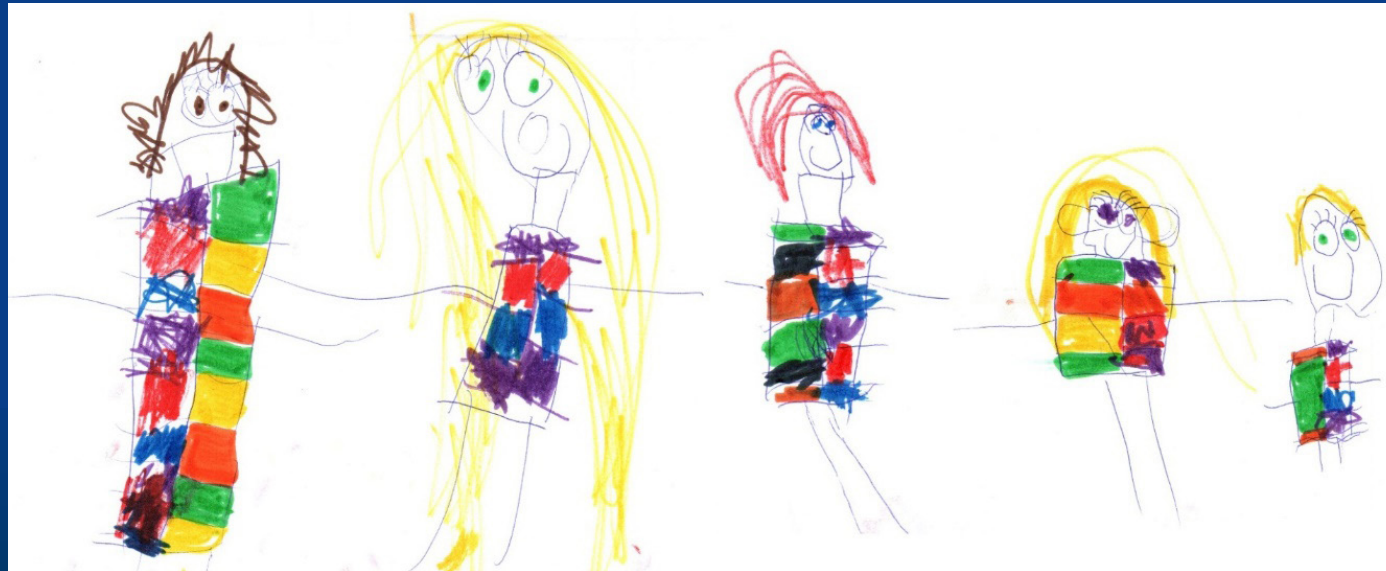


PEDAGOGICAL DOCUMENTATION: A SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PERSPECTIVE



A resource for early education and care educator teams

Written by Jamie Huff Sisson and Victoria Whittington

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About the Project Team

Jamie Huff Sisson (PhD) is a Lecturer in the School of Education at the University of South Australia. Previously Jamie was an early childhood teacher and educational consultant in the United States working with sites in moving toward emergent and inquiry based pedagogies. Jamie's contribution to the project included two Emergent and Inquiry Based lectures and lecture meetings and facilitating hub groups as well as working with Elspeth McInnes and Victoria Whittington on the Universal Access project evaluation.

Victoria Whittington (PhD) is an Associate Professor in the School of Education at the University of South Australia. Previously Victoria worked as both an early childhood and primary teacher in South Australia and Canada. Victoria contributed the lectures and lecture meetings on Leadership and Pedagogical Documentation and facilitated hub groups. She also worked with Elspeth McInnes and Jamie Sisson on the Universal Access project evaluation.

Mary Scales is the Program Leader for the Professional Learning Programs at Gowrie SA. Previously Mary worked as a kindergarten teacher and has held a number of leadership and project management roles. Mary led this Universal Access project funded by DECD which assisted educational leaders and early childhood teachers in 76 services.

Carrie Mitton is an Educational Mentor working for Gowrie SA in this project. Her past her roles have included training and assessment, consultancy, teaching and coaching within the education and care sector. She worked with educators within sites through mentoring, special events and hub groups to build capacity and deepen learning and reflection within those sites.

About the Project Team

Krystal Kimble Krystal is an Educational Mentor in this project. Currently she is also the Children's Program Leader across Thebarton and Underdale sites of Gowrie SA. Her past roles have also included kindergarten teacher and team leader. In this project, she supported sites through mentoring, inquiry projects and a regional hub group and special events for ECTS.

Ailsa Zadow is an Educational Mentor in this project working for Gowrie SA and has previously worked as a teacher and director within kindergartens and primary schools over sixteen years. She supported educators in sites through a mentoring and facilitating role, with a particular focus on educator-based inquiry, hub group networks and events for early childhood teachers.

We would also like to acknowledge previous members of the Universal Access team, **Dr Elspeth McInnes, Lyndsay Healey** and **Anne Mitchell**. Each of these individuals have made early contributions to this project that have been important to our learning journey.



Preface

Beginning in 2014 Gowrie SA and University of SA joined in a venture funded by the South Australian Department for Education and Child Development to provide support in a variety of ways for long day childcare centres offering Universal Access preschool programs as part of the Australian National Quality Agenda (2009) and the National Quality Framework (2012).

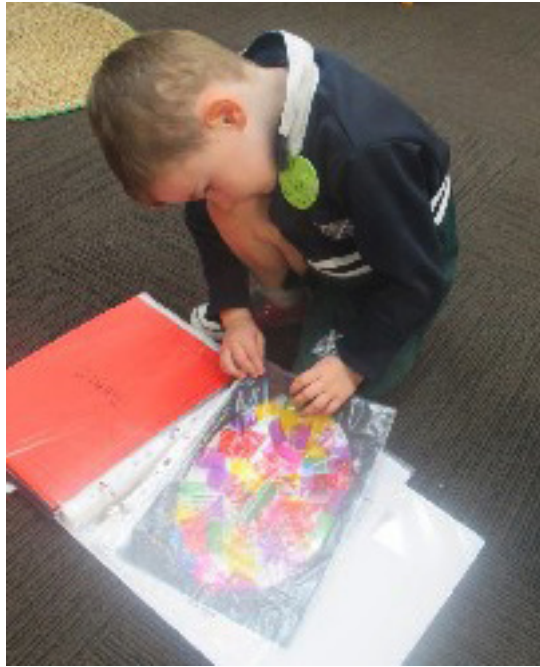
Data collected from the needs analysis suggested that participants were interested in professional development concerning leadership, emergent and inquiry based curriculum and pedagogical documentation. Lectures and lecture meetings, local hub groups, site visits, and online resources focused on these topics were offered to participating centres and their staff over one year, and extended to a second year in which additional centres joined us, then a third year.

The evaluation of the work of the first year showed that centres found the offerings most useful in the establishment and development of a Universal Access preschool program, with resources a valued component.

As the end of the project was near we decided to develop a resource on pedagogical documentation to explore how pedagogical documentation can be used to inform practice in rich and meaningful ways. It is our hope that this resource is useful for those who participated in the project and beyond in exploring pedagogical documentation.

Preface

The purpose of this e-book is to provide sites with a resource to support their teams in understanding and engaging in pedagogical documentation to make children's and educators' learning visible. This e-book has been developed in concert with the Australian Early Years Learning Framework: Belonging, Being, Becoming (2009) and is organised as a series of questions that we explored as part of the Universal Access Project.



In this e-book we explore:

1. Questions about our pedagogy:
 - a. *'How can we help children find the meaning of what they do, what they encounter, what they experience?'*
 - b. *'How can we do this for ourselves?'* (Rinaldi 2006, p. 63),
2. Pedagogical documentation and how it is part of rich learning processes and the creation of meaning, and,
3. The qualities of environments in which pedagogical documentation is well supported.

How to use this resource

Making our own learning journey visible within this resource was important in modelling learning as a journey rather than a destination. As such, we have organised this e-book into chapters that include examples from our learning journey. Along the way we invite you, as a team, to explore the same questions and provocations that we have. As you do so, we invite you to record your thoughts, theories, discoveries, and questions as a record of your learning journey. We have included throughout examples of documentation from local sites. You can use the examples to assist you to build your capacity to think critically about documentation. We would like you to think of the examples not as perfect, but as opportunities to learn.

We also invite you to use your own documentation to reflect on the key questions presented in each chapter. This e-book has been designed to enable you to use the chapters that you find most useful, however, we do recommend that you review the resource in its entirety so that you are familiar with the contents.



Why do educators document learning?

There are many good reasons for documenting children's and educators' learning. From our own experiences as educators and through our conversations with fellow educators we believe that the most important reason for documenting learning is to provide deeper, more meaningful and engaging learning environments for children.

When children are engaged in documentation they are reflecting on their learning as it happens. When documentation is made visible, children can tell the story about their learning and share it with others so that multiple perspectives can be included and it can form a base from which to develop further inquiry.

Documentation gives educators insights into what children are learning, and supports them to reflect on their own pedagogy. Documentation values young children as learners and thinkers, and is profoundly respectful of them as citizens who make important contributions to their communities.

As we reflected on this question about why we document learning we found that our ideas aligned with many contemporary early childhood researchers and were also reflected in the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

Engaging with the literature and research in our field is important in critically reflecting on our values and beliefs about education and care. Together with participants we explored different perspectives on the importance of documentation. In doing so we strengthened our understanding of why we use documentation and ways to document.

Why do educators document learning?

Provocation One:

In what follows we share the perspectives from colleagues who have inspired our thinking about why we document learning. As you read these perspectives think about your own practice and reflect upon the following:

- What resonates with you and your current practice?
- What aspirations do you have for your future practice?
- Why do you document learning?

Documentation as creating meaning:

We think that documentation is all about creating meaning in the minds of children, their educators and families. Meaning is about what is important to people, how they understand their lives. Reggio Emilia pedagogue Carla Rinaldi (2001a) said that in their search for meaning children ask *why*, *how* and *what* questions, and when communities respond to these questions they pass their cultural knowledge as well as build new shared understandings or meanings of the world. Communicating about this new learning through documentation Rinaldi (2001)

suggests, makes the world more meaningful to learners, children and adults. The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), (2009) is very clear about the importance of meaning. Outcome 5 'Children are effective communicators' 'Draw on their experiences in constructing meaning using symbols' and,

'Use the creative arts such as drawing, painting, sculpture, drama, dance, movement, music and storytelling to express ideas and make meaning.'

By involving learners (children, educators and families) in the documentation process we have found that we create opportunities for rich meaning making. Jamie shared a learning story that provided space for families to contribute to the story by drawing connections to the home life of the child. The learning story concerned how a shy pre-schooler developed leadership skills during an inquiry project on theatre productions. The family read the learning story together which sparked the development of a home production with the child's sibling. The family was then able to contribute to the learning story by documenting how the interests and new-found leadership role was developing at home.

Why do educators document learning?

Documentation as marking learning visible – a “window into human thinking”:

Elena Bodrova & Deborah Leong (2007) are two early childhood researchers who think that children’s social relationships develop their thinking. They said that documentation gives educators a window into children’s internal thinking processes, including how children understand their own thinking and learning.

Laura Rubizzi (2001) highlighted the benefit of educator reflection to documentation. When educators, “reflect on and discuss their choices and their actions, their awareness of the proposals they make to the children is significantly heightened.

Approaching their work in this way makes them more capable of listening to the children and more willing to introduce changes to their procedures that are more in tune with the children’s own strategies” (p.94). We believe such reflective discussion gives educators real insights into their own learning as well as children’s. When children’s and educators’ learning is documented families and policy makers can see

real evidence of the valuable learning journeys that children have taken. At the same time, such documentation can provide a strong argument for early childhood settings as great places for promoting learning. Documentation enables educators to grow as professionals (Gandini 2012, p. 338) because they are learning all the time, and can see that their work is valued and has meaning.

Documentation and children’s identities:

Other researchers, Wendy Lee & Margaret Carr (2006) said that when children have support to document their learning they become more purposeful and considered learners, and less impulsive. Furthermore, they see themselves as capable and competent (Rinaldi, 2013, p.16).

The benefits of documentation to children’s development of positive identities is clear in the EYLF (2009). In Outcome 1 children have a strong sense of identity, *‘children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities when they celebrate and share contributions and achievements with others’*.

What is pedagogical documentation?

Documentation is an important part of early childhood educators' work however there are many different ways that educators engage in documentation. The word 'documentation' is used to mean a variety of different tasks such as recording observations, writing reports, and keeping checklists.

While these forms of documentation are useful for educators, our endeavour is to focus more intently on pedagogical documentation. The question, 'what is pedagogical documentation?' is seemingly simple, however it offers an opportunity to have rich and deep discussions to co-construct shared understandings.

As a team, we invite you to explore this question through provocation two. As you do so, record your thoughts, theories, discoveries, and questions as a record of your learning journey.

Having the opportunity to deeply discuss what is meant when teams use terms like pedagogical documentation is important in building an environment in which everyone works collaboratively, and has together identified the principles that will guide how they work with children and families.



What is pedagogical documentation?

Provocation Two:

The words in this list have been used in various ways when talking about pedagogical documentation within the literature. Individually reflect upon and document the words from this list that are meaningful and important to you. What do you think they mean? In what ways are they important and why? Share and discuss your individual reflections as a team. Pay close attention to any differences as they can serve to prompt rich discussion about why beliefs may be different. While there may be some individual differences it is important to understand multiple perspectives. In doing so teams can work more collaboratively in drawing out common core beliefs that are needed to develop a shared vision.

- Communication
- Presentation
- Making learning visible
- Making teaching visible
- Evidence
- Artefacts
- Story
- Data
- Research
- Design process
- Part of planning cycle
- Accountability
- Assessment

What is pedagogical documentation?

The word 'pedagogy' is important in understanding how 'pedagogical documentation' is different from other forms of documentation. Pedagogy is defined as the study of teaching, that is, what is done to enable teaching to occur. Thus, pedagogical documentation is documentation that is about the study of educator teaching practices. Documentation in this sense is embedded in the learning process of educators and children (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 1999) as it not only documents the learning but becomes a part of the learning.

Pedagogical documentation entails the process of learning as it involves 'thoughtful reflection and analysis' (Fleet et al, 2011, p. 6). It engages educators in the study of their own pedagogy and provides an opportunity to reflect on the learning that has occurred. It includes educators researching practices to inform their evolving pedagogy (Wien, Guyevsky & Berdoussis, 2011). This reflection and analysis makes each stage of the learning journey of children and educators visible and provides an opportunity for families, colleagues, children and the community to be involved in the learning. Pedagogical

documentation provides a space for audience to engage through deep reflection by posing thought provoking questions.

 [Open the Seymour College document](#)

Seymour College posed the following question to direct their inquiry. *'Are our current communication practices meeting our families' needs?'* They collected data that included a survey of parents, and educators and group discussions with children. Analysis of data enabled them to gauge current parent, educator and child perspectives and to develop some ways in which they could improve communication and understanding. One outstanding outcome was that educators came to realise their documentation folders were not being fully used because the children did not realise that they owned the folders and could add to them and make decisions about the content. When children took ownership of the folders they involved their parents, showing them what they had done and inviting them to contribute.

What are the characteristics of pedagogical documentation?

In exploring pedagogical documentation, we found it useful to identify key characteristics. Here we share with you the eleven characteristics of pedagogical documentation we identified. As you continue your exploration in this area you may find more. We invite you to add them to our working list.

a. Documentation is interpersonal

The shared meaning created between people becomes visible via documentation.

Documentation of learning occurs in an existing relationship between two or more people, where both people are curious about something of mutual interest and can engage in extended conversation about this interest.

As Carla Rinaldi (2006) said, 'it is in this space that the questions, the dialogue, the comparison of ideas with colleagues are situated, where the meeting on "what to do" takes place and the process of assessment (deciding what to give value to) is carried out'. It is a 'knowledge seeking relationship' (p. 70) that is democratic. Documentation values the meaning created by

making it visible which enables further inquiry and meaning creation.

b. Documentation is subjective

Documentation does not claim to be objective, that is, without bias. Rather, by its very nature it is subjective because it includes the interpretations of the people involved. It acknowledges that each piece of documentation comes from a particular point of view, and those involved interpret the meaning of it, which is part of learning. In this process, the educator needs to accept feelings of doubt and uncertainty about what s/he is doing. Being too sure stops the exchange of ideas and reflections.

Documentation often tells a story about a person, often a child or children and learning. It also tells a story about the writer, often an educator. In this way both the person writing the story and those who read the documentation can reflect and learn.

What are the characteristics of pedagogical documentation?

c. Documentation is a research process

Documentation is a process that involves research because it is about investigating learning.

Documentation of learning traces a learning journey, and includes what the child or children did, reflections on key events and turning points, and the perspectives and interpretations of several people: the child, the educator, parents, other educators, community members.

On this journey pieces of documentation are gathered which contribute to building the whole story of what has been learned and how. This is data about learning. The analysis of it and the interpretations of it, followed by the drawing of conclusions regarding next steps is a research process for children and educators. Cagliari et al (2012) call documentation 'a vital means of exchange'.

You can see how educators become researchers with children via pedagogical documentation. Documentation enables educators to investigate and better understand what they are doing because they have evidence of their work, which is in effect, research data.

It is most useful to children, educators and parents and provides evidence to the community, including policy makers, that important learning occurs in early childhood settings, commanding their attention and respect.

At first, documentation may include daily observations on individuals or groups, notes on what children say, their theories and ideas, photos, video, and educator meeting notes, and daily diary that is sent home at the end of the week for parent comment. Staff could discuss these documentation forms to inform directions for inquiry.

What are the characteristics of pedagogical documentation?

d. Documentation shapes the identity of children and educators

Traditionally, an educator is viewed as the one who knows and who manages and controls learning. Educators' identities shift when they see themselves as co-learners and facilitators of learning who are studying with children. They are guides and fellow travellers on the learning journey, rather than directors of learning.

Pedagogical documentation shows the learning of the children and the educators. Rinaldi (2012) says, 'When teachers document children's work and review these documents with the children, the net result is a change in the image of their role as a teacher, a change from teaching subject matter to studying and learning with children' (p. 249). [our emphasis]. This shift in educator identity is consistent with the identity needed to engage in practitioner inquiry.

Similarly, children's identities shift when they see their learning valued and taken seriously and they come to see themselves as respected learners who contribute new insights.

e. Documentation values children as learners

The value of documentation for children is that they can see what they have done and come to understand its meaning for them. At the same time, children can hear about the meaning of their work for their educator, the educator's interest in it and valuing of it. In this way children come to see the importance of their work, and the value that others place upon it, that it is meaningful. When children see that their work is meaningful and highly regarded they begin to see themselves as persons who contribute value and meaning to their world. They can see that what they do is important, and as a result they feel appreciated. (Rinaldi 2006, p. 72).

What are the characteristics of pedagogical documentation?

f. Documentation is a kind of listening

Documentation requires educators to listen to children. Listening provides educators with a window into the culture of childhood. You cannot document learning without listening. Ann Pelo (2014) said that educators need to be present with children, to choose not to teach so that they can actively listen. This means letting go of teaching to allow what is happening around you to be the focus. In this way, you are able to truly hear. When educators are great listeners they are available to children so that they can engage in the process of documenting children's learning.

Listening is central to relationships which then enable learning. In Rinaldi's words, listening 'is a quality of mind' (Rinaldi 2006 p. 65-66). Listening involves all senses. To gain insights into the worlds of children, and indeed colleagues, educators need to be curious, open to differences, and to change, and, in the process, value others' points of views.

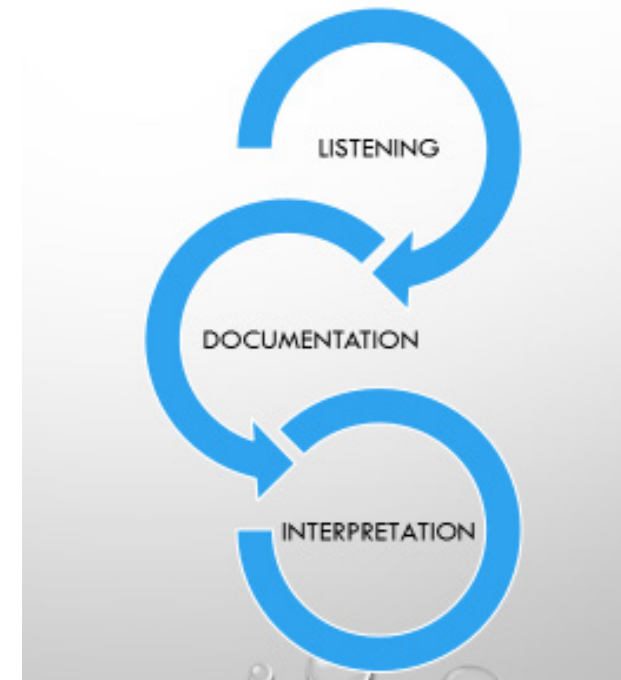
The details of children's drawings for example convey their understanding of the differences between things. When educators listen to children, parents and other educators they can reflect on current thinking, and 're-know or re-recognise' it.

What happens when children are listened to attentively? When children communicate their ideas to others they become more aware of their own thinking and the concepts they have. Rinaldi (2000) said, 'As children communicate their mental images or theories to others they also represent them to themselves, developing a more conscious vision. This is what is meant by 'internal listening' (p. 3). When educators present children's ideas (non-verbal as well as verbal) back to them a richer discussion can result. Educators also need to listen to their own words and actions to enable them to find a way forward for learning. In this listening and responding 'dance' children and educators negotiate the next steps.

What are the characteristics of pedagogical documentation?

Listening is not just about what educators do. Children are wired from birth to be excellent listeners, to attend very carefully to all that surrounds them. Their survival is dependent upon it. They must learn about their surroundings so they can live successfully in that context. They are also born communicators who are social beings, so they need to engage with others (Rinaldi 2006, p. 66). Documentation is often called 'visible listening', as it shows children's learning in progress, the path they have taken and the process they have used. Rinaldi (2006) calls documentation a 'building block of knowledge' (p. 68).

Listening, documentation and interpretation are woven together as a part of learning. Children listen to those around them, and communicate their ideas in a host of ways. Those ideas are documented, also in many ways, and then children's reflections and interpretations on that documentation are combined with those of others in a dynamic process that results in learning for all, while also stimulating directions for further learning.



THE PROJECT APPROACH – ELEMENTS AND PROCESS

In the listening phase shown in this diagram, educators undertake initial informal documentation, for example, meeting notes, ideas on post-it notes, diagrams, or an anticipatory planning web. Then educators discuss the informal documentation and develop an idea about children's intent. They then undertake further listening and documentation around those ideas.

What are the characteristics of pedagogical documentation?

As the documentation takes form educators, children, families and the community offer their perspectives and insights, called interpretation here, which may result in further documentation or re launching into a new form. From here, the process continues.

g. Documentation needs theory

Theory is important to documentation because it provides a stand point for thinking and interpretation to happen. Children's every observable action can be understood from several theoretical view points.

Drawing from a variety of theories is useful in understanding the complexities of our learning environments as social spaces where children learn, develop and participate as citizens.

Drawing not only on developmental theories but also on contemporary theories will ensure the whole child is considered. For example, developmental theory indicates what activities might be beneficial to particular areas of development.

One theoretical idea of importance is that of the zone of proximal development developed by Vygotsky (1978). It describes the area in which children are most interested to learn, the space between what they know already and have consolidated, and what is too challenging to learn, even with assistance. Educators advance children's learning when they tune into this zone, and build from there.

Contemporary theories are useful because they disrupt the taken-for-granted beliefs that child development provides a complete knowledge base about young children. Critical theories, for example, are used to understand children as being actively engaged in the development of identities. They are useful in understanding how social inequities play out within the classroom and are focused on engaging children in critical conversations with the focus of action for social justice. They consider issues that may arise concerning, gender, class, ethnicity, and the exercise of power as significant.

What are the characteristics of pedagogical documentation?

To illustrate, a young pre-schooler observes that a new classmate has an accent that is not the same as hers, points and laughs at that child and says, 'You talk funny'. The employment of child development theories will lead the educator to the idea that noticing differences is a part of age appropriate development, but it does not address the fact that this interchange has implications to the identities of both children, the child who made the observation and the one who received the message.

Critical theory provides tools that enable an analysis which leads to action in reframing the significance of the interchange in terms of emerging identity and relationships.

Only focusing on child development theories can run the risk of positioning teachers' knowledge of children in terms of categorising them in predetermined ways rather than providing opportunities to understand children as unique individuals who enact agency within their worlds.

h. Documentation values children's voices

Documentation of learning enables children to express what they know, to contribute their knowledge. Their contributions have origins in what they have learned living in their homes with their families and friends.

Documentation of children's learning values their knowledge, and is inclusive. It does not force their thinking into a framework or set of narrow outcomes that shape and limit the knowledge they bring to the learning setting.

In the words of Forman and Fyfe (2012) documentation presents 'unique stories that reveal forms of thinking no book of standards contains' (p. 255).

Children's voices include their theories to explain a phenomenon. Their theories are often different from those of adults because they are transitory and spontaneous: they show children's thinking at that moment. They may say that daisies turn into butterflies at night, as one child in a Reggio Emilia centre proposed. Such theories can form the basis of projects that in part involve exploration of that child's theory.

What are the characteristics of pedagogical documentation?

i. Documentation is exhibited

Early childhood settings have many places to exhibit children's documentation and thus their learning, the walls, tables, ceiling, floor, publications. The exhibition is not simply intended to display children's achievements, it is also shown to provoke discussion about what children and their educators are learning, to enable reflection, and provide direction for further learning.

Such exhibits often include the educator's reflections next to the children's work, photographs and children's narratives, telling the story about the steps of learning involved. Children's theories are also present and signify the importance of learning as a process of discovery. When learning is exhibited or made visible in this way, other children and educators, parents, the community and even policy makers can see learning in progress. Children also see that their work is valued and meaningful.

Provocation Three:

As a team, use our working list to critique the following examples of pedagogical documentation happening at different stages throughout two inquiries. The first enquiry is into campfires, and the second is a fish inquiry project.

Discuss how these examples emulate key characteristics of pedagogical documentation and explore the following questions: Does the documentation as presented demonstrate all of the characteristics? If not, which ones are missing, and what might the educators have done to change this? Do all the characteristics need to be evidenced in order to be high quality pedagogical documentation?

 [View 'Setting the Program'](#)

 [View the Fish Inquiry Project](#)

What are the characteristics of pedagogical documentation?

Characteristics of Pedagogical Documentation

- a. Documentation is interpersonal
- b. Documentation is subjective
- c. Documentation is a research process
- d. Documentation shapes the identity of children and educators
- e. Documentation values children as learners
- f. Documentation is a kind of listening
- g. Documentation needs theory
- h. Documentation values children's voices
- i. Documentation is exhibited

Pedagogical documentation or display?

In understanding what pedagogical documentation is, it is also important to understand what it is not. There is a difference between pedagogical documentation and display. Displays are different from pedagogical documentation as they are used to showcase an end product, "what we did". In contrast, pedagogical documentation is designed to provoke deeper thinking about children's learning (and understandings) as well as our teaching practices by telling the story of what

happened, at each stage. Although it is certainly reasonable to use displays we found that for the purpose of making learning visible and engaging an audience in dialogue to explore pedagogy, pedagogical documentation is most useful.

Provocation Four:

As a team, use the table below from the team at Harvard Graduate School of Education (2006) to critically reflect on your current documentation practices. It will be useful to focus on a particular piece of documentation as you reflect. Discuss the following questions:

- Is this documentation a display or pedagogical documentation? Why do you think?
- Describe elements of this documentation that indicate that it is an example of pedagogical documentation or indicate that it is not.
- What other elements of pedagogical documentation could be used to strengthen this as an example of pedagogical documentation?

What are the characteristics of pedagogical documentation?

Documentation	Display
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus is placed on evidence of the learning process in the context of what happened.• Includes analysis and/or reflection.• Invites inquiry about children's thinking, learning and development• Invites predictions about effective teaching.• More like a research report than a record of past events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus is placed on what happened or "what we did."• Display of each child's individual work.• Is standardized or product oriented.• "Invites pleasure and satisfaction, but is not deliberately designed to provoke hypotheses."

Table 1: Comparison of the qualities of documentation versus display, Harvard Graduate School of Education, 2006

How are pedagogical documentation and educators' image of the child related?

Our image of the child as a learner is intimately related to our practice as educators. If we believe children are an empty slate, then we respond as educators who strive to fill them up with knowledge. If we believe children are vulnerable we respond by protecting them from things we believe will cause them harm. If we believe they are competent we trust them to engage not only as learners but also as teachers who have knowledge that can be shared with us. Our own image of the child is often reflective of our experiences as children. Sisson (2016) suggests critical reflection on our own experiences as children is important in making sure we do not perpetuate particular images of the child as being universally true for all children. As a team, we engaged in critical personal reflection about our own experiences. We would like to share Victoria's as an example.

When Victoria was a child many significant adults around her thought that children should be seen but not heard at all. Children were to obey without question everything that adults directed. They were required to fit in to whatever context and not disrupt it in any way. Adults were always correct.

Children were seen as unable, and unknowing. Learning the rules set by others was paramount. Being scolded was common, and speaking back when reprimanded was regarded as a further indication of disobedience. Praise of any kind was regarded as likely to spoil the child and so was avoided.

This adult stance indicated a certain image of children. They were seen as low in power, not worthy of respect, and low in knowledge. They were not equal to adults in anyway, had no rights, and were not citizens with capacity but rather individuals who had to wait until adulthood to express their ideas and to assert their rights, that is, until they knew better. Any indication of agency beyond what adults expected was regarded as cheeky and treated with amusement. Respect for children's ideas was not evident.

Critical personal reflection like Victoria's provides us with an opportunity to deeply consider our beliefs about children and how our beliefs impact our practice and the lives of children we work with.

How are pedagogical documentation and educators' image of the child related?

Provocation Five:

During one of our lecture meetings we focused on reflecting on how our past experiences as children impact our values and beliefs about our teaching. We would like to invite you to similarly reflect on practice and the image of the child as a learner (using the table in Appendix A).

Remember back to a significant experience you or another person you know well had as a child that concerned documenting and assessing learning. Record these significant experiences in the column under 'Experiences as a child within educational and care contexts'. Then reflect upon the 'Underpinning philosophical perspectives' that may have served to inform that experience in the next column (See example overleaf).

Reflection questions to consider:

- What image of the child do you think was evident? Why?
- What do you think was the purpose of documentation or assessment?
- Did the child/children feel listened to, valued, respected, and feel as though they were a competent person who could make a contribution to the thinking of those around them? Explain how or how not?

How are pedagogical documentation and educators' image of the child related?

Experiences as a child within educational and care contexts (i.e. home, school, preschool, childcare)	
Significant experience	Underpinning philosophical perspectives concerning: nature of knowledge, how people learn, image of the child, role of the educator
<p>JP school- I had difficulties in math. There was one particular concept that I was struggling with and I was determined to figure it out, make it meaningful to me so that I understood. As I played with the math problem it became clear to me. I tested this out with other problems and it consistently worked. When it came time for the test, although my answers were correct my teacher marked them wrong because I didn't arrive at the answer in the same way that he had taught.</p>	<p>Knowledge is absolute with one right way.</p> <p>People learn from more knowledgeable others.</p> <p>The child is a blank slate and the role of the teacher is to fill them up with knowledge.</p>

Table 2: Example of one person's reflection on a significant childhood experience

How are pedagogical documentation and educators' image of the child related?

In understanding how our past experiences inform our values and practice we also reflected upon our experiences in teacher education and professional development. We invite you to do the same. We think that reflection on our experiences in teacher education and professional development is important as it helps us to think about how our experiences as children may reflect or not reflect what we as adults have learned and value for children. This type of reflection assists us in identifying contemporary practices that we value so that we can reflect upon how we use them in our current practice. Remember back to a significant professional learning experience you had. Record these significant experiences in the column under "Professional experience and events". Then reflect upon the "underpinning philosophical perspectives" that may have served to inform that experience in the next column.

Reflection questions to consider:

- How are your experiences as a child different or similar to what you have valued through your professional learning?
- How do you enact your professional values within your classroom?

- What is your image of the child and how do you communicate that throughout your practice?

Professional experiences and events (i.e. professional development, reading of literature or research, teacher education, working with a colleague or team)	
Significant experience	Underpinning philosophical perspectives concerning: nature of knowledge, how people learn, image of the child, role of the educator.
Working as a team with other educators at Ohio University in moving toward an emergent curriculum with the inspiration of Reggio Emilia principles.	Knowledge is social constructed. Image of the child-competent and capable Role of the educator-facilitator, co-learner, co-educator, co-player.

Table 3: Example of Jamie's reflection on a significant experience as an educator

How are pedagogical documentation and educators' image of the child related?

Our use of pedagogical documentation is also impacted by our image of the child. We found that the image of the child can impact documentation in the following ways:

- The image that the educator has of the child is central to whether they will document, how they will document, and how that educator will regard and use the documentation produced.
- When a child is seen as competent, strong and of value then the educator approaches the child with respect and sees her/himself as a learner as well as an educator. As Rinaldi 2006, said, 'The child is competent and strong, has the right to hope, and the right to be valued, not fragile, needy and incapable' (p. 64).
- When children's recordings are regarded as being a moment in the past, this is likely to be seen as evidence of them being a child.
- When respect is shown for children's thinking, thought is given to the processes by which children and educators choose what, when and how to document.

The learning story provided overleaf is an example of how pedagogical documentation can value the child as competent and capable. Notice how this particular example is written directly to the child. The content is focused on an intimate learning exchange highlighting how the child assisted the educator in her learning. The significance of this exchange is not distracted by citing learning outcomes but is focused on highlighting the child as competent. Certainly, the teachers could link this exchange to learning outcomes, however that outside the interest of the child and thus not the purpose of this learning story.

How are pedagogical documentation and educators' image of the child related?

Can I go to the Tower Markets?

In Jacaranda there has been a lot of conversation about excursions and the places that we can go in our community. Harry this is an idea that you have been extremely interested in. Today you had an idea, you wanted to go to the tower markets. I responded with curiosity and a problem....

'Harry this is a great idea! But I have a problem, I don't know how to get to the Markets'. You lead the opportunity for learning around this topic for yourself by telling me that you can draw a map and show me what it looks like as well as his to get there. What a great idea and solution this was for my problem. When I asked you what you needed you told me 'I need textas and paper'.

As I watched you in this learning experience I was amazed by your dedication, persistence and motivation in your design. You were so engrossed in your artwork that I was so curious and excited to hear about the tower markets and how we would get there.

You told me you were finished and I asked you if you would like me to record the different elements of your art as you described it to me.

You gave me permission to write in the space near the different elements as you told me about them. (Please turn over to art work to hear Harry's voice as she explains the elements of his picture).

Harry as you highlighted for me what the tower markets looked like I really felt like I could paint a true picture of your previous experiences of the tower markets. I could see that you had absorbed so many elements of the environment, that you experience with your family.

When I consider all the elements that you think about I can see that you are learning about the things in your community. I can see how connected you are to the places that you visit regularly. I am noticing from the last story I wrote about Mr Sunshine there is a common thread. I have noticed the attention you pay to the details in and around buildings and structures you are familiar with.

I wonder if you would be interested in constructing a three dimensional version of your drawing of the tower markets using recycled and natural materials that can be found in our art studio. I look forward to discussing this with you.

How are pedagogical documentation and educators' image of the child related?

It is also important to be aware of how our pedagogical documentation for other audiences communicates our image of the child. How we communicate our work with children can have a powerful influence on how our audiences will view the children in our rooms. Many adult audiences will come from the perspective of their experiences of children who were taught in traditional classroom where the likely image of the child was that of an empty vessel.

The following learning story example has been written with the child and family as the audience. From this example, we notice that the educators are trying to strike a balance that fits the needs of both audiences. In doing so this example demonstrates how educators not only make learning visible by explicitly drawing connections to learning outcomes but also draws a clear picture of the child as competent and capable, and makes explicit their role in informing the curriculum.

How are pedagogical documentation and educators' image of the child related?

Excursions!

In Jacaranda we have been talking about an planning excursions in our local community. This has been something that you have been interested in. We were talking about the



different places that we could go in the community as we were planning a visit to Cibo - a coffee shop on Grange Road with some other children. You liked this idea and said you wanted to come

but we talked about this excursion being full. I explained to you that we could plan another excursion to somewhere else in the future. You made a connection about coffee shops and shared with me how you go to Mr. Sunshine's. You asked 'Can we go to Mr. Sunshine's to get a chocolate brownie and chocolate milk?' (Excursions Floorbook). I talked to you about how I thought it was a great idea as Mr. Sunshine's was a place that we were thinking about visiting for our arts project. Justin is planning to connect with Mr. Sunshine's to

talk about developing an art gallery there. I posed the question to you about what Mr. Sunshine's looks like and how we would get there? You took it upon yourself to design your own map of what it looked like. You highlighted that you had drawn a sun for Mr. Sunshine, the chairs, the door, inside where you get the hot chocolate.

Thinking about the learning.

Harry in this experience I can see that you are learning about mapping and representing your ideas through art. I can see that you are making marks that mean something and you are learning how to articulate and communicate your ideas. I am learning about the connections that you have in the local community and the places that you are interested in visiting.



How are pedagogical documentation and educators' image of the child related?

Possible Lines of Development

You highlighted that you are interested in visiting Mr. Sunshine's. As you explore making meaning of text and art I am thinking that we could connect with Mr. Sunshine's through writing letters to share with them your artwork and our intentions of visiting. I wonder what you think of this idea. I will talk with you soon to find out how you would like to reach out to them to plan an excursion. I also think we could connect with Justin to work together in thinking about our ideas about an art gallery at Mr. Sunshine's.

From your friend, Christina.

As a family I am wondering about the moments that you share together at Mr. Sunshine's as I know this is a place that you visit often. Also are there any other places in our local community that you enjoy visiting?

Christina



How can we engage in pedagogical documentation in our (South) Australian context?

A question often asked regarding pedagogical documentation is 'how can we engage in pedagogical documentation?' Many educators say they are unsure about when documentation should be used. Our view is that there is no one way. There are, however, many different purposes and ways to document. Here are four questions to consider when determining when and what to document.

1. Is the child(ren) doing or showing something that indicates they have learned new knowledge or a skill. This requires knowing the child(ren) well so you are able to decide whether new learning is occurring.
2. Has an interaction out of the ordinary occurred between you and the child, perhaps an 'ah ha' moment? Or is there opportunity to see 'the extraordinary in the ordinary' (Shafer, 2002 in Fleet et al 2012, p. 6)
3. Do you as an educator feel inspired by what has just occurred?
4. Are you looking to learn something about the children, their learning or your practice in which pedagogical documentation could provide useful insights?

For us, these four questions represent different reasons to document but will also require different ways. We also explored further questions.

- What forms of documentation might educators choose to fit the purpose?
- Who is the audience for documentation?
- What are the methods for collecting and presenting learning?
- How can we use pedagogical documentation to inform our emergent and inquiry based curriculum?

How do educators chose appropriate forms of documentation?

As educators, it is important that we do not fall into the trap of following the newest trend at the cost of current practice. While this may lead to some improvements in one area it may lead to new issues in other areas. Limiting types of documentation, you use can reduce your capacity to meet the needs of diverse audiences and purposes. As with any form of communication it is important to consider your purpose and audience when making decisions about documentation.

How can we engage in pedagogical documentation in our (South) Australian context?

There are many different purposes for documentation. A few include:

- Support for learning and reflection
- Making learning visible (group/ individual)
- Making teaching visible
- Highlighting the extraordinary in the ordinary
- Co-constructing knowledge
- Informing planning and further directions
- Communicating
- Advocating
- Engaging in dialogue
- Growing understanding
- Demonstrating accountability
- Assessing progress
- Provoking thought
- Reflecting critically

For example: If the purpose of documentation is to make teaching visible by exploring children's literacy learning in a preschool classroom then we would want to make sure our documentation

includes examples of children engaging in literacy throughout the process with captions that outline the significance of the example. We would also want to see child, family, and community perspectives on the significance for them.

Who is the audience for documentation?

The audience is also an important factor to consider. Documentation that is meant for children should look different from that meant for families. It will need to be presented at their eye level and presented in a language they can understand (photos versus many words). It is likely to include children as the creators. We identified the following potential audience members to consider when creating documentation.

- Children
- Families
- Staff
- Communities
- Other stakeholders, for example, politicians and education system leaders

How can we engage in pedagogical documentation in our (South) Australian context?

What are the methods for collecting and presenting learning?

Carefully considering purpose and audience is important when choosing methods to capture thinking. For instance, documentation with a lot of text would probably not be as appropriate as photos and audio/video for documentation when the intended audience is children. Documentation data can be collected in various ways.

- Photography
- Video
- Audio
- Observation notes
- Transcripts of conversations
- Artefacts
- Text
- Other

How educators choose to share documentation also requires careful consideration. Project participants found that how and where their documentation was shared was important to making it accessible to the intended audiences. After identifying the purpose and audience, educators need also consider which forum is most accessible for the intended audience and fit for purpose. There are many different forums to choose from including:

- Documentation panels
- Learning stories/ journeys
- Portfolios
- Floor books
- Formal and informal reports
- Project book
- Observation formats

How can we engage in pedagogical documentation in our (South) Australian context?

Provocation Six:

As mentioned earlier in this e-book, there is no one 'right way' to document. The decisions you make about documentation will require careful consideration of the purpose, audience and methods available. As a team review the four questions we offer to determine when and what to document.

1. Is the child(ren) doing or showing something that indicates they have learned new knowledge or a skill. This requires knowing the child(ren) well so you are able to decide whether something is new learning.
2. Has an interaction out of the ordinary occurred between you and the child, perhaps an 'ah ha' moment? Or is there opportunity to see 'the extraordinary in the ordinary' (Shafer, 2002 in Fleet et al 2012, p. 6)
3. Do you as an educator feel excited by what has just occurred?
4. Are you looking to learn something about the children, their learning or your practice in which pedagogical documentation could be useful?

As you review the questions above reflect upon the following:

- Do these questions reflect times that you think are important in documentation? Why or why not?
- What other questions might you add to this list that will be useful in deciding when to document?

As a team share pieces of your own documentation. Discuss the following:

- When do you document?
- Why do you document?
- What do you document?
- Discuss how your answers to these question, reflect your values about documentation.

How can we engage in pedagogical documentation in our (South) Australian context?

How can educators use pedagogical documentation to inform their emergent and inquiry based curriculum?

As part of our project we also explored the use of emergent and inquiry based pedagogies, and how they work with pedagogical documentation (Sisson 2016). As we reflected upon our context and explored the possibilities that pedagogical documentation has to offer we also turned to Anne Pelo's thinking lens (2014), outlined below, to better understand how pedagogical documentation can be use.



Anne Pelo's (2014) thinking lens provides information about how pedagogical documentation can be used to support learning.

She reminds us to carefully observe children with an open heart and mind so we can truly understand their point of view. We cannot do this however, if we are consumed with wanting children to meet particular goals and objectives from the starting point. We draw on Ann's 'thinking lens' to help us align our attention to the children's attention:

1. Know yourself - What is your immediate response to the children's play and conversation? What touches your heart? What values are ignited as you observe?
2. Take the children's point of view - What are the children trying to figure out? What theories are they testing?
3. Examine the environment - How is the space have an impact on this experience?
4. Collaborate with others - How do others understand the meaning of the children's play? What insights do the families offer? What research or theories might you consider?

How can we engage in pedagogical documentation in our (South) Australian context?

5. Reflect and take action - going beyond the surface of children's interests and inquiries, beyond transmitting knowledge by reflection on:
 - What can we do that would deepen children's relationships?
 - What can we do that would invite children to take a different perspective?
 - How can we help children see their own and each other's ideas? How can we make their thinking visible?
 - How can we call forward children's emotional and spiritual ways of knowing and relating?
 - How can we connect this moment to the developmental themes of childhood?
 - How can we use this moment to strengthen children's skills in learning domains such as literacy, math, critical thinking and social justice understandings?

Provocation Seven:

As a team reflect on each of the dot points presented from Ann Pelo's thinking lens. Draw a Y chart for each, then reflect on the following questions. What does it look like? What does it feel like? What does it sound like? Then reflect on what it requires from us?

In building on the work of Anne Pelo, Jamie Sisson (2016) developed an emergent inquiry planning cycle. We found this planning cycle to be useful in demonstrating different points within a learning journey where pedagogical documentation can occur.

The inquiry planning cycle is not a linear process nor is it a simple cyclical process. It is rather complex and messy. As this e-book is focussed on pedagogical documentation we will not go into detail of the structure of this complex cycle but will draw to your attention how documentation intertwines with multiple aspects of planning and engagement, thus serving multiple purposes.

How can we engage in pedagogical documentation in our (South) Australian context?

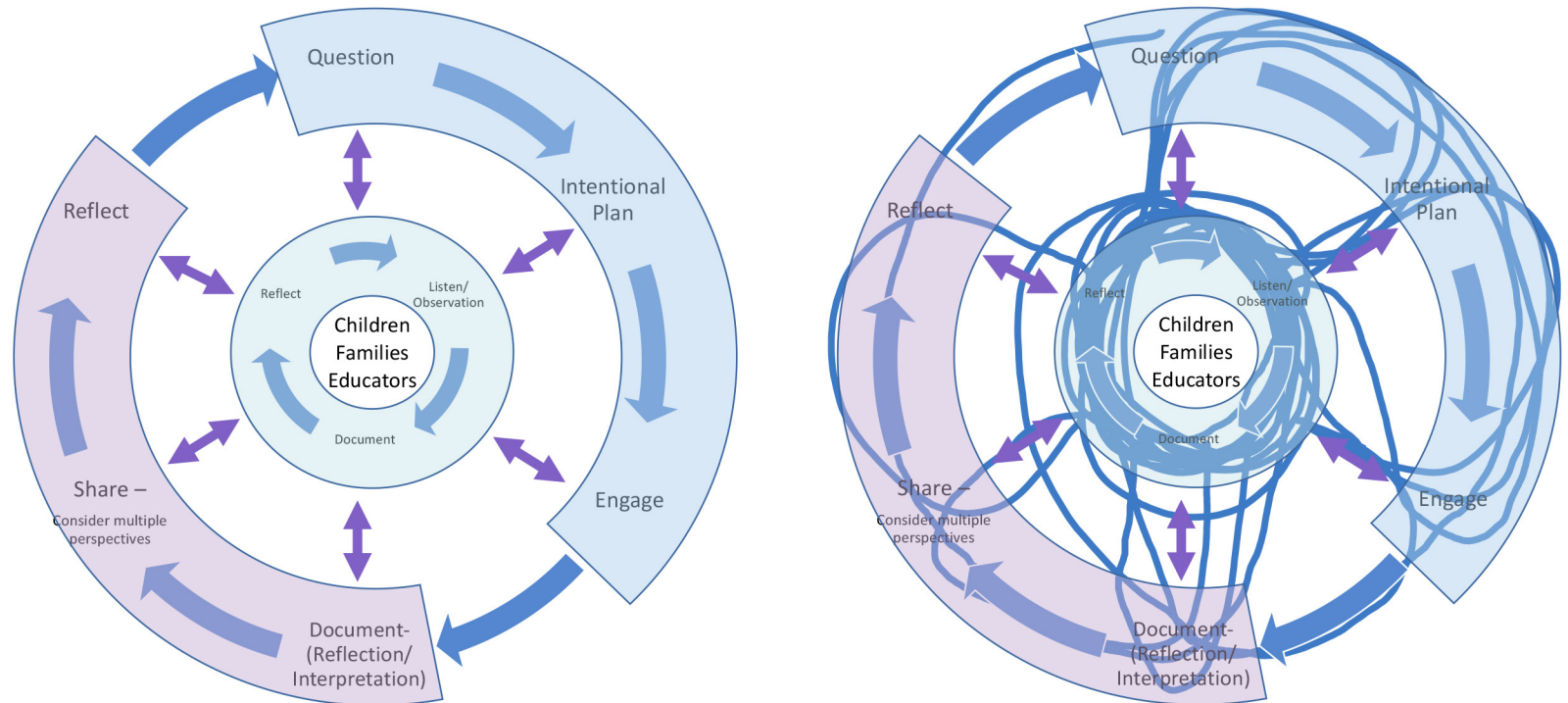


Figure 2: Inquiry Planning Cycle, © Sisson 2016

Pedagogical documentation is reflected at different stages within this cycle. The centre of the cycle represents engagement with children to decide on an issue or topic of interest. Engagement here means bringing educator intentions together with children's intentions. We begin by listening to children when we engage in conversations with them, or listening by observing them engage with their peers and the environment. In documentation, we

not only record what children are doing and saying but also interpret it through our own lens of understandings which have developed in a social context. Documentation may include observation notes, transcripts of conversations, or making an anticipatory planning web from brainstorming conversations. This means that documentation is about recording and sharing the process of learning as it occurs and not just the final product.

How can we engage in pedagogical documentation in our (South) Australian context?

Reflection at this point is focused on thinking deeply about what we see and hear. What does this mean for our work with young children? How does this serve to inform our planning and practice? We found Ann Pelo's thinking lens date beneficial in helping us bring our own intentions as educators together with the children's intentions. After reflection, educators must determine if they are ready to move on to the next phase (questioning), or if they need to continue working on bringing educator intentions together with the children's intentions through pedagogical documentation.

The arrows in the diagram show that this cycle is dynamic. Although the cycle looks seemingly linear, it is anything but. Educators come in and out of the centre cycle using pedagogical documentation to inform their planning and practice at various stages.

In the following links we provide examples of different forms pedagogical documentation being used throughout a project. First is a learning story that is used as part of the initial planning. This example captures how this inquiry project was born. The audience for this learning story is the child and their family and provides a space for families to make a contribution to the learning story and subsequently the planning.

 [**Rob's initial learning story – Setting the Program**](#)

This second example from this project is a page from a floor book where the intended audience members are the children and educators in the classroom. Here we see some photographs and hand-written notes that capture the growing interest as it emerged. This page is then used during group discussion with the children to reflect upon this emerging interest and to plan further directions.

How can we engage in pedagogical documentation in our (South) Australian context?

Planning a campfire

The third is an overview of the project. This piece of pedagogical documentation is meant for a broader audience for the purpose of making learning visible. This documentation can be found on the wall of the preschool room where families and visitors can have access as they enter the space. This documentation tells the narrative of the learning journey. It can also be used to draw the audience in to the experience by providing a provocation for consideration.

Preparing for a campfire

Although documentation and reflection occurs throughout the process, as represented by the arrows pointing back to the centre cycle, they are also identified as a stage in the broader emergent curriculum inquiry cycle. Pedagogical documentation can change direction after engaging in a provocation or invitation for learning. The cycle provides children and educators with the opportunity to reflect more broadly upon their learning before sharing with others.

Back-mapping

During this use of pedagogical documentation educators could draw connections between what the children have actually achieved and the outcomes in the EYLF and individual learning plans. This is called back-mapping. In the context of early childhood education in (South) Australia, it is important that at the same time as educators reflect upon children's' learning they are also drawing connections between what happened and the learning outcomes in the EYLF as well as any individual goals. This information can then be used to assist educators in further planning by providing an understanding about what children are currently learning and how educators and families can better support their learning.

Theory is also important in back-mapping because, as previously mentioned, it provides a standpoint to think about and interpret our pedagogical documentation. All children's activities can be understood using several theories.

How can we engage in pedagogical documentation in our (South) Australian context?

For example, when 3-year-old Jack and Waleed's educator noticed one afternoon that they were taking turns to try to get a hose to click on to a nearby tap, exchanging ideas on how to do that, their actions could be seen as an experiment with the physical world as in Piagetian theory, from a socio-cultural standpoint as collaborative learning, or as task encoding and production in the information processing approach. The purpose of the documentation will help decide which theory will be chosen as most appropriate in understanding the significance of the actions.

Action recorded by educator	Piaget's theory	Vygotsky's socio cultural theory	Information processing
Jack and Waleed are together investigating how to attach a hose to a tap by pushing the hose up against the tap outlet.	<p>Via sensory motor actions children are investigating the physical characteristics of a hose, a tap and their function together. They are learning schemes such as those for hose and tap and conveying water.</p> <p>Children learn by discovery, by experimenting with their world and learn best with peers as the power relation is equal, rather than being told how to do it by an adult.</p>	<p>Learning occurs in a context in which the mind is socially formed. The children have seen their close adults engaged in this activity and so they want to do it too. They understand it is significant to becoming a fully functioning person in their community. The children are also working collaboratively to solve the problem, sharing ideas about how to achieve their goal in their zone of proximal development.</p>	<p>Children learn by taking in ideas via their senses into their sensory register (encoding), and then drawing on their long term memory (perhaps remembering adults connecting the hose and the tap), in working memory attempt to solve the task (production).</p>

Table 4: Comparisons of theories regarding one observation

How can we engage in pedagogical documentation in our (South) Australian context?

Back-mapping also provides educators with an understanding of their own strengths and interests as a learner that can inform professional development. For instance, in engaging in back-mapping a teacher may learn that she often spent considerable amount of time bringing music into children's inquiry projects but often missed opportunities to incorporate outdoor exploration. Her reflection informs how she will approach the next inquiry project and the resources she will choose to seek out to assist her in her thinking. So back-mapping is not only about identifying outcomes but also about understanding ourselves as educators and being intentional in our practice.

The following excerpt from a larger documentation panel included pictures and examples of children's work from an emergent inquiry project on 'How can we make the water flow' demonstrates how teachers use back-mapping to interpret the children's learning.

As educators, we are always learning from children. Their play offers us a deeper understanding of their learning interests.

Four year old Susan pulled the yellow "sink" out and dropped it on the floor as she went to the fridge. Tracy turned and walked over to the sink and exclaimed, "Oh no, the sink is broken!" Just then Rebecca turned around and rushed over and said 'Don't worry, I'll fix it.' She put her head under and up through the hole where the sink used to be. She came out and turned to Tracy and said 'it's not good, I can't fix it.' Tracy moved in and put her head under and up through the where the sink use to be. She tugged and twisted her hands around the clear thick tube under the sink and shouted from underneath, "I have to fix it... the water is unflowed."

Discussing this scenario with the preschool class we had decided to focus on the following questions for our inquiry project:

- **How can we make the water flow?**
- **How does plumbing work?**
- **How can we control water flow?**

How can we engage in pedagogical documentation in our (South) Australian context?

Children had been initiating conversations with the educators as they try to help solve the water flow problem. When they did so they reflected on what worked and what had not worked to inform future decisions. Together the children and educators worked on creating “blue prints” and clay models of their ideas. During this time, the children were developing numeracy and literacy skills. The children used language to describe and connect to their world and presented their ideas through complex drawing of blue prints and clay representations (EYLF Literacy outcome). The children analysed, read and organised the data they collected in their world as they observed different examples of how water moves through different plumbing systems they created. They created a chart detailing what they thought would work and what actually did (EYLF Numeracy outcome).

EYLF Outcome 1 - Children feel safe, secure, and supported. The engagement showed they have a sense of trust in their relationships with their educators.

- **Numeracy - I analyse, read and organise the data in my world-** Interpret and use data to make decisions
- **Literacy - I use language to connect with my world, I understand the language of my world, I represent my world symbolically**

The educator started with a statement about how she is always learning from children and then provided a short vignette to illustrate how the project came to life. She then briefly described what transpired next and drew connections to the outcomes in the EYLF.

How can we engage in pedagogical documentation in our (South) Australian context?

Sharing Pedagogical Documentation

Sharing pedagogical documentation was also an important consideration for us. We wanted to employ documentation to engage the audience in dialogue to produce better understanding of learning and pedagogy. Sharing can be achieved by posting pedagogical documentation on the wall as a documentation panel, sending it home in a portfolio or learning story, or having

a learning expo. After sharing pedagogical documentation with an audience, it is important to provide time for further reflection to consider how others' perspectives can add to the shared understanding of children and educators.

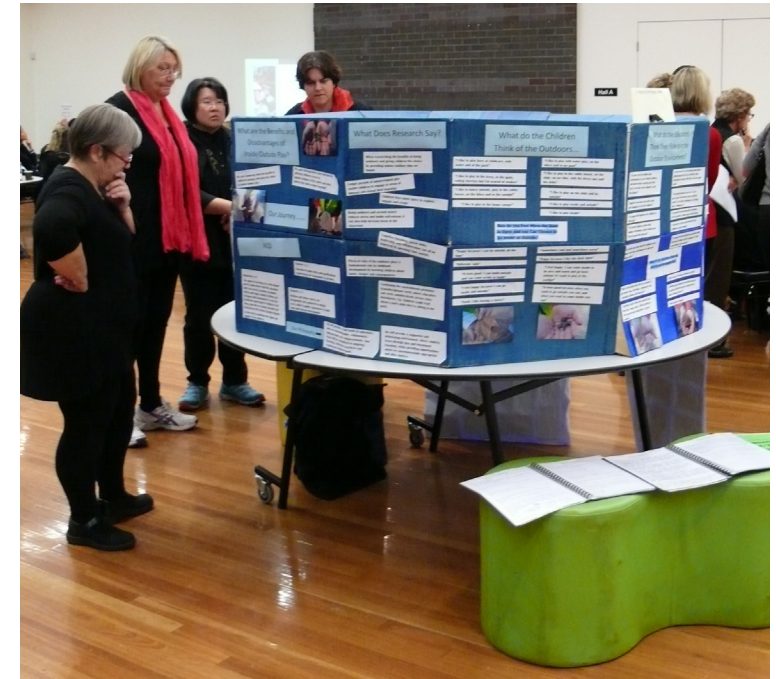
Jamie shared an example of sharing pedagogical documentation in practice from her own experience:



How can we engage in pedagogical documentation in our (South) Australian context?

'When I was teaching in a preschool classroom we decided to hold a learning gallery in our room. We (educators and children) invited families, colleagues, and university faculty to come for a few hours to see what we have been up to and to engage in dialogue about our learning. During this time as visitors explored our documentation we asked questions to spark dialogue. The children were also involved so they were able to experience first-hand how their learning impacted on the thinking of others. This empowered children as they were respected as active agents in the learning of the community. After our learning gallery, we reflected the next day about the conversations we had and what we learned. This led into a brainstorming session about the next line of inquiry.'

We engaged in this practice on a larger scale throughout the Universal Access project during our Learning Expo. At this time educators shared examples of their work including their emergent inquiry projects with children and their educator research. This experience was a wonderful opportunity to not only see what other centres were doing, but also to engage in critical dialogue about our work, to engage with others perspectives and to understand multiple possibilities.



What are the challenges in documenting pedagogically?

With any new venture, it is important to talk about the challenges that others have faced, and the strategies they have used to overcome them. Some common challenges that educators reported follow:

a. Making time for documentation

Making documentation a part of the everyday practice for children and educators and the time to do it is part of educators' work. Using pedagogical documentation communicates value in and the importance of learning as a process.

Pedagogical documentation is not just a window into the learning that has happened but it also supports the learning by promoting dialogue that takes learning deeper. Settings do well when they organise time for educators to meet and discuss what they have observed and their teaching actions, to develop a joint proposal about the next stage, a hypothesis that can be used as a lens through which to consider and then progress children's learning. Educators need time to document the learning as it progresses, perhaps during their joint planning and reflection time. Having sufficient time is

integral to planning. The achievement of the National Quality Standards are underpinned by making time for educators to document and reflect on learning. Documentation is not something educators do that is additional to their current program. It is a different way of undertaking that program. Documenting together and individually is part of everyday activities for children and their educators.

b. Deciding what forms of documentation to use

When you are ready to document you need to think about what form to use. Do you write it up in a floor book, make or take notes to enable the preparation of a learning story, get out the camera, I-pad or video recorder? Perhaps when confronted with this dilemma, think about the suitability of the medium to show the progress of the learning. For example, an exhibition in which a child's learning is documented in mosaic form might be accompanied by the stages of the project so the viewer can see learning in progress. The child's thinking about their work and the ideas s/he had that prompted it could also be placed with the mosaic.

What are the challenges in documenting pedagogically?

In another example, a video could show a group performance with an accompanying description about that performance and its origins

We think that the best way to document is to present the learning in a way that enables sharing, both the final form as well as the learning in progress, and which includes children's voices about their work.

c. Deciding what to document and when

There are lots of examples of recording something in notes or a drawing, in clay or in a dance however the initial record may not always progress beyond that first rough form. It is necessary to make choices about what is best able to convey the learning, to decide what is most meaningful.

Victoria shared an example she recently observed during a visit to a centre when she saw that the educators had displayed all the early forms of documentation from a recent inquiry, notes, photos, drawings, maps, observations. The educators also displayed notes from their team meeting when they discussed all this documentation, and after

considerable discussion decided on a direction for the inquiry. The next stages were also displayed.

There is a risk in being driven to record because each child's folder needs to contain a certain number or type of items. How might drivers such as this one be responded to? Educators often keep a record of documentation to monitor documentation of each child in their room.

When educators spend time observing, documenting, and then interpreting learning it makes their time with children more meaningful and responsive. In this way children develop theories about their world that make the events and objects they engage with meaningful (Rinaldi 2006, in Forman & Fyfe 2012, p. 283).

Emergent curriculum and pedagogical documentation go hand in hand. When children's big questions that underlie their immediate interests are built upon and followed, documentation tracks the learning that is occurring as it occurs, and informs future direction.

What are the challenges in documenting pedagogically?

d. Considering how to involve families in pedagogical documentation

Obtaining parents' perspectives on their children's learning can be challenging. Some educators said that they encourage the children to show their parents what they have achieved.

In one example, educators had ready a letter template to the child that can easily be filled in. Another educator put the signing book at the rear of the room so that parents would need to pass by the documentation. Yet another recently reported that they emailed documentation so that children had the chance to talk at home with their families about their learning at a time outside the rush of pick up and drop off times.

Parents are most likely to participate when every aspect of the site indicates to them that they are welcome and valued, competent members of the setting community. The site also conveys that parent participation is vital to their

child's learning, and indeed the quality of the community in which they live.

We do this by involving families as valued contributors to documentation rather than just passive recipients. This can include asking families to contribute on a section of their child's learning story on their reflections or a provocation on a documentation panel with space for families and visitors to reflect and share their understandings about learning as we have seen in some of our previous examples.

Provocation Eight:

As a team reflect upon the following questions:

- What challenges have you encountered personally, and with your team, in documenting children's learning? List them and consider each.
- What strategies have you developed?
- What is still challenging you?

What are the challenges in documenting pedagogically?

Providing support through leadership

Leadership is also highly relevant. Leaders can organise and lead their settings so that pedagogical documentation is the setting way of working with children. They can provide the time for the conversations and planning and reflection. Leadership can help to provide the resources required to build learning environments that provoke children's interests and stimulate them to respond.

Finally, leadership can work with educators to enable the structures in the setting to enable pedagogical documentation. For example, they can organise routines in a staggered manner so that educators can spend time with smaller groups of children, and be available when family members are present for conversations that seek their perspectives.

Team members can also lead upwards by developing a proposal to put to leadership if their site is currently not using this approach, and perhaps suggesting a visit to a centre strong in the use of pedagogical documentation.

Provocation Nine:

What challenges have you experienced in either leading your team to engage in documenting pedagogically, or as the member of a team wanting to move towards employing pedagogical documentation?

What strategies have you employed to achieve this goal at your site?



Conclusion

In this e-book we have shared our own learning journey on pedagogical documentation as a framework to assist educators in engaging in their own learning and reflection. In particular, we have focused on:

1. Questions about our pedagogy:
 - a. *'How can we help children find the meaning of what they do, what they encounter, what they experience?'*
 - b. *'How can we do this for ourselves?'*
(Rinaldi 2006, p. 63),
2. Pedagogical documentation and how it is part of rich learning processes and the creation of meaning, and
3. The qualities of the environments in which pedagogical documentation is well supported.

We hope that this resource inspires your team to come together to reflect and co-construct an understanding about their practice and use of pedagogical documentation. This resource has been designed to be used on multiple occasions. Returning to the provocations will provide teams with the opportunity to continue their learning and growth in deeper and more meaningful ways. We are living in an exciting time in education where we all have an opportunity to help shape its direction.

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Appendix A

Experiences as a child within educational and care contexts (i.e. home, school, preschool, childcare)		Professional experiences and events (i.e. professional development, reading of literature or research, teacher education, working with a colleague or team)	
Significant experience	Underpinning philosophical perspectives concerning: Nature of knowledge, how people learn, image of the child, role of the educator.	Significant experience	Underpinning philosophical perspectives concerning: Nature of knowledge, how people learn, image of the child, role of the educator.

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