

Building Intercultural Bridges

Mackay Regional Conference

August 2017

Please read the following paragraph out loud to the person next to you.

- ▶ Τα αγγλικά είναι τόσο δύσκολο για μένα. Κάθε μέρα ακούω ανθρώπους που χρησιμοποιούν λέξεις που δεν καταλαβαίνω και σε περιβάλλοντα που δεν έχουν νόημα για μένα. Δάσκαλος, πρέπει να βλέπετε μου για ό, τι αυτό μπορεί να γίνει και δεν μου τα μειονεκτήματα της μάθησης. Είναι απλά αγγλικά για σας, αλλά το «all Greek to me!»

**How do you feel right
now?**

Why are you feeling this way?

Something to remember.....

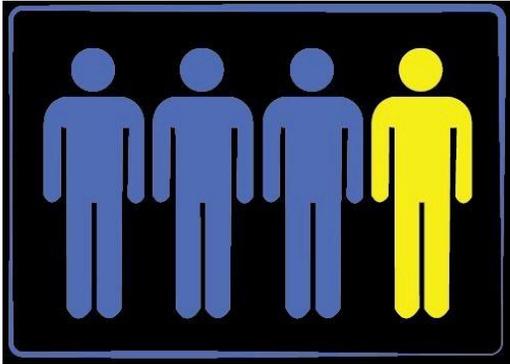
Greek

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English

- ▶ English is so hard for me. Every day I am listening to people using words I don't understand and in contexts that don't make sense to me. Teacher, I need you to see me for what I can become and not for my learning disadvantages. It's just English to you, but it's 'all Greek to me!'

A snapshot of the cohort diversity.



One in four students are EAL/D learners



Some of these students were born in Australia



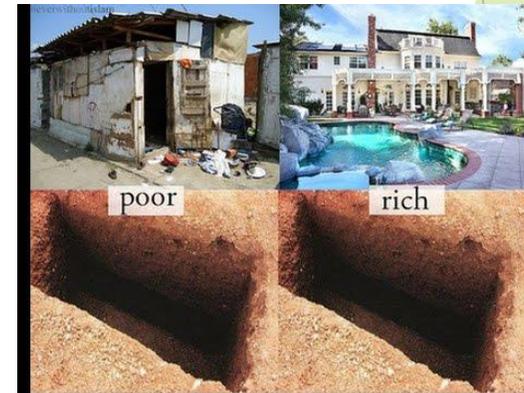
Some have had little to no schooling in their country of birth.



Some have experienced the trauma of war



They can start school at any time of the year



They can come from advantaged and disadvantaged backgrounds

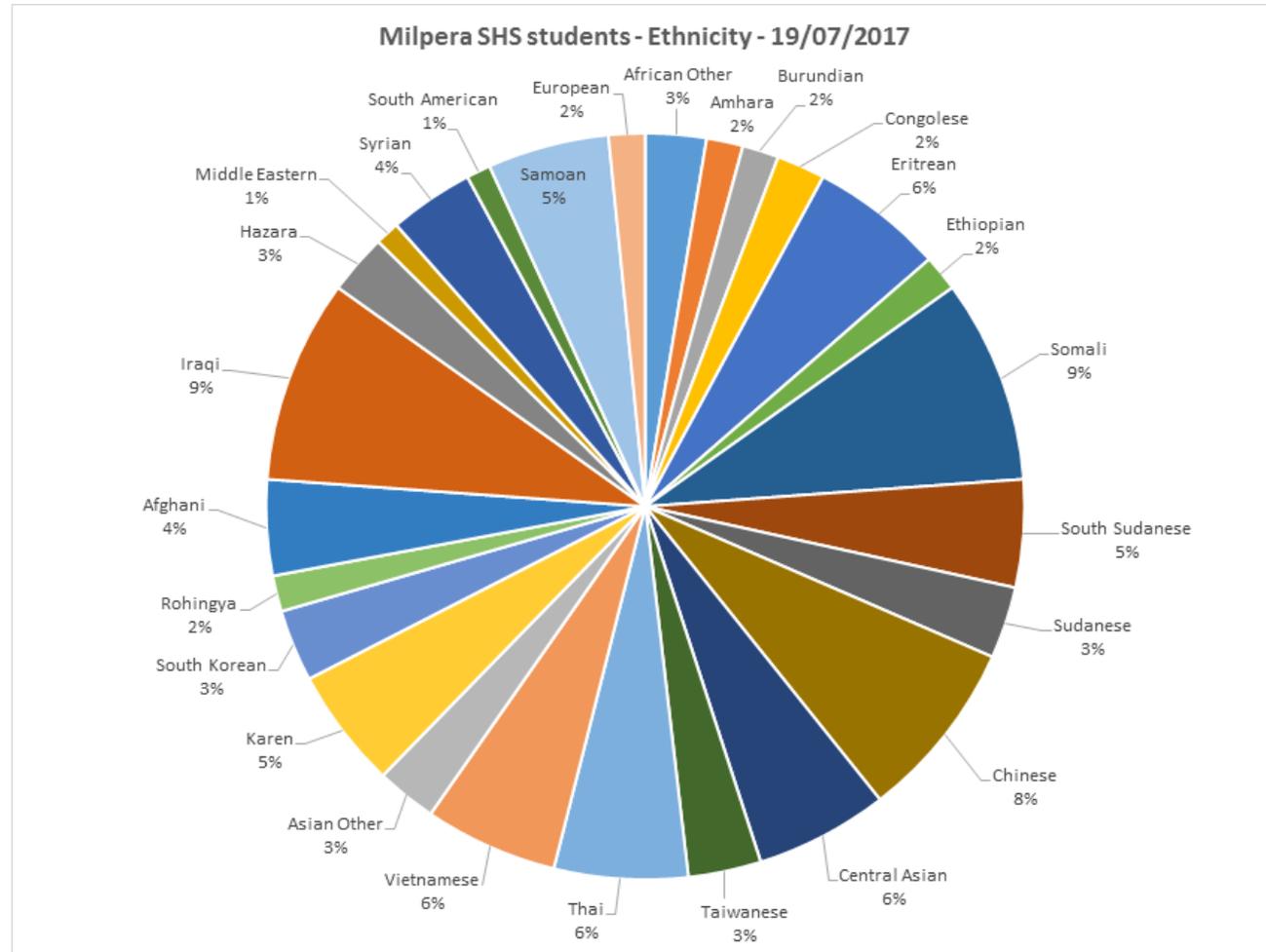
What can I do with
this information in
my mainstream
classroom?

Milpera: School context and student diversity.

- ▶ *Milpera is a state high school that focuses on intensive English language teaching and family settlement services.*
- ▶ *The students have very diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds*
- ▶ *Milpera students come from both refugee and migrant backgrounds.*



Milpera student population: 2017



SPC - CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

- ▶ Benefits of it being a primary school in terms of the time needed to make this a cross curriculum project
- ▶ Age of my kids allows them to enter the project with a less perspective
- ▶ Even the though age can vary Milpera kids relate to our kids with a big brother and sister relationship.
- ▶ Milpera kids don't have to struggle with the 'power play' of other teenagers their age.

Power of the Personal Relationship

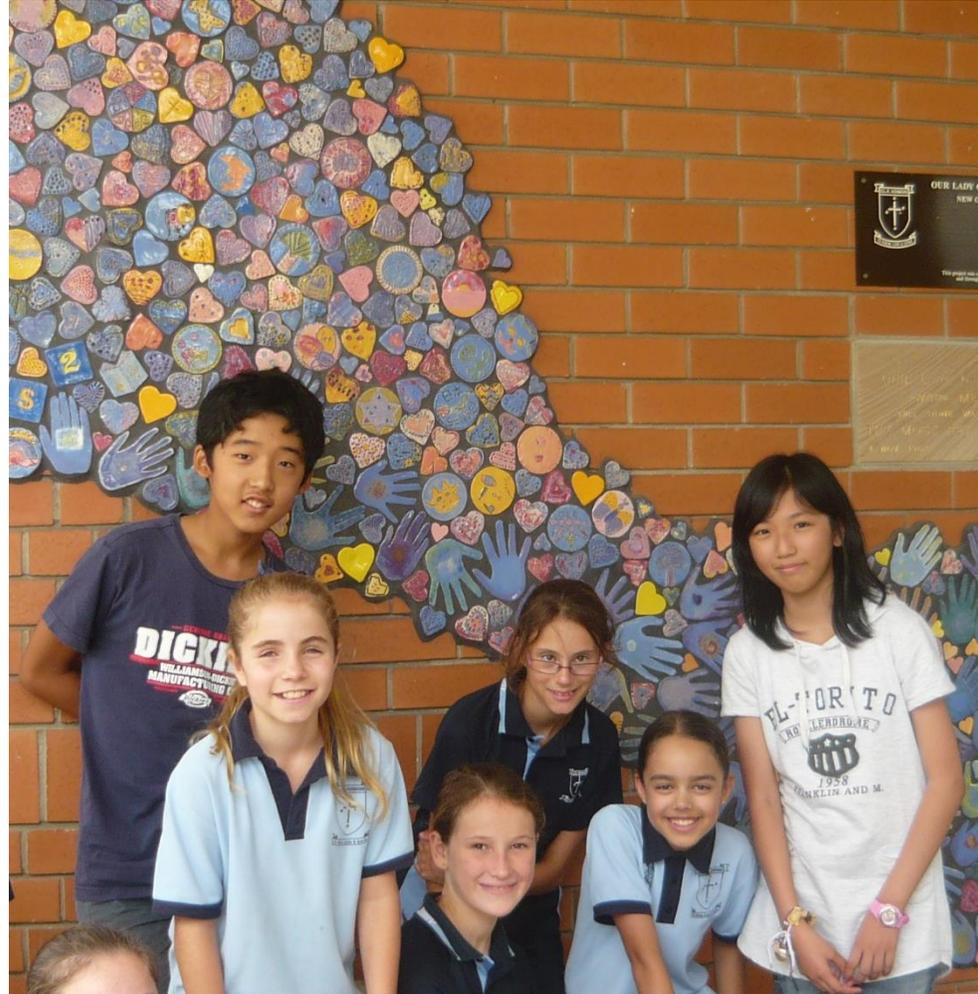
Our project aims to:

- ▶ *Connect students across cultures through a partner writing project.*
- ▶ *Share school visits creating links with the Achievement Standards by focussing on the cultural backgrounds of the writing partners.*
- ▶ *“Grow the conversation” to discover commonalities amongst such cultural diversity.*



Rationale for this project:

- ▶ *To understand how intercultural dialogue can add value to the writing process as experienced at Junior Secondary Level.*
- ▶ *To provide real audience and real purpose to enhance student outcomes within the ACARA Achievement Standards and intercultural sensitivity.*



Curriculum Links for St Peter Chanel

History

Understanding the migration story of our past. White Australia Policy, Populate or Perish, Ten Pound Pom Scheme etc.

Understanding the migration story today including asylum seekers and refugees through the text Boy Overboard by Morris Gleitzman.

Meeting our Milpera buddies and understanding their migration stories. Challenging preconceived ideas about religion and culture.

Achievement Standard

- ▶ By the end of Year 6, students explain the significance of an event/development, an individual and/or group. They identify and describe continuities and changes for different groups in the past and present. They describe the causes and effects of change on society. They compare the experiences of different people in the past. Students describe, compare and explain the diverse characteristics of different places in different locations from local to global scales. They describe how people, places, communities and environments are diverse and globally interconnected and identify the effects of these interconnections over time. Students explain the importance of people, institutions and processes to Australia's democracy and legal system. They describe the rights and responsibilities of Australian citizens and the obligations they may have as global citizens. Students recognise why choices about the allocation of resources involve trade-offs. They explain why it is important to be informed when making consumer and financial decisions. They identify the purpose of business and recognise the different ways that businesses choose to provide goods and services. They explain different views on how to respond to an issue or challenge.
- ▶ Students develop appropriate questions to frame an investigation. They locate and collect useful data and information from primary and secondary sources. They examine sources to determine their origin and purpose and to identify different perspectives in the past and present. They interpret data to identify, describe and compare distributions, patterns and trends, and to infer relationships, and evaluate evidence to draw conclusions. Students sequence information about events, the lives of individuals and selected phenomena in chronological order and represent time by creating timelines. They organise and represent data in a range of formats, including large- and small-scale maps, using appropriate conventions. They collaboratively generate alternative responses to an issue, use criteria to make decisions and identify the advantages and disadvantages of preferring one decision over others. They reflect on their learning to propose action in response to an issue or challenge and describe the probable effects of their proposal. They present ideas, findings, viewpoints and conclusions in a range of communication forms that incorporate source materials, mapping, graphing, communication conventions and discipline-specific terms.

Curriculum links for Geography

- ▶ Where did my penpal come from?
- ▶ Why did they come?
- ▶ What is their country like both geographically and economically?
- ▶ How is it the same or different to Australia?

Content Descriptors - History

- ▶ **Concepts for developing understanding**

- ▶ The content in the history sub-strand provides opportunities for students to develop historical understanding through key concepts including **sources, continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, empathy and significance**. The Year 6 curriculum moves from colonial Australia to the development of Australia as a nation, particularly after 1900. Students explore the factors that led to Federation and the different attitudes to Federation and citizenship at the time (continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives). Through studies of people's experiences of democracy and citizenship over time (perspectives, empathy), students come to understand the significance of events, ideas and people's contributions in influencing development of Australia's system of government (continuity and change, significance). **Students learn about the way of life of people who migrated to Australia since Federation and their contributions to Australia's economic and social development (significance, empathy)**. In learning about Australia as a nation, students compare a range of sources to determine points of view (sources, perspectives).

- ▶ **Inquiry Questions**

- ▶ **Why and how did Australia become a nation?**
- ▶ **How did Australian society change throughout the twentieth century?**
- ▶ **Who were the people who came to Australia? Why did they come?**
- ▶ **What contribution have significant individuals and groups made to the development of Australian society?**

Content Descriptors - Geography

- ▶ **Geography**
- ▶ **Concepts for developing understanding**
- ▶ The content in the geography sub-strand provides opportunities to develop students' understanding of **place, space, environment, interconnection and change**. Students explore the diverse environments, peoples and cultures within the Asia region and at a global level (space, place, environment) and expand their mental map of the world. Students examine Australia's various connections with other countries and places throughout the world, how these are changing, and the effects of these interconnections (interconnections, change).
- ▶ **Inquiry Questions**
- ▶ **How do places, people and cultures differ across the world?**
- ▶ **What are Australia's global connections between people and places?**
- ▶ **How do people's connections to places affect their perception of them?**

What did Tina's students get from the experience?

- ▶ Meeting curriculum outcomes
- ▶ Unpacking preconceived stereotypes
- ▶ Challenging ideas of the world around them
- ▶ Creating a non judgemental environment
- ▶ Seeking acceptance and security with diverse cultural partners and in a new school



Interview Questions

- ▶ Before you met me what did you know about my country?
- ▶ What things are the same for us?
- ▶ What do you want to do after high school?
- ▶ What things make a good and happy life?
- ▶ What do you think about Milpera?

Conclusions: *Did we build a bridge?*



- ▶ *The “bridge” is evidenced by the enjoyment of the shared activities; the pride that students showed in their letter writing process; the skills they learnt from each other; the genuine and appropriate questions used in their interviews.*
- ▶ *The fun we had together.*
- ▶ *Marg to talk about the boys who wanted*
- ▶ *to learn the guitar and the students donating*
- ▶ *Swimming pool Milpera - Minister of Education*
- ▶ *- persuasive writing power of democratic voice*



Practical Resources to Support YOUR project

- ▶ Look for your own 'Milpera' within your own classroom, school or wider community. They will be your greatest resource.
- ▶ Photography books for screen
- ▶ Meet Marly - options to adapt and scaffold activities import a few slides
- ▶ MARGRET TALK ABOUT THE ESL TEACHING BOOKS
- ▶ Tina talk about Meet Marly and the other picture books that build empathy
- ▶ Give my email address to get resources

References & Acknowledgements

References:

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- ▶ Tsai, Y. & Houghton, S. (Eds.) (2010). *Becoming Intercultural: Inside and Outside the classroom*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars.

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