



The SEAL Community Newsletter No.18, Autumn 2018

Welcome!

Welcome to another newsletter from the SEAL Community. If you missed our earlier newsletters, you'll find them in the Newsletter archive on the SEAL Community members' pages. For example, the theme of the first (Keeping SEAL alive and growing) may be of interest if you have been using SEAL resources for some years and are looking to refresh your approach. Also of particular interest may be the second, which focuses on diversity, the fifth which is about early years, the sixth which is about SEAL in secondary schools. In newsletters 16 and 17 we featured some resources for developing self-regulation which have proved very popular.

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News Update

Anti-Bullying Week 2018

Save the date! Anti-Bullying Week this year is happening from Monday 12th – Friday 16th November and has the theme 'Choose Respect'. It will again kick off with ['Odd Socks Day'](#) on the 12th November

Cuts in time dedicated to PSHE and PE

A significant cut in the number of hours schools teach PE and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) at school has raised concerns about pupils' health.

Times Educational Supplement analysis of Department for Education figures has revealed major drops in the time allocated to both subjects. According to its analysis of England's school workforce statistics, between 2011 and 2017 the number of teacher hours dedicated to PE in state-funded secondary schools fell by 5 per cent at key stage 3 and by 21 per cent at KS4.

And PHSE lessons have reduced even more dramatically, with teacher hours devoted to the subject down by one third (33 per cent) for KS3, and almost halved (47 per cent) for KS4 pupils.

Character back as a political priority in England



New-ish education secretary Damian Hinds has set out his priorities for the education system. And yes, “character, resilience and well-being” is back. A recent DfE document reveals the return to centre stage of a policy area that was a pet concern of Nicky Morgan, before being pushed to the sidelines by Justine Greening.

Together with “academic standards to match key nations”, and “technical education to rival Germany’s”, it completes a trio of bullet points that explain what it means to have a world-class education system.

And the issue of character also appears third among the list of seven questions that DfE civil servants are told to ask themselves when considering what their teams do and don't do: “Will this develop character and wellbeing?”

Teaching about health and relationships to be compulsory in England



The government confirmed in July that it will be compulsory for all schools to teach the health and relationships aspects of PSHE education from 2020. When announcing the requirements, the Education Secretary encouraged schools to build on what they're already doing well through PSHE rather than ‘starting from scratch’.

Every child, in every school, will be guaranteed a PSHE education that covers mental health and wellbeing, physical health (including healthy lifestyles and first aid) and learning about safe, healthy relationships, including understanding consent and negotiating life online.

A consultation is now open until November on the accompanying draft regulations and guidance.

There is much in the draft requirements for what pupils should know by the end of primary and secondary school that is relevant to SEAL, and when the guidance is finalised we will map the SEAL content against the required learning outcomes. But please do respond to the consultation to flag up a very important missing element. The document asks that pupils learn how to 'recognise and talk about their emotions', but apart from a brief mention of relaxation does not include learning how to manage strong feelings such as anxiety and anger – that is, self-regulation. Another important omission is that learning how to resolve conflict appears in the secondary requirements, but not the primary ones.

Relationship and sexuality lessons to be compulsory in Wales from age five

Following a [review](#) of sex education by the Welsh government it was announced in May that relationship and sexuality education (RSE) is to be a statutory part of the school curriculum from 2022 for five- to 16-year-olds.

Currently in Wales, sex and relationship education is a statutory part of the basic curriculum but schools are able to decide how the subject is taught.

In a statement the Welsh government said that for some schools this "doesn't stretch beyond the biological aspects of human relationships".

"RSE represents a major departure from these traditional approaches because it broadens this area of study and places an emphasis on forming and maintaining healthy, happy and fulfilling relationships," the statement adds.

The content of RSE is presumably being developed as part of the Welsh Curriculum Review. When it is finalised, we will map SEAL content against the requirements.

More than half of mental health referrals are for primary aged children

Children as young as three are being referred by nurseries and schools for professional support with their mental health, the NSPCC has learned.

And more than half of referrals from schools in England for mental health support for children came from primary schools

- The number of education settings seeking professional mental health help for pupils up by more than a third in the last three years, NSPCC says
- 56 per cent of referrals were for primary school children
- Total referrals from education settings for children aged 11 and under rose from 13,687 in 2014/15 to 20,137 in 2017/18- though the actual numbers will be much higher as only 53 out of 66 NHS Trusts supplied data.

The average age of the youngest child at referral was around three-and-a half in 2017/18.



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The charity's figures are based on a Freedom of Information request it made to NHS trusts in England.

In almost a third of referrals for which data is available, children were denied specialist treatment from Child and Adolescent Mental health Services (CAMHS) as they did not meet the criteria for support.

One in five pupils has low self-regard

A study, based on 2018 national data from PASS surveys (Pupil Attitudes to Self and School) – the largest of its kind in the UK, involving more than 850,000 pupils – found that 19% of all pupils exhibit low self-regard and doubt their capabilities as learners.

More than one in twenty children (6%) exhibit extremely poor attitudes to their learning and have very low self-regard, which makes them especially vulnerable.

The study, conducted by GL Assessment, found that boys were just as likely to have negative feelings about themselves as girls. There was little variation between genders, although girls are slightly more positive when it comes to attitudes to attendance (77% are highly satisfied compared to 71% for boys) and preparedness for learning (79% versus 70%).

Sizeable minorities of children are dissatisfied with their school and are poorly motivated. Just under a fifth (18%) have negative feelings about their school, with 15% exhibiting a low work ethic and the same proportion having poor attitudes to attendance. Children tended to exhibit increasingly negative attitudes as they got older.

The findings add to evidence from other studies such as the OECD's 2015 PISA survey that found that UK youngsters were among the least satisfied and most anxious in the developed world.

Resource round-up

New resource compendiums

Anti-bullying week approaches, so we've uploaded a collection of resources to help children understand and respect difference. At <http://sealcommunity.org/member-resource/resources-help-children-respect-and-value-difference> you'll find a moving video, a secondary PowerPoint resource created by pupils for pupils and a bunch of nice activity ideas based on children's books. There are also ideas on helping older primary and secondary pupils to understand why we sometimes use hate speech-speech which attacks a person or group on the basis of attributes such as race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, or gender. Find them at <http://sealcommunity.org/member-resource/tackling-hate-speech>.

For Getting on and Falling out we've a new picture book list covering friendship, anger and seeing things from different perspectives, at <http://sealcommunity.org/member-resource/new-picture-book-ideas-getting-and-falling-out>

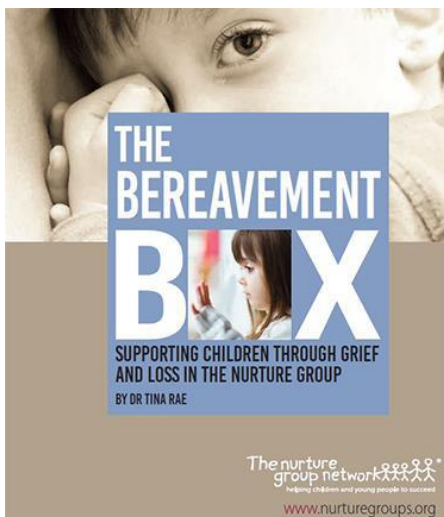
Since the last newsletter we've also uploaded resources for building relationships and a sense of belonging for a new class. See <http://sealcommunity.org/member-resource/all-about-me-paper-lunch-bag-try-these-great-new-back-school-resources>

Fun comic strips for under 12s- great for the whiteboard



YoungMinds has been working with the Beano to create Mandi, a new character specifically created to engage children with mental health. Mandi made her debut in the 80th Anniversary edition of Beano, guest edited by comedian and children's writer David Walliams. Mandi's storylines will see her deal with everyday issues that can create stress and anxiety in children - things like body image, and whether you're pretty or not, bullying, social media pressures. In her first appearance in the comic, Mandi gets her first mobile. Find it at <https://www.beano.com/posts/mandi-and-her-mobile>

The Bereavement Box



This resource from the Nurture Group network provides tried and tested tools, strategies and ideas for exploring loss with children and young people. The 60 cards cover three key areas:

Understanding – this includes understanding the nature of death and the fact that it is permanent, the grief process, life cycles and the feelings and behaviours we may have as a result of the death of a loved one and how to manage these

Remembering – this includes a range of activities such as journaling, making memory books and mobiles, writing letters, recalling good and sad times, special times collage, memory chains and candles

Celebrating – this includes designing memorial gardens, the balloon ceremony, portraits, poems and pictures.

The box can be ordered at <https://www.nurtureuk.org/our-services/publications/programmes/beravement-box> and costs £60.

The Wellbeing Stories

These six stories have been written to help 9 – 13 year olds deal with some of the issues they face, such as test anxiety, loss and transition, so that problems are less likely to escalate.



The unique feature of these stories are the ten characters representing different types of positive and negative thinking. Examples are:

- The Worry Wart, who can metamorphose into a Panic Monster
- The two-faced Sprite of Bad Stories (SoBS), who sees the worst in everyone and everything
- The Mindfulness Magician, who helps us stay in the here and now
- The Beautiful Blessings who is thankful rather than resentful

Every story comes with a teacher toolkit of activities, and a family toolkit. Both enable young people to further explore the issues raised in a safe and constructive way.

More information from www.wellbeingstories.com

Updated Disrespect NoBody resources on preventing teenage relationships abuse

The Home Office and PSHE Association have updated these free resources to support the government's Disrespect NoBody campaign. The campaign, and resources, aim to help young people understand and maintain healthy relationships while learning about consent and what constitutes controlling behaviour, violence and abuse. By promoting healthy attitudes and behaviours at an early age, the campaign seeks to challenge damaging ones and prevent the onset of domestic violence in adults in the long term.

The resources aim to help young people develop key skills and attributes such as empathy, respect, communication and negotiation so that they can enjoy healthy relationships as they grow up and in adulthood.

The pack includes:

- Discussion guides, lesson plans and ready-made template slide decks on three topics: relationship abuse, sharing sexual images and consent
- Interactive classroom activities, including agony aunt responses, true or false questions and myth busting activities

Find it at <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/disrespect-nobody-teaching-resources-preventing>

What works in tackling bullying?

The DfE have published qualitative research to understand anti-bullying practices schools have found effective. These include approaches to tackling bullying generally and more specific types of bullying, for example:

- racial bullying
- special educational needs and disability bullying
- lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender bullying

The report contains common themes found throughout the research and seven case studies. It's intended to be used as a resource by schools and other stakeholders looking for examples of anti-bullying practices.

Find it at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/approaches-to-preventing-and-tackling-bullying?utm_campaign=13193937&utm_content=weeklyregister&utm_source=exact-target&utm_medium=email

It was only banter

This moving film about name calling and bullying from HumanUtopia is a great resource for anti-bullying work in secondary schools.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=653B2hpkaZ4>

NSPCC 'Making sense of relationships' lesson plans

This free pack for 9-16 year olds includes three lessons to support transition and changing friendships at key stage 2 and six lessons exploring healthy and unhealthy relationships at key stage 3. The three lessons at key stage 4 address issues such as abusive behaviour in relationships and pornography. Other themes explored include consent, challenging gender stereotypes, relationship values and much more.

An accompanying Teacher Guide outlines how to plan the lessons into a PSHE curriculum and provides advice on safeguarding pupils, signposting to additional support and communicating with parents about lesson aims and content.

Find the resources at <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/safeguarding/schools-protecting-children-abuse-neglect/making-sense-of-relationships>

Home Office #knifefree lesson plans for KS3&4

The free-to-download lessons – one for key stage 3 and one for key stage 4 – challenge the myths and communicate the realities of carrying a knife to secondary school students, using real life stories of young people's experiences as a basis for discussion.

https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/home-office-knifefree-lesson-plans-ks34?utm_source=PSHE%20Knifefree%20lesson%20plan%20promotion&utm_campaign=%23knifefree&utm_content=Knifefree%20lesson%20plans

Kindness Curriculum

We've previously featured the Kindness Curriculum resources from the Random Acts of Kindness organisation. Now there is a complete new Foundation to Y6 curriculum (scheme of work, lesson plans) especially designed for the UK. Find it free at https://rak-materials.s3.amazonaws.com/uk/RAK_in_the_UK_kindness_curriculum.pdf

Sharing practice

How to build empathy in the classroom, one story at a time

Jon Biddle is a year 6 teacher at Moorlands primary academy in Norfolk. Here he writes about the school's work with EmpathyLab.



As a teacher, I've long been aware of the importance of using stories to help develop children's understanding of other people. But I hadn't thought about how to embed it more systematically into the classroom until I was at an English conference in 2015. There, I was introduced to research showing how reading fiction provides an excellent training for young people in developing and practising empathy and theory of mind, that is, understanding of how other people feel and think.

My school got involved with empathy work as part of a long-term strategy to improve children's attitudes to school, each other and the local community. The five EmpathyLab topics that teachers were encouraged to explore were friendship, loneliness, bullying, refugees and homelessness. At Moorlands, my year 6 class focused on refugees first. We spent time reading books, such as *Boy Overboard* by Morris Gleitzman and *Welcome to Nowhere* by Elizabeth Laird, as well as non-fiction including *Who Are Refugees and Migrants?* by Michael Rosen.

The impact on the children was striking. It was the first thing that they spoke to their parents about at the end of the day and they immediately wanted to have a class meeting to think of ways that they could help. Several of them talked about how when they had seen stories about refugees on the news they didn't really pay attention before, but felt they now would.

The school invited speakers from Amnesty International and the local charity Great Yarmouth Refugee Outreach Support (Gyros). Each pupil wrote a letter to a child refugee from Syria as part of Amnesty's Write for Rights campaign, and the two Gyros representatives (who were both refugees) shared their stories of fleeing home.



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To hear first-hand accounts about life as a refugee was a unique experience for the children, and caused a genuine shift in their attitudes. Before getting involved with EmpathyLab, we might have just tried to raise some money, which is perhaps more akin to sympathy rather than empathy.

The school also organised a refugee sleepover for the year 6 students. They were told they could only bring five items with them in a plastic bag to give them a small insight into what it would be like to be a refugee. This led to much discussion and, even though they knew they would be going home in the morning, many talked about how difficult it was to choose.

The focus on empathy across the year led to an improvement both in their emotional vocabulary and comprehension skills. The Amnesty letters were undoubtedly the most powerful pieces of written work my students have produced, simply because they knew there would be a genuine audience for their work. Year 6 students have since been involved with planning lessons about refugees for other year groups, which has created a real sense of cooperation and teamwork among the class. I have also been struck by the thought that empathy had never been taught explicitly to them before. One child told me: "I've always actually had empathy with other people, I just didn't know what it was called."

The work shifted the children's attitudes to the world and their place in it. "I used to think that refugees were different from us. Now I don't.", one said. Another said, "This was probably some of my favourite work that we've ever done. We're learning about the real world and how we're all part of it. Like, everyone, not just us and the people we know."

This year, the whole school will be involved with the project, focusing on loneliness. One of the year 4 classes, inspired by the main character in *The Old Woman Who Named Things* by Cynthia Rylant, has already arranged and hosted a tea party for 30 elderly residents from the local village. It's just one example of how a focus on empathy has improved relationships between our school and the local community.

Going forward, the project has made me think carefully about the books I read to the classes and those the school buys for the library. Not all books in a classroom need a message, but when they have one, we must be prepared to discuss it with children. As one parent said to me when asked for feedback, "I love how you're teaching them about the wider world and the difference that they can make to it, not just getting them ready for SATs". That's something I believe all teachers want to do.

Resources:

EmpathyLab have produced a guide to 21 books to build empathy in primary children. We've uploaded it here <http://sealcommunity.org/member-resource/read-empathy-guide>

The National Literacy Trust have a booklist of books for work on refugees at http://www.wordsforlife.org.uk/refugee-week-book-list?mc_cid=a26d20b581&mc_eid=9a4650c3b1. One of the best is *A Story like the Wind* by Gill Lewis- a stunning illustrated story of refugees fleeing their war-torn homeland. Words and illustrations intertwine to tell the story of Rami and his fellow travellers sharing a fable to escape their peril and reignite their hope against tyranny.

For work on loneliness, try *Voices in the Park* by Anthony Browne. In the book a visit to the park is seen through the eyes of a boy and girl, Charles and Smudge, and both their parents. Charles, isolated by his overbearing mother, longs for a friend. He finds brief companionship in Smudge. You could start exploring the book by discussing how the stylistic features – font, illustration, text size – reveal the characters’ feelings. How do we know that Charles is lonely? Discuss how he could talk about how he feels in relation to Smudge: what might she suggest that he do? Using role-play to bring their conversation to life could help get children talking about their own experiences.

Practical tools and tips



In recent newsletters we’ve featured ideas on how to help children learn to regulate their attention and emotions - self-regulation. But how can these ideas be applied at home? Try sharing these top tips.

Seven Steps to Building Self-Regulation Skills - at home

1. Stop and think. Instead of yelling “no!” when your child is growing upset, overexcited, or disruptive, ask him to “stop and think”: pause, take a break, and reflect for a moment before acting.
 - *Game tip: “Simon Says” can help children remember to think before acting.*
2. Focus, pay attention, and listen. When your child is talking to another person, remind her to stop what she’s doing, look at who is talking, and “hold on to” her ideas rather than interrupting.
 - *Game tip: “I Spy” and “Name that Sound” can help children practice looking and listening carefully.*
3. Remember directions and follow through with daily tasks. For multistep chores such as setting the table or getting ready for school in the morning, post a list of steps in that area or make up a song to help your child remember what he has to do.

➤ *Game tip: “Going on a Bear Hunt” and “Going to Grandma’s House” can help children practice keeping track of and updating lists of items.*

4. Plan and set goals. When making plans, talk through them with your child. For example, if she wants to have a birthday party, write out list of steps (sending out invitations, buying decorations, making a cake, etc.) you both have to accomplish before the big day. Set a timeline and cross off tasks together as you both complete them.

5. Practice being patient. Explain to your child what you do when you have to wait for something. Try out different strategies for the two of you when waiting at the doctor’s office or in line at the grocery store, such as counting all the red things you see or singing a song.

6. Manage difficult feelings. Depending on your child’s age, when he grows upset encourage him to take a deep breath, count backwards from 10 or 20, go for a walk, or write down his feelings. When you grow frustrated along with your child, practice these strategies together to help manage your own feelings.

7. Deal effectively with conflicts. To help your child listen and understand other people’s perspectives, teach her to use “I messages” (such as “I feel angry when...”) and “say it backs” (such as “You’re saying to me that...”). When she’s upset with someone, brainstorm compromises together. When you have your own conflict to resolve, explain your thought process. Remind your children that conflicts are normal, but that it’s important to solve them in peaceful and kind ways.

Interesting new research

Independent evaluations highlight the ‘significant and valuable impact’ of The Prince William Award



Evaluation reports into The Prince William Award have found that it has significant impact on socio-emotional development, attitudes to learning, resilience and outcomes and results.

The awards programme, backed by the Duke of Cambridge and run by national education charity SkillForce, uses predominantly ex-Service men and women to help children and young people develop self-confidence and good character through interactive lessons and community projects.

Piloted across 35 primary and secondary schools in the 2016/17 academic year, the programme was subject to two rigorous independent evaluations; one by Chrysalis Research and the other by Newcastle University.

The evaluations looked at the impact the programme had on nearly 1,000 students aged between six and 14, using student and teacher surveys, school assessment and monitoring data and a standardised referenced behaviour scale known as DESSA.

Key findings from The Chrysalis Research Report found that:

- The proportion of pupils for whom social-emotional development was identified as an area of need reduced from 47 to 15 per cent, and the proportion of children with high levels of socio-emotional competency, increased from four to 22 per cent.
- Three quarters of the teachers and leaders highlighted that pupils' confidence and self-esteem improved 'a lot'. 67 per cent of pupils noticed improvements in their confidence and self-esteem.
- 83 per cent of the programme participants stated that taking part in the programme had helped them do better in their learning.
- Analysis of primary school pupils' attainment before and after the programme suggests that participating pupils made good progress in their studies. At the end of the programme, 20 per cent of pupils participating primary school pupils were doing better in Maths, 24 per cent in reading, and 19 per cent in writing, compared to their pre-programme assessments.

A second report completed by Newcastle University looked more closely at how the programme helped young people be more resilient.

It found that:

- Children who participated in the pilot of the Prince William Award reported higher levels of mental toughness post-Award when compared to pre-Award
- Teachers reported significant reductions in behaviour difficulties post-Award when compared to pre-Award
- Children perceived there to be several benefits of the Award, including improved confidence, management of emotions, perseverance, interpersonal skills, and self-reflection

Following the pilot programme, The Prince William Award is being formally launched for all schools in the country.

Mindfulness and yoga for primary pupils

This **randomised controlled trial** assessed the benefits of introducing yoga and mindfulness into elementary (primary) classrooms.

Alessandra Bazzano and colleagues worked with a public school in New Orleans to add mindfulness and yoga to the school's existing empathy-based programme for pupils needing extra support. Third grade (Year 4) pupils were screened for symptoms of anxiety (using the Screen for Child Anxiety Related Emotional Disorders scale), and were then randomly split into an intervention group (n=20) and a control group (n=32). Pupils in the intervention group participated in a yoga and mindfulness programme for eight weeks, while the control group received the standard care, which included counselling and activities from a school social worker. All pupils filled out

questionnaires to measure quality of life and life satisfaction across a number of different variables before, during and after the treatment period.

Pupils in the intervention group showed a significantly greater improvement in psychosocial and emotional quality of life compared with pupils who received standard care.

Bazzano, A. et al (2018) Effect of mindfulness and yoga on quality of life for elementary school students and teachers: results of a randomized controlled school-based study *Psychology Research and Behavior Management* [Volume 2018:11](#) Pages 81—89

Mixed results for Zippy's Friends programme



Zippy's Friends is a whole-class social and emotional learning (SEL) programme that aims to develop children's coping skills, including their ability to manage stressful situations. It is an internationally-used, well-developed programme aimed at class teachers of children in Years 1 and 2, run by the independent charity Partnership for Children.

This research aimed to test the impact of Zippy's Friends on academic attainment (in reading) and emotional self-regulation among Year 2 pupils.

Zippy's Friends consists of 24 weekly 45-minute sessions delivered by class teachers over one school year. Six modules cover stories about a pet stick insect called Zippy and a group of young children who are his friends. Children are actively engaged in the stories through questioning, and learning is consolidated using games, activities, role-playing, and discussion.

The evaluation involved 83 schools from five English local authorities, and 3,904 children. Schools were randomly allocated to an intervention group to teach Zippy's Friends or a control group to continue teaching as normal. Interviews

Children receiving Zippy's Friends made small improvements in teacher-reported self-regulated learning, compared to other pupils. The project found no evidence that Zippy's Friends improved reading outcomes or emotional self-regulation. BUT there was evidence that schools randomised to the control condition increased their social and emotional learning (SEL) provision over the course of the trial such that they delivered a similar amount of new provision to the intervention group. Intervention schools increased SEL from 41 to 65 minutes, whereas control group schools increased SEL from 37 to 55 minutes per week. This means that Zippy's Friends was not really being compared to 'business as usual'.

Live theatre promotes empathy and tolerance better than film



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In this study schools in Arkansas in the US were assigned by lottery to receive free tickets to attend one of five live theatre performances over a two-year period. Grade 9 (Year 10) classes from participating schools were then randomly assigned to attend the live performances or not attend. In addition, for two of the five experiments, a second treatment group was added in which pupils were randomly assigned to watch a film version of the theatre play. The average age of the pupils in the treatment and control groups was 14 years old.

The impact to pupils of the live theatre trip was measured on five outcomes: tolerance, social perspective taking (the ability to understand others' feelings and perspectives), and knowledge of the content and vocabulary of the plays. Pupils in the theatre trip treatment groups scored higher for levels of tolerance and social perspective taking. Their knowledge of the plot and vocabulary the plays was also greater than pupils in the control group.

However, watching a film did not produce benefits, and as the film-viewing group also left school for a field trip, the results suggest that the educational benefits to pupils come from the experience of watching live theatre, and not simply from leaving school for a trip.

Greene, J. P. (2018) The Play's the Thing: Experimentally Examining the Social and Cognitive Effects of School Field Trips to Live Theater Performances. *Educational Researcher* Volume: 47 issue: 4, page(s): 246-254