Part 2 of The Art & Science of Teaching
Focus on teaching and learning

Technology as an enabling tool
The benefits and challenges of the Digital Age

Insights of a learning community
Students and teachers reflect on their experiences

Leading Edge + Campus Highlights + Past Connections + Staff News

Volume 2 • October 2015
A note from the Principal

This year in Connections we’re exploring the Art and Science of Teaching.

In the April edition we looked at what it means to be a learning community. Each challenge we face as a community is an opportunity for growth. While we share a set of common goals and values, we are each at different stages of our professional lives.

Educational research shows that high performing schools support their teachers with learning opportunities tailored to their needs and offer time for deep reflection.

In this edition we look at the Peer to Peer classroom observation and reflection program, find out what teachers and students think about our learning community and further consider how technology can be used as an enabling tool.

- Geoff Newton, Principal.

A High Tide Floats All Boats

Teacher observations have traditionally been linked with performance evaluation and top-down leadership. Unsurprisingly these kinds of classroom visits engendered feelings of uncertainty and insecurity.

However research indicates that the observation method remains one of the most valuable instruments of reflection and improvement. The Peer to Peer (P2P), classroom observation and reflection program at Hillbrook is based on the idea that we naturally learn from others. It is focused on improving students’ classroom experiences. As well as inviting colleagues into their classrooms, teachers are encouraged to make their own observations, record their own lessons and conduct student feedback surveys. This provides the data for classroom reflection on their teaching.

The P2P Program provides:
- an increased sense of shared responsibility and collaboration among teachers;
- increased focus on student achievement and improvement of classroom practices;
- increased trust and collegiality among staff;
- the opportunity to reflect on practice as a whole staff and as individuals;
- a welcoming, friendly and supportive atmosphere for new teachers, and;
- the establishment of a professional learning community.

Classroom observers can:
- identify what they wish to look at to improve their teaching and discuss this beforehand with the observed teacher;
- observe general classroom practices and interaction;
- give the observed teacher feedback if agreed prior;
- make a short visit or stay for the duration of a lesson, and;
- tailor the visit to be observational or interactive by negotiation.

Finally the great benefit of this program, aside from the sharing of practice, is that teachers can more deeply reflect on what they observe and incorporate these ideas into their own teaching.

A Mylar print onto clear polyester film using a photograph of herself and integrating personal, meaningful items.

Craig Merritt, Deputy Principal

In the interests of contributing to knowledge beyond Hillbrook, three QUT researchers are undertaking a project, in partnership with our students and teachers, to determine whether, or how, Philosophical Inquiry influences students’ learning and reasoning. They will also look at teacher perception, and the ways in which Philosophical Inquiry changes or enhances teachers’ pedagogical practices. Lots of interesting things to keep an eye on!

What do you find interesting about questions?

Georgie, 7G
You can’t ever run out of questions.

George, 7G

You can’t really learn without questions.

Oliver, 7G

How they have shaped the world and society. For example, Newton asked the question ‘What makes an apple fall?’ and discovered gravity.

Luke, 7G

What is a big question you would like to discuss?

William 7G
Are humans more important than other life forms?

What makes bullies bully?

Marcus, 7G

What is our purpose and why are we here today?

James, 7G

How do we live life to the fullest?

Laura, 7G

Do two wrongs always make a right?

Freya, 7G

What do you find interesting about questions?
One of the things I love about being an educator is the opportunity to keep learning; discovering new ways of teaching in my discipline, developing skills in new areas and learning from other teachers in schools here and around the world.

Over the past year we have read, discussed, debated and practised the ten design questions posed in Marzano’s *The Art and Science of Teaching* (see Connections Vol 1 April 2015, p6). Marzano provides us with a common language for talking about pedagogy, as well as a framework, supported by substantial research, for designing units and reflecting upon lessons. Teaching is as much a quest for knowledge as an opportunity to educate – but it’s an enjoyable quest!

The Science Department at Hillbrook is a collegial and open-minded group. It’s not always easy to get marking done in our staffroom because talk quickly turns to some area of science. This year we have embarked on a Thinking Science programme, our lessons are aimed at progressing students to more advanced thinking at an earlier stage than they would normally. We call this cognitive acceleration and evidence from Australian and British shows that Thinking Science methods really work. Our lessons are underpinned by a collaborative or ‘social constructivist’ framework, therefore they’re an opportunity for everyone to work together and take leadership roles.

A new subject, Philosophical Inquiry, also emerged this year. The Hillbrook learning community is like an orchestra, each student playing their part to create a final piece. Every student creates their unique sound adding to the harmony. The students support one another and make sure everyone has their say and accepts each other’s ideas.

The Hillbrook learning environment allows students to be creative and be themselves without anyone holding them back. Members of the learning community feel safe and reassured that they belong and are equal. This means everyone fits in, whilst learning and having fun.

At last we arrive to the teachers who make learning possible; the conductors. They guide and support students throughout their school years making sure everyone has an unforgettable experience.

In my eyes, a racing yacht in rough waters is a metaphor for our learning community. On this boat there’s a crew made up of teachers and students, each of us performing the responsibilities and tasks required, working as a team. Our common goal is the successful journey through the ocean of our high school learning experience. To me this is the true meaning of a community; a cohesive group of students and teachers of all ages, with many different strengths and abilities, who support one another and create an environment where learning thrives. This is achieved through the unique relationships shared between students and their teachers.

It’s a truly memorable sight to see a group of your peers engrossed in the words of their teacher and in turn when the teacher becomes intrigued and engaged in the opinions of their students.

At Hillbrook the ability to learn is enhanced by the respect and trust students and teachers have for one another. To me, these are the aspects of Hillbrook that make it what it is; a truly great learning experience.
Technology as an Enabling Tool

Miriam Kroker
E-Learning Coordinator

Few television shows have had the cultural impact of Star Trek and this is especially evident in the one-liners that have become part of the English language. Captain Kirk’s opening narration ‘To boldly go where no man has gone before’ had a sense of futuristic wisdom to it. Well, we live in that place now. Wearable technologies, handheld computers, electronic navigation, location settings, voice activated computers and augmented reality are part of our current world.

Teenagers regard ongoing technological advances as the norm and absorb them very easily. The digital environment is natural to them; it is not an optional extra. This is why Hillbrook has taken a deliberately proactive stance that integrates the digital environment into educational practice.

Students can go to amazing places online but they need to follow certain rules to remain safe, so all Year 7 and Year 8 students have participated in a cybersafety program and teachers reinforce the message in the classroom. However, this is simply a beginning because literacy now has a fourth dimension: digital literacy. If students are to survive, let alone thrive, in this new age they require a completely different set of skills. Digital literacy is not a stationary concept. As technology changes, what it means to be digitally literate also evolves to ensure that students develop and apply skills in appropriate new technologies for information discovery, transfer analysis, review and communication. Consequently, we are developing a school wide digital literacy program that explores the legal and ethical dimensions of the online environment and encourages students to use technology in a responsible way. The concept of digital literacy is primarily about literacies rather than digital technologies or digital competence. Digital literacy involves finding, using and disseminating information in a digital world. Most teachers were not born into the Digital Age, so they are learning too. Ongoing learning is now a permanent feature of every teacher’s practice.

At Hillbrook, we believe that pedagogy is the driver; technology is simply the accelerator. It is excellent to see teachers try out a particular strategy in their classroom, reflect on the result and then share the experience so that others can learn from their efforts.

Today’s teenagers have never been more affluent, more exposed to advertising or more able to access a world of information beyond home. Many parents find themselves in the role of guide to the digital environment for their children without having ‘read the manual’ – because there is no manual!

In June this year, social researcher and author, Maggie Hamilton (pictured above), visited Hillbrook to talk to parents, students and teachers about the challenges our children may encounter as they become more independent and to provide parents with increased confidence to navigate the digital landscape.

Maggie acknowledged that technology is here to stay and is not something that can or should be avoided by parents. Her talk to parents focused on ways to encourage young adults to balance online experiences with healthy offline interactions.

In order to find this balance teenagers need positive role models, to be involved in real life activities with their peers that build self-esteem and to see the value of real experiences reflected in their parents’ actions and activities. Parents need to keep the lines of communication open, to discuss the motivations and effects of advertising and encourage their children to think critically about the types of information they find online.

*iPads @ Hillbrook* is an online space where our parent community can gain an understanding of how to assist their children. It has information about topics such as balancing screen time, cyberbullying and inappropriate content.

At Hillbrook students are aware they have the right to use their iPad for learning, but also the responsibility to use it wisely. In class, when students are invited to use their iPads, they initially ‘swipe up’, i.e. clearing their iPads of any applications which are currently open.

There is a mutual understanding between teachers and students that, if a student is seen within an app which has not been opened at teacher direction, they will lose their iPad privileges. There is the temptation of technology through their breaks and enjoy the benefits of face-to-face time with their friends.

The students come up with ‘topic starters’ in class to prompt thought and discussion.

“*Talk-to-a-Friend Thursday***

Hillbrook is a hive of activity at any given break time with students chatting, engaged in sport or co-curricular activity or connecting and studying on their iPads. ‘*Talk-to-a-Friend Thursday***’ students are encouraged to step away from the temptations of technology through their breaks and enjoy the benefits of face-to-face time with their friends.

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“*When was the last time you tried something for the first time?***

“*If you could have any superpower, what would it be?***

“*If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go right now?***

“*How is the world different from 10 years ago?***

“*What would Australia look like if it had been colonised by Jamaica instead of Britain?***
Technology in the classroom

Ancient Greece and QR Codes – Otis Mayocchi (7 Blue)

QR Codes are not a new concept, but they are cool. They are a digital pattern that can be read by an App using the camera built into the device. Once the App reads the code, it sends users to the web page linked to the pattern. QR stands for 'quick response' and the codes are frequently used in advertising, at bus stops, on cars or in magazines.

We used QR Codes in our Ancient Greece museum (The Hillbrookonian) last semester. As part of the assessment for this unit, each student researched an artifact then created a model replica of it. In our Ancient Greece museum (AKA the library) these artifacts were displayed next to a fact sheet that the student created. On the fact sheet, among other information, was a QR code that linked to a recording of the student leading an 'audio tour' of the artifact and its importance. If you want to see an example of one, mine is below.

iPads in English – Emily Suffolk (9 Blue)

During English in Semester One, 9 Blue (pictured below), created a monthly digital newsletter called Cheese - a clever play on words. Although it was initiated by our English teacher, it was all done by the students in our class.

Throughout the semester I wrote four articles for various editions, but the highlight was having the chance to be the first student editor. This meant I had a lot of work to do (more than I expected) as I had to select, collect and edit articles from my classmates, create the design and put it all together so it could be published.

The iPads were a very important part of this process and fortunately made it a lot easier. I was able to communicate with my classmates online and through email, as well as send articles back and forth using apps such as Google Drive. I also put the entire edition together using Adobe Comp, which was easy to use and made it look really good! I could even format articles in advance using placeholders for images and text. Finally, when the editions were finished, they were uploaded to Online@Hillbrook, so everyone in the school could easily read them. We published five editions of Cheese and didn’t have to use any paper.

Email is also another big advantage of the iPads, and it has proven to be very useful this year. After a big lesson, Ms Kroker emails the whole class with a description of what we did or a reminder of what we need to do for assessment and homework. This is really helpful as it reinforces what we learnt that lesson, gives us helpful information we might’ve missed and makes sure people who were away aren’t left behind.

Global Studies and Evernote – Emma Kellett-Lunney (9 Blue)

This year in Global Studies, we have been using our iPads for a range of activities, including storing class notes. To assist us in note-taking the practical App, Evernote, has made this process easier. We can send notes to teachers or fellow students within the App and it means that all of our notes are kept in one place. This really helps us with organisation. Online@Hillbrook has also played a big part this year. We can access all of our course information and we can also submit our assignments via this great tool. Having iPads in Global Studies has really helped our class and made learning even more fun!
The Leading Edge

defence forces. The Leading Edge continue to serve in our country’s women and men who have and give thanks for and honour the opportunity to recognise, provide us with the diplomacy has failed. War is something that is used as a last resort when war. War is something that is connection.

premiere performance by the Hillbrook Wind Symphony a piece of music titled, ‘Legacy’ especially for the across France and Belgium as well as Gallipoli. Kenneth served for four years in various theatres 22 years of age. He served with the 25th Battalion, being played. Kenneth enlisted on 5 February 1915 at to Andrew Bretherton’s wife, Sally, owned the bugle ceremony. Private Kenneth George Mason, grandfather (below, Class 10G) added to the poignancy of the same way.”

I can only imagine that the ANZACs may have felt the taking responsibility for the future of this great country. Mike, a serving infantry officer with two tours in Afghanistan spoke humbly but powerfully, challenging us to keep the ANZAC spirit alive. “Australia is blessed with natural beauty and is filled with amazing people who are honest, fair and genuine. My service gives me a chance to make a difference, and it is my way of taking responsibility for the future of this great country. I can only imagine that the ANZACs may have felt the same way.”

The Last Post and Reveille played by Jordan Lovaszy (below, Class 10G) added to the poignancy of the ceremony. Private Kenneth George Mason, grandfather to Andrew Bretherton’s wife, Sally, owned the bugle being played. Kenneth enlisted on 5 February 1915 at 22 years of age. He served with the 25th Battalion, arriving at Gallipoli in early September of that year. Kenneth served for four years in various theatres across France and Belgium as well as Gallipoli.

Hillbrook Music Coordinator, David Jones, composed a piece of music titled, ‘Legacy’ especially for the 100th anniversary ANZAC DAY commemoration. Its premiere performance by the Hillbrook Wind Symphony added to the sense of significance and connection. ANZAC day is not a day for honouring war. War is something that is used as a last resort when diplomacy has failed. It does however provide us with the opportunity to recognise, give thanks for and honour the women and men who have and continue to serve in our country’s defence forces.

Foundation Day

This year’s Foundation Day ceremony was a little different from previous years as we sought to weave together our journey with other journeys that have influenced us as a community. One of our new Year 7 teachers, Tegan Baumgart, together with her uncle John Baumgart, former resident of Enoggera Boys Home, were our guest speakers. In her speech, Tegan shared her experience of starting at Hillbrook and how she was overwhelmed by the friendship and acceptance extended to her by the community.

John called on the students to appreciate the education afforded to them as not everyone has this opportunity. He encouraged students to stand up and make a change.

There’s a Place for Me Here

Our third speaker, Sam Di Mauro, spoke about the sculpture entitled, Transition, he and Marzia Del Fabbro created to celebrate all the people and communities that have occupied this place over time. “Life moves along like a stream, occasionally interrupted by experience and new meaning, and ultimately like the flow, can continue to grow richer and stronger.”

The artwork, in the walkway between B and G Block continues to grow and evolve.

We have focused this year on “There’s a place for me here” as a way of highlighting the significant number of new students and staff we welcomed at the beginning of the year. We also recognise how recent enhancements to our buildings and communal spaces may have affected our community sense of belonging. While these changes render new experiences, Hillbrook is still fundamentally the same welcoming and inclusive community setting.

We recently unveiled our latest sculptural piece that sits in the forecourt of our new building. The piece is entitled Community: There’s A Place For Me Here. The artist, Gavan Fenelon (inset), also created our “Trees” piece to commemorate our 25th year. Gavan’s sculptural public artworks can be found in numerous locations throughout the greater Brisbane area.

Well Done Captain Mae

Mae Rogers (kneeling 2nd from left) captained the Polo Bears under 14 water polo team that went on to win all the local club championships as well as the Qld State Club championship. The team recently competed against clubs from all over Australia and won the silver medal (above) in a penalty shootout.

Mae proved herself to be a wonderful leader and her discipline at training is second to none. She has been selected to the Qld State team for the second year running and her team, the Qld Maroons, won the East Coast Challenge against NSW, Vic, Tasmania and SA.

The 10 Year Reunion

Congratulations to Matthew Burris (10 White) who entered the Australian Pokemon Video Game National Championships on the Queen’s Birthday Weekend and won the seniors division (out of 96 people)! As an Australian Champion, he’s qualified for a paid trip to the World Championships in Boston, sponsored by Nintendo.

The 10 Year Reunion
Hillbrook recently entered two teams in the Opti-MINDS Regional competition with our Year 9 Language and Literature team; Emily Suffolk, Emma Kellett-Lunney, Caitlin Guthrie, Georgia Kerr and Jenna Matus, (above) scoring very highly.

Our Year 9 Science and Engineering team; Jarrah Love, Jakob Roberts, James Macmillan, Charlotte Ellem, and Isabelle Noble, were crowned the 2015 Brisbane Northside champions and will now perform at the national finals at UQ.
**News From the Past and News from.......the Staff**

Adam Cruickshanks started at Hillbrook as a foundation student in 1987. The following year Marnie Cruickshanks (nee Sonnenburg) commenced her Hillbrook journey. A few years after school finished Adam and Marnie met up again and eventually married and had 2 boys. Adam who holds a trade qualification has had a career in the oil industry prior to becoming a Maintenance Manager with Veola at their Advanced Recycled Water Treatment Plants.

Marnie finished school and headed straight to university completing a double degree majoring in Psychology and has worked predominantly in the public sector as a Learning and Organisational Development Consultant prior to a career change to the private sector. She is now Principal Consultant at the national management consulting firm, TMS Consulting.

28 years later their relationship with Hillbrook continues, not only with the close friendships that endure but their eldest son, Harvey Cruickshanks, started year 7 this year. Harvey is not only a student in the very first year 7 cohort at Hillbrook, he is also the first student who has both parents as past students. Younger brother Tulley is also enrolled and keen to commence his Hillbrook journey in 2019.

Luke Farrow graduated from Hillbrook in 2011 and is now living in Shanghai, China working with Black and Cameron productions shooting films and television commercials. Luke works mainly in the studio and on camera and has to travel quite a lot for work – which luckily he finds exciting!

Tori Brown graduated in 2007 and has been living in Kansas, USA since 2012. Tori and her husband, Timothy Harder, welcomed baby Lincoln James Harder at 1.39am on 1 June, weighing 8 pounds. Tori's Mum, Anne, who was our P&F President for some time, arrived in Kansas just in time to welcome Lincoln.

Tarquin Moon

A mini road trip to Miles prompted me to revisit Hillbrook recently. The road trip brought back memories of a Hillbrook Geography camp 17 years ago that I now realise touched upon so much of my family history. On camp we stayed at Colomboola, now a run-down camping ground that was once a very tiny community where my grandfather, Frank Gundry, was born. Around the corner the teachers took us to old Joe Hilton's cottage, an example of the modest self-built homes of the time. When I left Hillbrook I worked as an environmental campaigner and now I run a Thai restaurant in Cashmere with my husband’s family. What next?

**Melanie Cooke** has joined us in the role of Communications and Marketing Officer. She has a background in corporate communication and worked for many years at Brisbane Airport Corporation. Melanie works Monday to Wednesday, 9am to 2.30pm and in the spirit of Hillbrook’s motto, ‘In balance we grow,’ spends the rest of her time raising her three lovely girls – aged 10, 8 and 4.

Our Science teacher, Claire Smith, welcomed her second baby, Lachlan Thomas Levens in late August. Lachlan was born weighing 4.76kg (10lb 8oz) and measuring 57cm long.

**Date Claimers & Important Dates!**

- **Hillbrook Under the Stars** is our Hillbrook P&F and parents connect social event of the year and will be held in our fantastic new forecourt on 24 October 2015.
- We would like to extend a warm invitation to our wider school community. More info can be found at: www.hillbrook.qld.edu.au or email us at info@hillbrook.qld.edu.au
- **Date Claimers** & **Important Dates**
  - **20 November**: Year 12 Last Day
  - **27 November**: Year 7 & 11 Last Day
  - **19 November**: Graduation Dinner
  - **05 November**: Family Day
  - **01 November**: School Reopens Next Year
  - **24 October**: Hillbrook Under the Stars
  - **25 January**: Check the School Calendar for year level starting dates

**Linda Morrison** is a 1995 graduate. She is currently the Vice Principal at the American International School in Cairo, Egypt and is working on her PhD in education through QUT.

**Douglas Wilson** graduated in 2005 and went on to complete a bachelor’s degree at UQ in Multi-Media Design. Since then he’s been working in the Brisbane film industry as a motion graphics artist. Doug has also recently developed his own drone aerial cinematography business, AeroFlix, and filmed the latest Hillbrook video (Link on the Hillbrook website homepage).

The week represents the much-anticipated release of the Cyberpunk 2077 game with a release date of November 19, 2021.

Four Hillbrook art students entered the 2015 Creative Generation competition and exhibition: Emily Prass, Eugene Fritz, Ross Walker and Tayla Humphries.

We are pleased to announce that Tayla Humphries has been granted the Creative Generation Excellence Award. This is fantastic news and Tayla will have her work exhibited at GOMA in 2016. To see just what an honour this is, check out past Creative Generation exhibitions at GOMA’s website: qagoma.qld.gov.au/whats-on/exhibitions/past-exhibitions/creative-generation.
It was a great day for Sustainability

Following many months of preparation our 4th Sustainability Day was held on a sunny Saturday in August. The biennial event attracted a crowd estimated in excess of 2,000 visitors, involved a wide range of stalls, food, coffee, music and a captivating program of speakers. The Hillbrook community came together and shared creative and practical ways to live sustainably, finding local solutions to global problems. More than $10,000 was raised from the school stalls and was distributed to 13 charities. Our next Sustainability Day will be held in 2017.