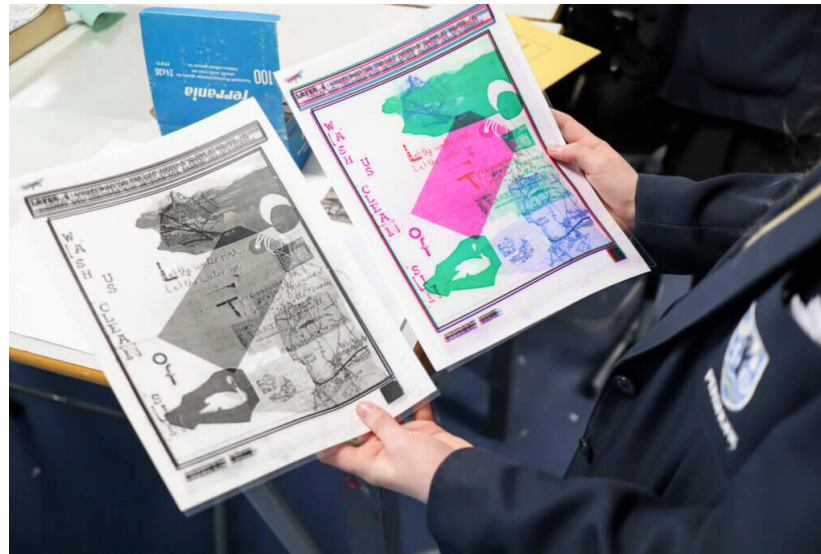
Meadow Arts are continuing to collaborate with the Art department in order to develop and display the artworks produced, and also on a new co-produced artistic commission in Worcestershire that will be exhibited from July 2024.

An extensive curriculum focussed resource (Art department) has also been developed by the school which will provide a model for cross- departmental working on this topic in future and will be used by subsequent year groups.

Resource

The resource is a PDF that will be available as a downloadable activity programme for teachers, educators, families, and arts organisations. It explores how to understand and engage with contemporary visual art in unusual places using creative writing and visual art techniques.

Main contact: emma@meadowarts.org



Nottingham Contemporary

Entry Level 1-3 (ages 15-19)

Lead Organisation: Nottingham Contemporary

Lead people: Sandra Austerfield, Lisa Jacques, Amanda Spruyt

Creative writer: Peter Rumney

Emergent creative writer: N/A

Education setting: Nottingham Education Sanctuary Team (NEST) part of Hospital and Home Education Learning Centre

Education setting lead person/people: Jonathan Cutting

Headline text:

A collaborative partnership project using creative writing to support newly arrived young people, asylum seekers and refugees to develop their sense of belonging in cultural spaces in Nottingham.

Summary-

45 students (Entry levels 1-3, ages 15-19)

3 other cultural venues

1 writer

24 workshops delivered

The Challenge

This project built on an existing relationship with Nottingham Education Sanctuary Team (NEST). It also furthered Nottingham Contemporary's long-standing commitment to work with refugee communities and support services. Almost 20% of Nottingham's population were born outside of the UK (2011 Census) and it is estimated that this figure has risen further since 2015.

The project drew on the findings of the academic research project [The Art of Belonging](#), 2022, which looked at the social integration of young refugees, through arts and culture place-making (for which NEST was the UK education partner). The MaxLiteracy Awards programme provided the opportunity to introduce a new approach to this work through the use of creative writing, multi-modal approaches and social discourses of writing, with the aim of developing a city-wide creative programme and engagement framework with young people who are refugees and asylum seekers.

The project partners specifically aimed to explore the following research questions together:

- How do we welcome and support young people to make a new home in our towns and cities?
- How do we develop so that young people feel they belong in our arts and cultural spaces?
- How can approaches shape our own practice and inclusion work?

The Approach

NEST works with children and young people, many of whom are going through the asylum process, with all the trauma and challenges that are implicit within that experience. Students attend NEST for up to a year, whilst in foster care or other accommodation. Young people who attend NEST speak a variety of different languages and their spoken and written English language skills are often very limited.

Nottingham Contemporary and NEST identified the potential that the project had in developing students English, verbal and written skills. This is one of NEST's core aims, in order to prepare students to achieve qualifications at Entry Levels in Functional Skills, Maths, ICT and English in the form of ESOL Skills for Life. The project responded to the students' survival literacy needs- developing language through a multi-modal approach to engagement, with a variety of contemporary art exhibitions; by encouraging students to make their own art; and through the writing of poetry, character-based stories and graphic story telling.

Before project delivery began, writer Peter Rumney worked closely with Johnathan Cutting (Lead teacher at NEST) to carefully consider the factors that can affect students' wellbeing to ensure that it was prioritised within decisions and planning. There were many factors to consider within the project to ensure all aspects of the content and delivery were mindful of the pupils involved and sensitive to their needs. For example, the project team ensured that they were always accepting and affirming of the use of home languages, and the blending home language with English, wherever this was helpful or empowering

to the young people. To reinforce this, many key words and phrases were translated into multiple languages to ensure wider access and support for participants.

The planning and reflection on this process involved drawing on the expertise of Jonathan's teaching practice with asylum seekers and refugees, as well as trauma informed training for the creative writer and the Nottingham Contemporary staff involved.

Programme delivery happened between Sept 2023-June 2024 at NEST and at partner cultural venues including Nottingham Castle, Lakeside Arts, Nottingham Contemporary and New Art Exchange. The project involved 4 cohorts of 15 – 20 pupils which each cohort taking part in a 6 session programme as part of their enhanced curriculum provision. Each programme was co-created with Jonathan Cutting (NEST) and Peter Rumney (Creative Writer), and delivered by both, in collaboration and individually. Each cohort of students experienced 5 sessions at NEST and 1 session at a cultural venue. Writer Peter Rumney delivered 1 or 2 sessions at NEST, as well as 1 session at a cultural venue for each cohort.

Whilst there were 4 separate cohorts of pupils, some pupils elected to join further cohorts too for some of the sessions, demonstrating the enjoyment and value that they placed on being part of the programme.

Reflection meetings after workshop delivery were seen as being essential to inform each step of the project. This also reinforced and developed Nottingham Contemporary's commitment to qualitative and reflective approaches in their working.

"This programme developed to be more meaningful through our reflections about the requirements of the students that we worked with and the measurable impact that the programme could potentially offer." Lisa Jacques

Learning

Students:

Student confidence increased over the course of the project in relation to both writing and speaking, as well as feeling comfortable to express their views as part of the group. This was evidenced through an evaluation tool in the form of a drawing frame which was repeated at the beginning and end of the sessions to encourage students to reflect on their learning. Over the course of the project students shared stories which touched on their personal experiences, which demonstrated that they felt safe in the space to share this in some way. The partners also highlighted 'glow moments' that were observed through the sessions, which provided insight into the students' positive experiences of being part of the programme.

"There was one particular student who was a key young man within a cultural group. To begin with I think he was concerned with how he would deal with it- how he would appear to his peers. Over the course of the sessions he let go of a lot of this and although writing in English was a real struggle, it was clear that he built confidence to engage with the process." Peter Rumney

Some students attended sessions as part of multiple cohorts and it was observed by the project partners that these students in particular demonstrated an improvement in their confidence due the repetition and familiarity of tasks. This in turn created an atmosphere in which they felt comfortable in the cultural spaces and with the writer and others involved in the project. This was demonstrated by students beginning tasks before being asked, as they had developed understanding of the expectations that were placed on them in the sessions and settings, and a change in their attitude from when they entered and left the session. As an example, students who attended multiple sessions would shake the hand of Peter and smile when they then came to subsequent sessions.

“One of my best moments from the project was the visit to Nottingham Castle. It was very close to the entrance to the school, but none of the students had been in there yet. We were looking at portraiture- past, present and future. This was not an easy concept to share with participants who don’t speak much English. However, when doing recall on the visit with them in another session, one student called out “past, present and future!”. This showed that the language was becoming embedded, and that person had the confidence to share it in the group. For me that also showed that the risk to take on big, complex concepts to explore through art in order to develop ‘survival language’ was working.” Peter Rumney

“It’s opened up new approaches and developed their confidence in writing and connection to the city.”

Jonathan Cutting

Partners:

Amongst the many principles upon which the project was built, and which were tested and developed throughout, the partners in the project have highlighted the following learning points which will inform further work with NEST, as well as the wider umbrella of work with cultural partners in the city.

- Accepting that sharing and developing verbal language is more important than writing at this point in the students’ learning.
- Accepting and affirming the use of home languages, or blending home language with English, wherever helpful or empowering.
- Offering translations into home languages for key words or ideas.
- Scaffolding and modelling everything at every stage.
- The use of familiar tropes learned during previous sessions to develop further understanding, e.g. using portraiture ‘frames’ as seen on gallery in different ways, such as;
 - drawing in frames
 - structuring narrative writing through visual frames
 - formatting accessible evaluation tools with frames
- Being prepared to explore ‘big concepts’ inspired by art works and cultural venues to enable the learning of ‘utilitarian language’, e.g. drawing on the sense of the past, present and future at Nottingham Castle to structure a story.

- Fostering student centric learning, collaboration, and peer-mentoring.
- Using diverse imagery and intercultural references to engage the whole group, and to help make positive connections with the host culture.
- Being aware of personal or cultural sensitivities, and challenging life experiences when engaging with artworks.

“I was not in most of the sessions but attended one at Lakeside and got to meet pupils and chat with them. It really brought everything together, having conversations with them and supporting what they were doing. It reaffirmed why we needed to do this.” Lisa Jacques

The Legacy

Nottingham Contemporary have placed the project within the wider umbrella of partner collaborations with NEST and city partners through wider city projects including the Art of Belonging City Pledge, as well as the University of Nottingham and Challenge Languages and Heritage network. The Art of Belonging pledge is a commitment by Nottingham’s arts and cultural partners to creating a more inclusive, diverse, compassionate, and welcoming society for refugees and asylum seekers.

This further collaboration resulted in an additional £500 funding to support the development of the final resource. This was used for the purposes of a dual project including a website resource for other cultural venues to learn about creative writing and refugee communities, as well as a published postcard project to share visibility of students’ work and share the project across the city.

Based on the impact evidence of the project, the Senior Leadership Team at NEST will embed this programme into the curriculum at NEST from Sept 2024, with Jonathan Cutting being the key lead.

“The programme has further developed our understanding of bringing writing and arts practices together, to inform our inclusion practice and has provided opportunities to develop our team. It speaks to our ambition to be part of the collective city-wide solutions. It has allowed us to continue to develop our understanding of the connections and possibilities supporting young people new to the city, to become a truly civic organisation where young people can develop their voice and find their place in it.” Lisa Jacques

Resource

The online resource produced for the project is aimed at educators, artists and cultural venues working with asylum and refugee communities, or those seeking to.

The designer of the resource had lived experience of being a refugee. The project team felt it was important to have a designer involved who was representative of the community they had been working with and to include her expertise in its development.

The activities included in the resource are a unit of 6 sessions to be used to develop creative writing in a variety of ways. The activities are not venue specific, therefore creative this opportunity for users to adapt activities to different venues and spaces.

The format of the resource, based on feedback from Jonathan Cutting, is clear and easy to use. It allows the user to quickly access the relevant part of the document, through the use of tabs- a nod to the visual threads and layers of the project. It also includes a live appendix of supporting resources, including signposting.

In addition to the resource a postcard was produced to share the students work as part of the project

Main contact: ljacques@nottinghamcontemporary.org

Take a Part

Key stages KS1-KS3, plus families

Lead Organisation: Take A Part

Lead people: Gem Smith, Shelley Hodgson

Creative writer: Simon James

Emergent creative writer: Laura Horton

Education setting: Prince Rock School and High View School

Education setting lead person/people: Kath Johnson, Naomi Whitelock

Headline text:

An action research project exploring how utilising art and drawing can build confidence in creative writing and make it more accessible for family art groups.

Summary-

19 students (KS1-KS3)

15 parents/carers/guardians

2 teaching staff

3 writers and creative practitioners- including one emergent writer

9 workshops delivered

The Challenge

The project built on a previous partnership between Prince Rock school, writer Simon James and Take A Part. The project partners had already tested working together and had started to develop relationships and a model of working that they wanted to interrogate further. The project aimed to develop skills in writing and literacy in groups that might not normally consider themselves writers, or those who had a lack of confidence in relation to literacy.

There was a curiosity to understand why the process of using picture books and drawing as a way into developing writing works so well. The partners wanted to understand which aspects of the collaboration made the programme most successful and what factors were paramount to the model. There was also a desire to come together again from all partners, due to the joy generated by the collaboration in their previous project. This project built on that energy and the legacy of the initial work.

The Approach

During the project Take A Part worked with two Crazy Glue family art groups (based at Prince Rock and High View schools) and two writers. Crazy Glue family art groups usually meet monthly, with parents spending the first hour of a session with an artist taking time to be creative, build skills and connections. They are then joined by their children after school, where they have the opportunity to make together.

- Group 1

The first group was a collaboration between Take A Part, writer Simon James and the Crazy Glue family art group from Prince Rock Primary school.

They began the process with a visit to a local green space, Beaumont Park. The green space acted as a point of inspiration to begin the groups' writing. By connecting their writing to a location in their community, the families felt that they better understood and owned the subject matter and themes of the piece. This also helped them to draw on real life resources.

The workshop included a variety of drawing and writing exercises designed to help the families to look, listen, reflect and consider what they could see in and around the green spaces. Tasks ranged from more directed activities ('list 10 things you can see that you like around you'/'draw something you can see from here') to more interpretive tasks ('choose your favourite place here, how does it make you feel? Write or draw something here'). The range of activities and approaches helped to offer everyone involved different 'ways in' to start writing, drawing, and generating ideas.

At the following sessions the group was guided through reflection activities using the content that they had gathered from their visit to the park. They were encouraged to explore this through activities related to the senses (what did they hear, smell, etc). The reflection activities helped to remind them what

they had seen; this was observed as being a particularly useful tool for the children. The groups were then supported to produce writing and drawing based on their reflections, including the development of potential characters, locations, images or phrases for the creative outcome. Conversation was seen as being an important part of the process, with many writing ideas being vocalised, particularly by the children in the group.

The Prince Rock group also visited The Box to see exhibition 'Dutch Flowers' which prompted group discussion about biodiversity in the park and representation of insects within the story and drawings being created.

- Group 2

The second group involved emergent writer Laura Horton and the Crazy Glue family art group from High View school (Efford). This group was run as a staggered sister project, mirroring the process of the Prince Rock work. This second project was seen as an important addition, as it enabled testing of aspects of the project within a different context, seeing how the same stages might be enacted differently with a different group and a different writer leading the sessions.

Group 2 visited Efford Valley green space to inspire their writing, the project then mirrored the session model of group 1. Simon James provided advice and mentoring for Laura Horton (emerging writer) in relation to delivery of the sessions.

The High View group also visited local arts spaces MIRROR Gallery and Arts Institute at University of Plymouth. The visits informed their thinking and gave further inspiration, connecting with more traditional and contemporary exhibitions and exhibition spaces. Many of the group had not been to either space before. The group were inspired by an exhibition of Ben Sanderson's work and produced their own nature themed collage work based on what they had seen.

- Creative outcomes

The two writers drew on their own practice and areas of expertise to direct the creative outcomes that the groups produced.

With the Prince Rock group, Simon James used the content developed during the initial sessions to create and illustrate a story. All members of the group were involved in producing and editing the narrative. Members of the group produced drawings to illustrate the text and others used watercolour painting techniques they had learned from Simon James to add colour to the final drawings. Participants also recorded the voiceover for the story; these recordings were put together with images of the drawings to create a short film. The recording was a powerful part of the process as it enabled the group to hear their voices within the work which fostered a sense of ownership.

With the High View group, Laura Horton, who is a playwright, worked with the families to develop a character that they might encounter in the valley and shaped a piece of writing from the perspective of their character. She then led the families through a series of improvisation tasks to encourage further development of these characters and the pieces of text. This task took members out of their comfort zone initially but encouraged creative ideas, fast

thinking and fun and led to the development of monologues. The monologues were recorded by the voices of the group and accompanied by a character profile which was designed and drawn.

Learning

- Families

Families involved in the project increased their confidence in creative writing. This was observed as being particularly true for the Prince Rock families who had participated in a previous writing project with writer Simon James. This project further elevated their confidence by positioning them in the space as experts. Skills were also developed around oracy, creative writing, storytelling, improvisation and role play, drawing and painting.

The group at High View had a slightly different experience, as they were not working in the context of an already established relationship with the writer and writing. As a result of this there was initially observed to be some nervousness around tasks and connections with playwrighting. However this trepidation eased as sessions moved on and trust was built between the writer and group. Consistent numbers and participation from families even if they were ill or had to miss a session showed their commitment to the project and a connectivity to the work and each other.

"It's nice to come to Crazy Glue because it gives me that slot of time that you would never allow yourself, because we are all so busy, so this is a nice escape from everyday life and having the opportunity to do different creative things, including writing, is really rewarding." Parent participant

"it's a really nice bonding process as a family to do it, so that's been really lovely actually to be inspired by the group to do those things which you remind yourself to do but you don't often make that slot of time to ACTUALLY do." Parent participant

"it's been really exciting for me to feel that kind of freedom of expression where you can use these mediums (in art group) and you can have a go and that's fine, whatever you create is fine, it doesn't have to be perfect, it doesn't have to be for anyone else's benefit, it's just a expression in that moment and that's really liberating actually! I think it's been mentally kind of liberating, I haven't physically done anything outside of the group, I wouldn't yet, but I would have more confidence to do so now..." Parent participant

- Partners

Lead writer Simon James developed his previous approach and model further in this project, it enabled him to reflect on how to deliver this type of work in collaboration with an arts organisation and it offered the chance to take that learning and be reflective about his practice.

“when I look up and see the whole group working, children and parents together, these are my favourite moments. For me the culmination of all our efforts are for these moments where there is a sense of unity, purpose and focus of minds when working together towards a jointly-held creative goal... The group is not obliged to attend, so it remains important that the project is enjoyable, something to look forward to, and fun to share. At the same time, I hope that the group finds that setting themselves a task bears it's own rewards. I believe we always achieve this, but it's something I remain vigilant about.” Simon James, lead writer

Laura Horton, the emergent writer working with the High View group has grown in confidence over the duration of the project. Through sustained work with the group and relationship building she learned to share and lead tasks that both brought the group into the activity, but also challenged what they knew or had done before.

“finding the right path to share skills with the group, combining my playwriting with their interests and finding the best routes was initially a challenge but I think the improv exercises we did, they really bound the group together, providing a sense of joy and unity” Laura Horton, emergent writer

Both writers on the project have learnt and deepened skills around engaging with communities, co-creating pieces and understanding how their practice can inform and support collaborative writing to take place.

For the Take A Part team the investigation of the delivery process has provided a learning opportunity to both observe and hone aspects of the project using reflective practice to inform approaches as the project progressed. The project has offered up challenges, but has also given opportunity for robust testing of how writing can work with families. Take A Part will use the learning from this project to shape a new and exciting model of engagement that others can learn from and that enables families to feel empowered, inspired try new things, gain new skills and develop greater literacy skills.

“Continuing to help the group feel that they can trust in new things, they always do surprise me, but feeling that a new thing might put people off or be a challenge, it's a very on the edge thing between wanting to push and grow their confidence and skills in sessions and putting them off, so this new approach and working with words has been right on that edge of things both in a good and challenging way at times!” Gem Smith, Lead Producer, Take A Part

Legacy

Take A Part's work has become more embedded within the community. The project was already a piece of legacy work of sorts, due to the established relationship of the partners involved. The project enabled an established partnership to be strengthened, deepened and challenged. It also provided deeper investigation and understanding of how and why this model works.

Beyond the project, the partners plan to apply their learning to future work, focussing on developing a more established model around working with art to build confidence and skills in literacy. Take A Part aim to continue working with the two Crazy Glue groups and with Simon James to develop future creative

collaborative opportunities. Take A Part and the project partners also plan to find opportunities to share this model and learning with other community groups in the future.

Resource

The resource is a 'how to guide' on engaging families interested in the arts to build skills and confidence around literacy, creative writing and storytelling. It includes example activities, ways in, perspectives on the project from partners, example project plans and the 'ingredients' that make a project of this type work. As part of this resource there is also opportunity to listen to audio collected from the sessions, to support people who wish to listen to aspects of the project and explore how conversations developed.

A short film of the creative outcomes from both the Prince Rock and High View groups is also available to access.

Main contact

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← one year old

blue mouse

makes a squeaky noise

Scared because she is so small and the valley is so big!

girl mouse

she's lost her friend

I was happily sleeping in amongst my friends when I was woken by a noise! As I slowly opened my eyes I could see this small colourful creature kicking a noisy, shiny thing on the ground. It made my ears ring! So, I stepped out from my sleeping spots and asked it to please stop, as I'd like to go back to sleep, but it ran away before I could finish asking it...

A boy kicking a can down the footpath next to the trees

Greenspace visit with Prince Rock Crazy Glue group

Examples of character development writing and illustration with High View group

Appendices

Appendix A- Evaluation Methodologies

Nottingham Contemporary Evaluation Methodology

INTENDED OUTCOMES - what each partner wants to achieve through the project	EVALUATION DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGIES- how to collect evidence, who will collect, and when
<p>CYP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students feel a greater sense of connection and belonging to the city - Students increase skills and confidence to express themselves and write creatively (org using an approach informed by social discourses of writing and trauma informed practice) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Number of students taking part in workshops, first language, nationality</i> Demographic info from NEST ○ <i>Simple survey (focus on sliding scale/indicator icons/visual aids as opposed to too text heavy) to establish a baseline of understanding/skills/confidence in creative writing and/or creative skills</i> Workshop plenary survey at project start. Further surveying at mid-point and end of project. Also to incorporate: <p><i>Student scoring/comments about feeling of connection to city (i.e how many arts and cultural venues have they visited, do they feel comfortable in these spaces), connection to others in the group? Something about visibility/seeing reflection of</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students learn new skills in exploring concepts within contemporary artwork and the context of the venue - Student wellbeing improves over the course of the project 	<p><i>themselves and their background/experiences at the venues/in the city? feeling of empowerment and confidence on personal level</i></p> <p><i>Designed by external evaluator and carried out by session facilitator/NEST</i></p> <p><i>MID-POINT REVISIONS TO THE ABOVE:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Templates from Jonathon re levels of understanding - NEST reading diagnostic and assessment for learning (EAL competency framework- assessment starting point and English at start of programme- only small element of this with 6 sessions work) Speaking, listening and understanding- assessed termly against this. - Jonathan identifying ‘glow moments’ can observe those moments as he knows the pupils and can see different it’s making over a course of sessions - <i>Jonathan and Peter’s observations and pupil ‘case studies’ decided upon as best way to measure impact, as English language skills amongst pupils are a major challenge with assessing impact using other methods in this project</i> - <i>Discussed potential issues regarding bias- will guard against this through professionalism, multiple partners being involved, dedication and shared values regarding reflective and critical practice.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>General student comments as part of workshops</i> <i>Teachers/facilitators to collect</i> ○ <i>The creative outputs themselves (writing and art responses) which illustrate pupil voice, what is important to them etc.</i> <i>Series of postcards/posters produced sharing and showcasing the work.</i> <i>Photographs of sessions and broader body of work produced.</i> <i>Photos to be taken by session facilitator/NEST and shared with external evaluator with students permission</i> ○ <i>Summative discussion and reflection session by students and education setting. This should focus on the creative outputs of the project- celebration of what has been produced. Recording of this (either through written comments and observation, video or sound recording).</i>
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	<p>Reflection on their experiences of working with new people, visiting new places, making creative responses.</p> <p><i>Could also include- creative evaluation activity- illustrating project journey. Identifying high and low points, connection with project, legacy and how it improves their life chances and aspirations.</i></p> <p>Guidance from external evaluator on facilitation of this session, working with project team to run and record session.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>The toolkit/resource created as a result of the project, which will incorporate project learning and approaches tried and tested with CYP. Focus on: social practices, approaches to support inclusion and care and on working with multi-lingual learners</i> <p>Created in collaboration with all partners and shared with external evaluator</p>
<p>Nottingham Contemporary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of sustained partnerships, peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and cross-sectoral exchange (e.g.with educational, youth and health sectors). (Focus on other organisations from this year’s cohort and other ML alumni). - Partners build better knowledge of each other and effective collaborative working practices: <i>local partners learn</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Final resource (TBC)</i> <p>Created in collaboration between all partners and shared with external evaluator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Participation and reflection on training (e.g supporting mental health and wellbeing) delivered by Engage. Baseline survey/feedback regarding confidence and skills in areas as part of CPD opportunity and repeated after CPD series to show learning.</i> <p>Survey designed by external evaluator in consultation with Engage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Reflection on peer to peer learning (through interviews and survey) with NEST, Engage, and other partners in overall project.</i> <p>Surveys and interviews by external evaluator at mid-point and end of project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Sharing sessions with other organisations at start, mid-point and end of programme. Impacts of cross-phase learning.</i>

<p><i>more about each other's values, aims and operations and identify key success criteria for working together</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop understanding of social discourses of writing and its connection to the social practice of artists. - Develop inclusion practice by responding to the needs of newly arrived communities, specifically through the exploration of developing multi-lingual and trauma informed responses/practice. 	<p>Sharing sessions set up by Engage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Review of any promotional outputs from Nottingham Contemporary relating to the project e.g social media /website.</i> Notts Contemporary to share with external evaluator ○ <i>Case study report</i> Nottingham Contemporary working in collaboration with external evaluator ○ <i>Feedback gathered from other venues and teachers as part of the CPD event (supporting early career teachers and teacher development) and city CPD event showcasing partner venues</i> ○ <i>Reflection on organisational learning and impacts of project re development of inclusion practice and using social discourse writing.</i> Surveys and interview with external evaluator at project conclusion, plus findings recorded through case study report and final resource. <p>MIDPOINT ADDITION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Impacts against City of Sanctuary- potential interviews with the other venues involved and the longer term impacts of the project</i> Evaluator to consider questions to send to them, Lisa to advise on this. Mention potential longer term impacts in evaluation report.
<p>School/Education provider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To develop sustained geographical partnerships, peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and cross-sectoral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Final toolkit/resource</i> Created in collaboration between all partners and shared with external evaluator ○ <i>Reflection on peer to peer learning with school, Engage, and other partners in overall project.</i>

<p>exchange (e.g. with educational, youth and health sectors).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support NEST to meet improvement and development plans e.g boost student engagement in art & creativity, support well-being 	<p>Surveys and interviews by external evaluator (partner learning, relationships/expectations etc)</p> <p>MIDPOINT REVISION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Development of a replicable and well evidenced model for an enrichment curriculum- new addition for NEST
<p>Creative Writers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creative writer and emergent writer both gain understanding of working in a co-creative way - Creative writer gains skills in mentoring - Project partners build better knowledge of each other and effective collaborative working practices: <i>partners learn more about each other's values, aims and operations and identify key success criteria for working together in future.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <i>Surveys to establish baseline and learning re:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confidence and skills in areas identified re CPD, mentoring etc. -Reflection on peer to peer learning -Comments re expectations for the project/relationship building etc - Legacy of project and long term impacts o Surveys and interviews by external evaluator (partner learning, relationships/expectations etc) o <i>Reflection on any CPD sessions attended</i> o Surveys by external evaluator o <i>Final toolkit/resource</i> o Created in collaboration between all partners and shared with external evaluator

<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Creative Writer and emergent writer both gain new tools to use when connecting creative writing and visual arts. - Creative writer and emergent writer develop new skills (and reflective practice) in the implementation of social discourse and trauma informed writing.	

Take A Part Evaluation Methodology

INTENDED OUTCOMES - what each partner wants to achieve through the project (demonstrable/measurable)	EVALUATION DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGIES- how to collect evidence, who will collect, and when
<p>CYP and families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants improve their wellbeing and connection within family units and to others in the group. - Participants improve their confidence and skills in creative writing/storytelling/oracy/conceptual and visual literacy - Increased understanding and appreciation of their local area and environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Number of families taking part in workshops</i> Session facilitator ○ <i>Simple survey or group activities (icebreaker/plenary) to establish:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -<i>Baseline of understanding/skills/confidence in creative writing and visual literacy</i> (How do you feel about literacy/writing? What do you use it for? Word association (word map re writing/art) What types of writing do you enjoy?) -<i>Area of creativity interest/hobby/something they discovered they liked through previous programme</i> (wordcloud showing collective interests at start and end of project) -<i>Connection with new venues/places</i> (have you been to this place before? Have you ever been somewhere similar? How do you feel in this place?) -<i>Connection with project</i> (enjoyment/reflection/learning/sense of pride) -<i>Wellbeing</i> (5 ways to wellbeing)

	<p>Designed by external evaluator in collaboration with Take A Part and carried out by session facilitator/school. Start, mid-point and project end.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Photographs of sessions and work</i> Collected by Take A Part or session facilitator ○ <i>General family comments as part of workshops and visits</i> Teachers/facilitators to collect ○ <i>The creative outputs themselves (writing/art responses)</i> To be shared with external evaluator with families' permission ○ <i>Self-reflective activities, as part of session, undertaken by participants</i> <i>Journalling/discussion/drawings</i> <i>Self-reflective journal at end of each session- part of session process</i> <p>Designed by external evaluator in collaboration with Take A Part and carried out by session facilitator/school</p>
<p>Take A Part</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TAP develops opportunity for peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and cross-sectoral exchange 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Development of toolkit/resource (focus on creating a practical, robust, replicable model for future programmes)</i> Take A Part in collaboration with partners

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TAP broaden and deepen their understanding of how to use the arts to raise literacy levels and confidence of children and parents - TAP explore and potentially create a practical model of creative literacy that can be embedded into future programmes of work and shared with wider partners. - Project partners (i.e Prince Rock School, Simon James) build better knowledge of each other and effective collaborative working practices: <i>partners learn more about each other's values, aims and operations and identify key success criteria for working together in future.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Participation and reflection on training and support (delivered by Engage)</i> Survey/interview external evaluator in collaboration with Engage ○ <i>Surveys to establish baseline and learning re:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Confidence and skills in areas identified re CPD</i> - <i>Reflection on peer to peer learning (interviews and surveys) with group, Engage, other partners in overall project</i> - <i>Comments re expectations for the project/relationship building etc</i> Survey/interview external evaluator ○ <i>Sharing sessions with other organisations at start, mid-point and end of programme. Impacts of cross-phase learning.</i> Sharing sessions set up by external evaluator/Engage ○ <i>Sharing and comparison of previous project final outcome- 'Colin Cormorant' and reflection on how learning from this project has informed current project.</i> Take A Part to share with external evaluator ○ <i>Case study report- action research</i> Take A Part in collaboration with partners and support from external evaluator if required ○ <i>Any promotional materials of the project and comments collected as result of sharing opportunities.</i>
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	<p><i>For example: resource/toolkit and associated pieces of writing from the projects will be shared in local libraries in Plymouth and with the Cultural Education Partnership to share the learning more widely and offer opportunity to highlight to programme.</i></p> <p>Take A Part to share with external evaluator</p>
<p>Education Setting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project partners (i.e Prince Rock School, Simon James) build better knowledge of each other and effective collaborative working practices: <i>partners learn more about each other's values, aims and operations and identify key success criteria for working together in future.</i> - Education setting have improved understanding of how creative writing can improve literacy levels in children and also supports parents in growing their skills and confidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Development of toolkit/resource (focus on creating a practical, robust, replicable model for future programmes)</i> Take A Part in collaboration with partners ○ <i>Surveys to establish baseline and learning re:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Confidence and skills in areas identified re CPD</i> - <i>Reflection on peer to peer learning (interviews and surveys)</i> - <i>Comments re expectations for the project/relationship building etc</i> - <i>Legacy of project and long term impacts</i> <p>Survey/interview external evaluator</p>
<p>Creative Writers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Creative Writer and emergent writer both gain new tools to use when connecting creative writing and visual arts, and reflective practice which incorporates considerations of how people 'learn together'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Final toolkit/resource</i> Created in collaboration between all partners and shared with external evaluator

Creative writer and emergent writer both gain understanding of working in a co-creative way

Creative writer gains skills in mentoring

Project partners (i.e Prince Rock School, Simon James) build better knowledge of each other and effective collaborative working practices: *partners learn more about each other's values, aims and operations and identify key success criteria for working together in future.*

- *Comparison of previous project final outcome- 'Colin Cormorant' and reflection of how learning from this project has informed current project.*
Take A Part to share with external evaluator
- *Surveys to establish baseline and learning re:*
 - *Confidence and skills in areas identified re CPD, mentoring etc.*
 - Reflection on peer to peer learning*
 - Comments re expectations for the project/relationship building etc*
 - *Legacy of project and long term impacts***Surveys and interviews by external evaluator (partner learning, relationships/expectations etc)**

Meadow Arts Evaluation Methodology

INTENDED OUTCOMES - what each partner wants to achieve through the project	EVALUATION DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGIES- how to collect evidence, who will collect, and when
<p>CYP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students learn new skills in exploring concepts within contemporary artwork and the context of the venue - Students wellbeing and anxiety is improved, through exploration of climate change, their environmental concerns and how we can use art to help relieve climate anxiety. - Students conceptual and visual literacy is enhanced (through new cross curricular and cross departmental approaches- Art and English). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Number of students taking part in workshops and their area of interest (English/Art)</i> Session facilitator/school ○ <i>Simple survey to establish a baseline of understanding/skills/confidence in creative writing and/or creative skills- workshop plenary survey at project start. Further surveying at mid-point and end of project. Also to incorporate:</i> <i>Student scoring of their responses to understanding and anxieties re climate change and environmental concerns</i> Designed by external evaluator and carried out by session facilitator/school ○ <i>General student comments as part of workshops</i> Teachers/facilitators to collect

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>The creative outputs themselves (writing and art responses) exploring feelings/issues re climate change and environmental concerns. Photographs of sessions and work.</i> To taken by session facilitator/school and shared with external evaluator with students permission ○ <i>Discussion and reflection session by students and teachers. This should focus on the creative outputs of the project at end of project. Recording of this (either through written comments and observation, video or sound recording). Reflection on their experiences of working with new people (mixed group of year 9 students) making creative responses in response to the artwork of peers.</i> <i>Could also include- creative evaluation activity- illustrating project journey. Identifying high and low points, connection with project, legacy and how it improves their life chances and aspirations outside of Pershore.</i> Guidance from external evaluator on facilitation of this session, working with teachers to run and record session. ○ <i>The toolkit/resource created as a result of the project, which will incorporate project learning and approaches tried and tested with CYP.</i> Created in collaboration with all partners and shared with external evaluator
<p>Meadow Arts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of sustained geographical partnerships, peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and cross- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Final resource (focus on cross curric/departmental learning resources for non-gallery /museum settings.)</i> Created in collaboration between all partners and shared with external evaluator

<p>sectoral exchange (e.g., with educational, youth and health sectors).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning and development of working practice and practical materials for future creative and literacy projects in other schools across the region. - Partners build better knowledge of each other and effective collaborative working practices: <i>partners learn more about each other's values, aims and operations and identify key success criteria for working together</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Participation and reflection on training in supporting mental health and wellbeing (delivered by Engage) Baseline survey regarding confidence and skills in areas identified before each CPD opportunity and repeated after CPD event to show learning.</i> Survey designed by external evaluator in consultation with Engage ○ <i>Reflection on peer to peer learning (through interviews and survey) with school, Engage, and other partners in overall project.</i> Surveys and interviews by external evaluator ○ <i>Sharing sessions with other organisations at start, mid-point and end of programme. Impacts of cross-phase learning.</i> Sharing sessions set up by external evaluator/Engage ○ <i>Review of promotional outputs from Meadow Arts</i> <i>Meadow Arts will film shorts of the project for social media /website.</i> <i>Meadow Arts blog post from a young writer participant for our website /e-news.</i> <i>Sharing of marketing output with the school, Pershore Abbey, Hilary Jack, and the NAWÉ creative writer.</i> Meadow Arts to share with external evaluator ○ <i>Case study report</i> Meadow Arts in collaboration with partners and support from external evaluator if required ○ <i>Reflection on CPD re Literacy training and creating curriculum focused resources.</i> Work between partners to be reflected upon in interviews by external evaluator
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<p>School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To develop sustained geographical partnerships, peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and cross-sectoral exchange (e.g., with educational, youth and health sectors). - Development of replicable model of cross curriculum working practice between Art and English departments which can be shared as an example of best practice with other local schools. - Support the school to meet improvement and school development plans e.g boost student engagement in art & creativity, support well-being, and raise awareness of and aspiration for creative careers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Final toolkit/resource (focus on cross curric/departmental learning resources for non-gallery /museum settings.)</i> Created in collaboration between all partners and shared with external evaluator ○ <i>Reflection on peer to peer learning (through interviews and survey) with school, Engage, and other partners in overall project.</i> Surveys and interviews by external evaluator (partner learning, relationships/expectations etc) ○ <i>Recording and review of promotion and sharing of the project (school development/improvement plans) which will include:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Showcase at Pershore Abbey for school and wider community.</i> - <i>Outcomes showcased at the school performance for all pupils and parents at Christmas.</i> - <i>Outcomes published in school magazine that is produced by the 6th form students.</i> - <i>Teachers to share amongst the Avonreach Multi Academy Trust.</i> - <i>Teachers to share amongst the other school departments to exemplar cross curricular working.</i> <p><i>School to share with external evaluator any promotional materials, comments from parents/wider school community/colleagues from other schools on outcomes of project.</i></p>
<p>Creative Writer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Creative Writers are better able to connect visual arts to their creative writing and have new tools to use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Surveys to establish baseline and learning re:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Confidence and skills in areas identified re CPD, mentoring etc.</i> - <i>Reflection on peer to peer learning</i> - <i>Comments re expectations for the project/relationship building etc</i> - <i>Legacy of project and long term impacts</i> <p><i>Surveys and interviews by external evaluator (partner learning, relationships/expectations etc)</i></p>

<p>when connecting creative writing and visual arts.</p> <p>Develop sustained geographical partnerships, peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and cross-sectoral exchange (e.g., with educational, cultural, youth and health sectors)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Reflection on any CPD sessions attended</i> ○ <i>Final toolkit/resource (focus on cross curric/departmental learning resources for non-gallery /museum settings.)</i> <i>Created in collaboration between all partners and shared with external evaluator</i>

Appendix B - Family Survey Results (project start) Take A Part- Prince Rock Crazy Glue group

SESSION 1:

Q1: How do you feel about writing?

See I'm not very good at writing at all, I'm just like "oooooh" But once it catches me I'm like "Ah!" Fantasy is my favourite, I like to be away, I like the Werewolves and the magic and stuff. When I was younger I wrote the first chapter of a book..." (A)

I don't like writing because it makes my hand achy (Ch)

It's good, because I like writing, I like writing neat and I like writing stories. I do stuff at school. I like to read Room On The Broom (Ch)

They love reading books with rhyme and rhythm, things that have a rhythm. They like reading and visiting the library in school. We also listen to a lot of music for the rhythm. I've got poetry books at home too and they like poems. We go to the Central Library lots (A)

Q2: What does the word art make you think of?

Playfulness, just playing, creating and not thinking too much, peaceful, meditative, life affirming (A)

Building stuff, making stuff out of paper (Ch)

Creativity, life and colour, expressing myself (A)

Creative, colour (A)

Building items and paintings (Ch)

Drawing and painting (Ch)

Drawing and painting (A)

Lovely wall paintings (A)

Q3: What is your favourite way to be creative?

Building Lego (Ch)

Writing, drawing, painting and making things with my little people (A)

Painting and drawing (A)

Doodling, painting and making items with clay (Ch)

Posca Pens on paper (Ch)

Acrylic paints (A)

Decorating and love (A)

Q4: How confident are you about art/drawing and writing?

I prefer writing, I just find it easier...I find drawing harder. I think because you use writing more as an adult (writing lists, etc) but you don't tend to draw as much (A)

I feel confident about writing and not as sure about art (Ch)

I feel more confident about writing than drawing (A)

I really like writing, I'm not so good at drawing but I'm alright at creative writing (A)

I feel excited about doing writing, I love drawing and art (Ch)

I love writing and I like drawing and art but I'm not as good as I am at writing, but I'll give it a go! (A)

I feel confident with writing and writing with art (Ch)

I feel happy about writing and happy about drawing and art (Ch)

To be fair I am keen on the drawing aspect, I am better at drawing and writing but I am good at stories when you can get to decide what's going to happen (Ch)

Mostly I feel confident with the writing (Ch)

Writing, I'm ok, drawing I'm terrible! (A)




Writing- thumb up Art/Drawing thumb up (Ch)

Appendix E

Student Survey- MaxLiteracy Programme- Pershore High School

We are doing this project together as an experiment to see if we can be more creative if we bring art and creative writing together. We also want to look at whether your opinions and experiences change in different types of spaces. Lots of artists use different approaches or ways of expressing themselves to explore their surroundings, feelings or thoughts. To help us to understand whether any change happens in your opinions, skills and knowledge through this project we would like to ask you to fill out your answers to these questions, you will be asked the same questions again at two other points of the project. Please answer as honestly as possible. We'll also be talking to you and looking at what you make through the project. If you want to ask any questions about this then just let us know.

1. How do you feel about creative writing/literacy?

2. What **3 words** do you think of when we say **CREATIVE WRITING**?

3. How do you feel about art?

1

5

10

9. Is climate change important to you? Yes/no

10. How does thinking about climate change and the environment make you feel?

11. Why do you think it is important for artists and writers to make creative responses about big issues such as climate change?

12. Have you had any new experiences/learnt anything new/been to a new place/learnt a new skill today? Yes/No

Please tell us more...

Appendix F- Sample student survey responses (Pershore High School) Nov 23

Student Survey- MaxLiteracy Programme

We are doing this project together as an experiment to see if we can be more creative if we bring visual art and creative writing together. We also want to look at whether your opinions and experiences change in different types of spaces. Lots of artists use different approaches or ways of expressing themselves to explore their surroundings, feelings or thoughts. To help us to understand whether any change happens in your opinions, skills and knowledge through this project we would like to ask you to fill out your answers to these questions, you will be asked the same questions again at two other points of the project. Please answer as honestly as possible. We'll also be talking to you and looking at what you make through the project. If you want to ask any questions about this then just let us know.

1. How do you feel about creative writing/literacy?

I really enjoy it because I can write anything from my imagination.

2. What 3 words do you think of when we say CREATIVE WRITING?

Books
stories
Fairytales

3. How do you feel about art?

I enjoy it because there is no wrong or bad ideas.

4. What 3 words do you think of when we say ART?

Drawing
Painting
Sculpting

5. On the scale below, how confident are you about making art or creative writing?
1= least confident and 10= very confident

1 _____ 5 _____ 10 9

Student Survey- MaxLiteracy Programme

We are doing this project together as an experiment to see if we can be more creative if we bring visual art and creative writing together. We also want to look at whether your opinions and experiences change in different types of spaces. Lots of artists use different approaches or ways of expressing themselves to explore their surroundings, feelings or thoughts. To help us to understand whether any change happens in your opinions, skills and knowledge through this project we would like to ask you to fill out your answers to these questions, you will be asked the same questions again at two other points of the project. Please answer as honestly as possible. We'll also be talking to you and looking at what you make through the project. If you want to ask any questions about this then just let us know.

1. How do you feel about creative writing/literacy?

I love it because it gets my brain working

2. What 3 words do you think of when we say CREATIVE WRITING?

Creative, thoughtful,

3. How do you feel about art?

I sometimes enjoy it, it is a struggle

4. What 3 words do you think of when we say ART?

creative, colourful,

5. On the scale below, how confident are you about making art or creative writing?
1= least confident and 10= very confident

1 _____ 5 _____ 10 7.5

Student Survey- MaxLiteracy Programme

We are doing this project together as an experiment to see if we can be more creative if we bring visual art and creative writing together. We also want to look at whether your opinions and experiences change in different types of spaces. Lots of artists use different approaches or ways of expressing themselves to explore their surroundings, feelings or thoughts. To help us to understand whether any change happens in your opinions, skills and knowledge through this project we would like to ask you to fill out your answers to these questions, you will be asked the same questions again at two other points of the project. Please answer as honestly as possible. We'll also be talking to you and looking at what you make through the project. If you want to ask any questions about this then just let us know.

1. How do you feel about creative writing/literacy?

I feel very positive to be a part of the club

2. What 3 words do you think of when we say CREATIVE WRITING?

Fun, exploration, imaginative thinking

3. How do you feel about art?

I feel like it is a very effective way of showing our skills

4. What 3 words do you think of when we say ART?

Drawing, creativity and fun

5. On the scale below, how confident are you about making art or creative writing?
1= least confident and 10= very confident

1 _____ 5 _____ 10 10

Sample student survey results Dec 23

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1		1	2	3	4	5
2	Q1 a	I enjoy creative writing				
3	Q1 b	happy	happy	happy	happy	happy
4	Q2	description, story, meaning	creativity, freedom, art	imaginative, fun, unique	creative, imaginative, fun	freedom, flow, storytelling
5	Q3a	some meaningful, some pointless				
6	Q3b	neutral	happy	neutral	sad	happy
7	Q4	meaningful, pointless, emotion	creativity, freedom, colour	relaxing, individual, hard	boring, restricting, mutilated	creativity, freedom, storytelling
8	Q5		9	10	2 (art) writing (8)	3 (art) 10 (writing)
9	Q6	with description	I enjoy making art or writing	writing	writing	write and draw
10	Q7	yes words mean more	Gives another perspective on others views	Yes as it isn't something someone would say	depends on the writer	Yes, allows emotions to be communicated
11	Q8		8	6	7	9
12	Q9	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
13	Q10	confused, worried	Feel sad that others don't care about our world	Sad we don't do anything about it	Sad	worried
14	Q11	to make it known	makes people think about it more	makes people who don't care think	Raise awareness	to help people realise the damage
15	Q12	Yes- about life and environment	Yes- how to make different poetry	Yes- learned about ways to remix existing writing	Yes	Yes
16						

Sample student survey results Feb 24

	A	B	C	D	E	F
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Q1 a		I find it fun			
2	Q1 b	happy	happy	happy	happy	happy
3	Q2	fantasy, poems, stories	creativity, free, words	creativity, inspire, creation	imaginative, good, relaxing	long, magical, intriguing
4	Q3a		happy	I love art		amazing
5	Q3b	happy	happy	happy	neutral	happy
6	Q4	painting, drawing, cubism	creativity, supplies, freedom	creative, fun, relaxing		creative, exciting, hoorah
7	Q5		10	8	4	6- art, 9-creative writing
8	Q6	to write a story	art	through music or art	descriptive writing	designing clothes
9	Q7	Y	Yes- because poetry can make you think	Yes- as it just feels more emotional	No, poetry is not my thing	Yes- it has a rhythmic feel
10	Q8		8	5	6	7
11	Q9	Y	Y	Yes- as it just feels more emotional	Y	Yes- it has a rhythmic feel
12	Q10	scared	not bad, because I think we can make a difference	scared	depressed	annoyed
13	Q11	because people can see it	to tell more people	it can help influence others	to extend the campaign	to raise awareness
14	Q12	Yes- about the town that drowned	Y	Yes- poetry	Yes	Yes- loved walking in different places, loved creating
15						

Appendix G- Student confidence rating tool for Nottingham Contemporary project (designed by Peter Rumney)

HOW CONFIDENT AM I:

- SPEAKING in ENGLISH:
- WRITING in ENGLISH:



Student Name:.....

5
4
3
2
1
0

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Appendix H- Statements for translation into home languages to support understanding and learning (Nottingham Contemporary project)

These are the statements that we showed to the students and translated into their home languages, to help contextualise the project:

Why are we doing this project?

- 1. Help you with your English.*
- 2. See if using and seeing visual art can help you with your English.*
- 3. See if writing stories or poetry can help you with your English.*
- 4. Show you some places in Nottingham so you can feel part of the city.*
- 5. See if you can help us to help other refugees and asylum seekers with their English like this.*