

## **Learning Activity:** Journal Writing/Silent Conversations

**Learning Behaviours:** *Reflection and evaluation*

**Teacher:** LWP

**DATE:** 16/9/05

**Class:** Year 9 English

This was not so much an activity as a reflection and evaluation of the whole terms works. It was however another way that can be used to get students to discuss, reflect and evaluate their learning. The success of the activity varied from the two examples below. It should be noted that I did this the last period before the final school assembly and the start of the holidays. This was partly the reasoning for doing it this way and partly responsible for the varied success of the exercise.

### **Discussion Tool:** *Silent Conversations*

Students were seated in their table groups, these were mainly friendship groups. I told the students that we would spend the period (shortened due to the assembly) discussing what we had done that term. I told them they were to do this without words and they could use their journals for the silent conversations. I wrote the name of the activities we did throughout the term, one a t time on the board. The students were to write their thought about the activity in the journal. They did this for about a minute and then they could silently swap their journals, read what others had said about the activity and make a comment about what they had said. They could then continue the conversation for a while.

As I said it had varying degrees of success. Doing it during the last period was a mistake and because the period was shortened it was a little rushed.

I do feel under the right conditions, some practice and some more structured prompting (be more specific about what I want them to reflect on) it's a Discussion Tool that could work really well.

## Student Comments

I think tv families was ok because it was easy and you knew all about the families.  
yeah I guess  
mmm. (no comment)  
I think the dangerous dogs thing we did was good because it was all dogs.  
nah I dont recon it was that good cause of the test condition thing  
I think it was OK, dogs arnt my thing though.  
sink Bridge to wise Mans Cove was kind of boring because of it I didnt read much books for my wide reading thing.  
it was fun I recon.  
didnt stop me from reading other books, I didnt want to read it coz its back sounded boring.  
Going to the rspca was fun and writing that we had to do on the computer was annoyin because in a slow typer.  
liked everything to do with the RSPCA! it was the best thing so far I loved the kittens they were cute.  
think CATS R EVIL but cute But LOOKS CAN BE DECEIVING  
this has been one of the best work things

### Silent Conversations

I thought TV families was ~~be~~ boring because we had to be in a group and reserch. What was the point in it? Ummm...? nothing exactly ~~is should~~ Why do we have to write an essay on TV families any way - coz he aint got any other work for us.

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I thought ~~of~~ the essay on dangerous dogs was good because he gave us information the day before. He also just sat us down for two periods to finish the essay! I know what V mean. ~~but I~~

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Mr Laidlaw didnt ~~is~~ warn us that it was due in that week! ~~other~~ There were too many questions 4 PAGES. - I know, but you should have started ~~is~~ reading it earlier (spelling) I no but he said it was due at the

### Silent Conversations

TV. Families was boring I didnt like it at all.  
I didnt like it to  
your gay Thats not nice

Dangerous Dogs was better than TV. Families  
dont you think yes Dangerous Dogs was  
much better than TV families

It was the worst thing in  
the world. No it was NOT

At least I'm not gay. shut up  
you shut up. No you shut up

## Teacher Journal

*I felt the results from the Silent Conversations were poor, but at least entertaining. Given the right conditions, timing and more structure I think as a discussion tool it could be very useful.*