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<td><strong>Author(s)</strong></td>
<td>Hanmore-Cawley, Marie</td>
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<td><strong>Publication Date</strong></td>
<td>2015-10-14</td>
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Intergenerational learning: collaborations to activate young children’s civic engagement in Irish Primary School

A thesis submitted to the National University of Ireland, Galway in fulfilment of the thesis requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

By

Marie Hanmore-Cawley, B. Comm., H.D.E., MA.

Supervisor: Professor Thomas Scharf

Irish Centre for Social Gerontology (ICSG)

Discipline of Economics

National University of Ireland, Galway

October 2015
DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any other degree.

This work is the result of my independent work and investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged giving explicit references. A reference list is appended.

Signed: ……………………………………………….. (Candidate)

Date: 16 October 2015
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the joyful memory of my late parents, Mary and Michael whose loving spirits inspire me still. I also dedicate this work to my family who have supported me throughout: my husband, John; my children, Derek, David, Michael, Jonathan, Maria and their beloveds; and to our first grandchild, Hugh, I dedicate this work as my intergenerational contribution to you and to your generation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to thank my thesis supervisor Professor Thomas Scharf for his valued advice and guidance over the last number of years. Tom’s insightful approach left me reassured that the task at hand was manageable and any sense of discouragement I felt was dispelled throughout supervision.

I also wish to express my gratitude to Dr Brian McGrath for his valued help and support during supervision sessions.

I got invaluable help from Christine de Largy and the staff of the Gerontology department and I am deeply thankful to you.

Special thanks to the principals and staffs of the research schools and the control school without whose consent, help and cooperation this study would not have been possible.

Special gratitude to the parents/guardians and the pupils of the research schools and the control school for consenting to participate and thence make this research possible.

I thank the ‘critical friends’ to this study whose feedback and advice was so important to me. You know who you are: MarieM, MarieO, MarianA,
BernadetteT, JosephineG, AnneF, MayC, AnnieM, ProinsiasT and CormacC. You belonged inside and outside this study. I spent endless hours discussing this study with you: on the phone, walking in parks and on beaches, in your houses and in mine. Thank you.

I wish to thank the retired members of our community who volunteered to visit the schools to exchange learning with the pupils, and who were most generous with their time and talent to further the civic education of young children in the research and pilot schools. I thank you for saying ‘Yes’ to intergenerational collaboration; for saying ‘Yes’ to sharing your knowledge, skills and abilities with young children. Rath Dé oraih go léir. You know who you are: SeánY, AnnY, MayC, MichaelC, AnnG, MargaretÓ, Edward, MaryR, MichaelD, MarieD, Frank, Bernadette, Ursula, Barry, Mavis, Peggy, Pauline, Jimmy, Connie Fallon (RIP), Josie Nicholson (RIP), Kathleen, James, Cormac, Tommy, Annie May, Bríd, MargaretQ, MarieÓ, MauraMc, Olivia, Ursula Beirne (RIP), Patricia, MarieW, and Doris. Thanks also to Michael who gave the botany presentation. Since this project started in 2011 three of our esteemed volunteers have passed away - our beloved Josie Nicholson, Ursula Beirne and Connie Fallon. I thank their families for their valued contributions agus ar dheis Dé to raibh a n-anamnacha dílse.

Mar Ócal scoir, gabaim bufochas le Dia as ucht na cabra a íug Sé dom le linn na tréimhse seo.
Máire Nic Ainníre
16 Deireadh Fómhair, 2015.
ABSTRACT

Background

This study addresses a two-dimensional problem: weaknesses in the provision of citizenship education in Irish Primary School; and increasing social distance between younger and older generations in Irish society. The thesis tested whether young children who participate in intergenerational learning collaborations would attain higher levels of civic literacy than children who were not involved in such collaborations; and whether desired outcomes for civic literacy could be conceptualised as young children’s civic engagement. Civic literacy refers to components of personal and social responsibility and leadership to take positive actions. The study was conducted in five schools in the west of Ireland: a control and four intervention-sites.

Aims

The study aimed to activate young children’s civic engagement and connect young and old in intergenerational learning collaborations through the civic literacy concept.

Methods

Using a mixed-methods embedded design (Creswell and Plano-Clark, 2011), the study is informed by the living theory approach to action research (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) and uses ‘awareness-action-evaluation’ (Foróige, 2010) as its reflective process. Analytical tools include: students’ pre-/post-intervention civic literacy questionnaires; teachers’ corresponding observational checklists; participant and key informant qualitative data; and researcher reflections. Analyses were processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, version 20) and MS Excel (2010).
Findings

Measured between two time-points, academic year-beginning and year-end, significant improvement ($p \leq 0.01$) was found for student self-reported civic literacy scores compared to a control group who did not participate in intergenerational collaborations. Teacher checklists corroborate student self-reports. Non-significance was found for gender, year group and academic ability groupings. Quantitative results cannot be generalised because non-probability sampling was used but the intervention programmes may have adaptability at primary level. Qualitative findings explained quantitative results which were then conceptualised, in light of the research literature, as young children’s civic engagement.

Conclusion

The study showed that intergenerational engagement was a successful vehicle for activating young children’s civic engagement in Irish Primary School.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BJF: Beth Johnson Foundation, UK
CSO: Central Statistics Office
FCYO: Funders Collaborate on Youth Organising (2003)
GOI: Government of Ireland
MI: Multiple Intelligences
SPHE: Social Personal Health Education
UN: United Nations
UNCRC: UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (the Convention)

Young and Old: young children (third- and fourth-class, modal age nine years) and retired older people (aged 60 years and over).

Irish term

Na cuairteoirí: the visitors or older people, i.e., volunteers
I am a retired secondary school teacher who taught Accounting, Economics, Business, Mathematics and Music. The first thirty-two years were joyfully spent with the Sisters of Mercy from whom I learned the value of lifelong learning. I latterly taught in a merged co-educational community college of which the Convent of Mercy was intended to be part. Reflecting now, with the benefit of hindsight, the greatest work I could have done for my students, had I the opportunity then, was to have taught them the skills and dispositions of civic literacy, namely personal and civic responsibility, and leadership skills to make a positive difference. However, curricular restraint was a prohibiting factor. Nowadays, with time to invest, I endeavour to contribute to the development of primary school children’s civic engagement because I believe that retired older people might help in activating it with and for them.

This study is prompted by MA research (Hanmore-Cawley, 2010) which tested whether intergenerational music-related activities could develop civic literacy skills in adolescents. An action research project, the research sample included 22 students (2\textsuperscript{nd} Year; modal age 13 years), in musical interaction with 20 residents in a nursing home, and, with 22 retired volunteers (aged 60 years and over) who visited the school to partner with students in learning exchanges through music, computers, and business studies. Quantitative results showed significantly improved scores for students’ civic literacy skills. Qualitative data corroborated quantitative results. Intergenerational engagement gave students the confidence to participate in a range of learning activities which emanated from participation in music-making, thereby enhancing their learning in other areas (e.g., English and History). Teachers confirmed that students were more motivated to learn related subjects because whole classes benefitted from participants’ contributions to classroom discussion on topics in which they gained real-life insight from learning with older people who lived through, for example, world wars, the Easter Rising 1916, and the Great Depression 1929-1932. Teachers found that participants’ oral/written communication skills showed
improvement reflected in better than usual year-end projects based on local history and literature. Parents/guardians generally testified that the project taught their son/daughter respect for older people and for their life’s experiences.

A limitation of the MA study was that it lacked a control group against which to compare the quantitative results. It also lacked reflective explanations from adolescents and older people on how adolescents learned civic literacy skills. From a class of 71 invited to volunteer for extra-curricular activity, 22 consented to participate. Thence, they may have been more positively disposed towards music-related activities and older people which might have explained their participation.

This doctoral study considerably extends the work done for the Masters. It encompasses five primary schools, one of which is a control, and two of which are pilots to the other two. Mediated through intergenerational learning collaborations, it involves hands-on civic learning.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This study concerns activating young children’s civic engagement, i.e., ‘working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivations to make that difference’ (Ehrlich, 2000, p.vi). Thus, the term ‘young children’s civic engagement’ is understood as actions undertaken by young children so as to make a positive difference in the world. The thesis is that young pupils who participate in intergenerational learning collaborations would improve in skills and dispositions of civic literacy besides pupils who were not involved in such collaborations. Civic literacy, in this study, is the teaching/learning tool of civic engagement. Civic literacy refers to ‘components of personal responsibility, caring for others and for the community, and leadership to take positive actions’ (Chi, Jastrzab and Melchior, 2006, p.6).

The study extends over an academic year in each of four schools, two of which are pilots to the other two and also includes a control group some 60 miles distant. The schools nestle under Na Corrsleibhte in a rural town in the west of Ireland. Here, young children in third- and fourth-class (with a modal age of nine years), and retired older people (aged 60 years and more), referred to interchangeably as ‘young and old’, collaborate in learning exchanges aimed at activating young children’s civic engagement through the civic literacy concept. Intergenerational practice was mediated through curricular content using: music and dance; arts and crafts; creative writing; local history and story-telling; environmental awareness; and information and communications technology (ICT). The idea was that interventions would be devised by the research-practitioner, in consultation with the participants and teachers. Young and old would then collaborate to derive desired outcomes for civic literacy and, by extension, lead to the activation of young children’s civic engagement.
This is an action research project, informed by the living theory approach (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) and incorporates ‘awareness-action-evaluation’ reflective processes (Foróige, 2010). With the living theory approach, research-practitioners investigate their own practice to produce living theories, i.e., their own explanations for what they are doing and why. The author is the research-practitioner, a term inferring the dual-function of researcher and practitioner in action research (Reason and Bradbury, 2008). The rest of this chapter outlines the research problem and proposed solution (1.1), followed by the purpose statement (1.2), and potential significance of this research (1.3). The chapter ends with a thesis outline (1.4).

1.1 Problem statement

A two-dimensional problem has been identified: weaknesses in the provision of citizenship education in Irish Primary School; and increasing social distance between young and old.

1.1.1 Dimension-1: Weaknesses in provision of citizenship education at Irish Primary School

The Irish Primary School curriculum in Social Personal Health and Education (Government of Ireland/GOI/SPHE, 1999a, p.2) aims to facilitate opportunities for the child ‘to create and maintain supportive relationships and become an active and responsible citizen in society…’. However, while the intention is clear, the Inspectorate Evaluation Studies: Promoting the Quality of Learning (GOI, 2009), which evaluated the provision of SPHE in Irish Primary School, found weaknesses in the provision of SPHE education, particularly in the Developing Citizenship strand. Forty primary schools with four or more mainstream class teachers were investigated in 173 class settings involving 1013 pupils. Interviews with principals and teaching staff, and focus group interviews with representative samples of pupils, were conducted in each school. Written questionnaires were completed by pupils.

The Inspectorate found that in over 30 per cent of cases (n=173), ‘learning in the Myself and the Wider World strand was irregular and limited’ (p.26)
and in some cases ‘there was no evidence of content from … Myself and the Wider World [Developing Citizenship is a sub-strand] being addressed at all’ (p.49) and, ‘this strand was addressed less regularly and less thoroughly [than others]’ (p.87). Particularly, the provision of learning opportunities with regard to wider communities, including national and European communities, was ‘significantly less evident in schools’ (p.49). The Inspectorate judged that in about 12 per cent of classrooms observed, pupils were not afforded adequate opportunities to acquire values, attitudes and skills necessary for developing citizenship because of the narrow range of active-learning approaches applied: ‘the lesson was overly teacher-directed and the pupils were provided with inadequate opportunities to explore the topic under discussion in an in-depth manner’ (p.57). Additionally, there was evidence of ‘failure to link the issues being addressed to pupils’ direct experiences and as a result pupils’ ability to transfer their learning to other situations was limited’ (p.57). Besides, while findings showed that ‘there was scope for development with regard to the range of active-learning approaches … teachers drew from a relatively narrow range’ (p.90).

The Inspectorate further judged that, in nearly 25 per cent of cases, approaches to collaborative learning were not satisfactory because, in some classrooms, insufficient opportunities were provided for pupils to work collaboratively. Furthermore, there was dissatisfaction expressed around how collaborations were structured because there was evidence of ‘failure to allocate distinct roles and responsibilities to individual group members to facilitate the effective working of the group as a whole and the achievement of the assigned task and the lesson objective’ (p.55). Students’ questionnaires and focus group responses substantiated the inspectors’ findings because only ‘5% of schools sought pupils’ views in the SPHE planning process’ (p.84). The Inspectorate explained that weaker delivery ‘is due in some measure to the lesser availability of relevant resources and teachers’ dependence on the provision of such [commercial] materials to aid curriculum implementation’ (p.30).

Overall, the Inspectorate’s report revealed that weaknesses in the provision of SPHE education were caused, in some cases, by: aspects of citizenship
not being addressed at all; didactic rather than active collaborative/cooperative learning approaches with limited linkage of lesson content to pupils’ direct experiences; inadequate in-depth discussion among pupils; difficulties in managing pupils’ contributions effectively during lessons; and pupils in some cases not being afforded adequate opportunities to acquire values, attitudes and skills of citizenship.

1.1.2 Dimension-2: Increasing social distance between young and old

The perception exists of an increasing social distance between generations, with this attributed by some to ‘a discontinuity between generations, by the changes in the family structure, and the individualist dimension of modern society’ (ENIL, 2012, p.35). It is seen to originate in demographic and social factors. In the European Union, average life expectancy at birth has risen to 79.7 years due to improved standards of living, education and advances in healthcare (TOY, 2013; Eurostat, 2012). Although older people are living longer, some argue that many are increasingly isolated from family members and younger generations because of ‘urbanisation, migration, family breakdown and increasing spread of extended networks of families across communities and continents’ (TOY, 2013, p.9). Additionally, family structure is changing from the traditional nuclear format to more differentiated structures connected to diverse cultural backgrounds and family models. Family size has declined ‘following a general decrease in total fertility levels across virtually every European nation’ (Beier et al., 2006, p.7). Consequently, social and demographic changes are affecting the lives, relationships and learning opportunities of young children. While generations remain connected vertically in the ‘beanpole family’ (more familial generations living), they are disconnected horizontally in growing up with fewer opportunities for connections to diverse age groups (TOY, 2013; ENIL, 2012). This is all happening at a time when the 2009 Treaty of Lisbon invites European Union member states to ‘strengthen intergenerational solidarity as one of the most important aspects to enhance social cohesion and the development of a participatory culture where women and men of all ages take part’ (Council of the European Union, 2010).
Advocates of intergenerational programmes further argue that Governments are contributing to the disconnectedness of young and old through their policies and services which target age groups and issues in ways that are by their nature disjointed and discriminatory (Hatton-Yeo, 2006). Consequently, the separation of generations into same-age institutions and spaces, such as pre-schools and retirement homes, increases the likelihood that young children and older people may miss out on opportunities for learning from each other (TOY, 2013). Such age-segregation has the effect that, in Ireland, for example, there is a growing tendency for the generations to associate with and value their contemporaries to the exclusion of other age-groups (Ageing Well Network, 2012). Eurostat (2011) carried out a survey in 2009 which found that 63.8 per cent of the EU-27 population (aged 15 years and over) believed that there were not enough opportunities for older and younger people to meet and collaborate on intergenerational initiatives. Twenty-seven per cent of EU-respondents agreed that their government was doing a good job on promoting intergenerational initiatives but 45 per cent of Irish respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that the Irish government was doing enough to promote intergenerational engagement in any form. National organisations focusing solely on intergenerational learning exist only in Germany and the United Kingdom (ENIL, 2012) whereas in Ireland intergenerational engagement is ‘very much in its infancy’ (p.26).

1.1.3 Addressing the two-dimensional problem

By bringing young and old together for learning collaborations, both get opportunities for active participation, thereby enhancing possibilities to become part of the solution to each other’s problem.

The SPHE (GOI/SPHE Teacher Guidelines, 1999b, pp.54-58) curriculum aligns well with the possibility of intergenerational collaboration in that it ‘enables schools to…work with the home and the community in implementing a school-based [SPHE] programme’ (p.2) and encourages schools to ‘[enlist] the support of different groups or individuals in the community’ (p.33). Timetabling allows approximately 30 minutes per week
for SPHE which is cross-curricular and therefore can be integrated into other learning domains.

In response to the Inspectorate’s report (GOI, 2009) which revealed weaknesses in the provision of citizenship education at primary level, this study offers opportunities to young and old to collaborate on civic literacy based activities intended to connect the two generations. Bearing in mind the civic engagement of young children and the intergenerational engagement of young and old, the aims and objectives of this study direct the central research question to follow.

1.2 Purpose statement

Aims

The two-dimensional problem already outlined is the source of the two aims for the study, namely:

1. To activate young children’s civic engagement;

2. To connect young and old through the civic literacy concept.

Objectives

The study plans to achieve its aims through the following stages:

1. Design an intergenerational learning programme of interventions appropriate for young children, informed by academic literature on youth civic engagement, intergenerational engagement, theories of practice, learning and action (Chapters Two, Three and Four);

2. Measure changes in pupils’ civic skills and dispositions over an academic year (Chapter Five); and explain outcomes that are referenced to the programme of interventions (Chapter Six);

3. Explain, in light of the literature, how desired outcomes for the civic literacy concept might be conceptualised as young children’s civic engagement; and how intergenerational learning collaborations might be a contributory factor (Chapter Seven).
Central research question

The central research question follows from the aims and objectives and gives the study its direction:

*To what extent and in what ways can participation in intergenerational learning collaborations activate young children’s civic engagement?*

The central research question will be further developed on consultation with the research literature (Chapters 2-4).

The research design chosen for this study was embedded mixed-methods design (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). The embedded aspect constitutes an action research based practice, informed by the living theory approach (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006), with ‘awareness-action-evaluation’ reflective cycles (Foróige, 2010). Intergenerational learning collaborations represent the practice. Embedded design suits this study being schools-based, and requiring reflective cycles that question and amend practice.

Quantitative data measured to what extent pupils acquired desired outcomes for civic literacy. Children’s self-reported scores, and student observational checklists maintained by class teachers, were measured at two time-points: academic year-beginning (September) and year-end (June). Qualitative data represented explanations offered by participants (pupils and older volunteers), key informants (class teachers/principals and parents/guardians) and the research-practitioner on how desired outcomes for civic literacy were derived. Qualitative data collection occurred before, during and after the intervention phase of the study. The qualitative dataset provided supplemental support to the quantitative dataset. The rationale for choosing mixed-methods was that a single dataset would not be sufficient to respond to the central research question because different data require different interpretations. Accordingly, supplemental qualitative data were needed to answer secondary research questions within the predominantly quantitative study. Reasons for including the qualitative data are tied to, but different from, the primary purpose of the quantitative aspect and explain whether or
how an intergenerational learning practice might have contributed desired outcomes for the civic literacy concept. A flowchart illustrates the embedded mixed-methods design (see Figure 1.1).

Note: ‘QUAN (qual)’ is the code for embedding qualitative data within a primary quantitative framework (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007, p.68).
Figure 1.1: Flowchart of mixed-methods procedures
1.3 Significance of this research

This study may interest policy makers, educators, children, older people and the organisations representing them, and parents/guardians. To this researcher’s knowledge, there is no known civic-literacy-themed intergenerational research study conducted to date which tests and explores young children’s civic activation in Irish Primary School. Besides, this study contributes research with rather than on children, thereby making them responsible for explanations of their learning through the living theory approach to action research (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006).

This study may interest education providers/users (teachers, principals, school-support services, curriculum developers and policy-makers) in finding possible solutions to identified challenges in delivering aspects of the SPHE curriculum.

This study may interest older people’s organisations (e.g., Active Retirement Ireland, Age & Opportunity, Age Action Ireland) as an exemplar for older people’s participation through intergenerational initiatives.

Parents/guardians and/or parents’ organisations (e.g., National Parents Council) may be interested in intergenerational collaborations that enhance curricular content through the civic literacy concept.

1.4 Thesis outline

The thesis follows a traditional outline. The research problem, problem statement, and research design have already been explained. Chapter Two presents two categories of literature as they relate to the research problem: young children’s civic engagement; and intergenerational engagement. Ways of understanding childhood are first discussed, followed by a section examining youth civic engagement. The literature then addresses the intergenerational concept, its evolution, a critique of pertinent intergenerational programmes, and ways to connect young and old. Chapter Three discusses the theoretical foci of practice, social learning, and action as well as this researcher’s educational values which drive the study, namely practice, connectedness and dialogue. Chapter Four explains the
methodology and methods for the study. It addresses embedded mixed-methods design. It discusses data collection, methods of analysis, integration and discussion. It further addresses ethical considerations, participant profiles, quality, rigour, robustness, research sites, and a description of the intervention programmes. The quantitative results are reported in Chapter Five. The qualitative findings are presented in Chapter Six. Chapter Seven discusses how outcomes for civic literacy can be conceptualised as activation of young children’s civic engagement. Chapter Eight draws the thesis to a close by considering issues arising from the research that are worthy of further consideration, and key learning that can be identified in light of the study.
CHAPTER TWO

CIVIC AND INTERGENERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses civic and intergenerational engagement in two sections. Section One addresses young children’s civic engagement and Section Two addresses intergenerational engagement.

SECTION ONE: YOUNG CHILDREN’S CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

In reviewing young children’s civic engagement, this section discusses understandings of childhood (2.1); citizenship typologies (2.2); civic engagement (2.3); and the civic literacy concept as a learning tool to activate young children’s civic engagement (2.4).

2.1 Understanding childhood

How childhood is viewed is important because ‘our understanding of children’s relationship to citizenship is rooted in how we perceive children’ (Lister, 2007, p.697). In Ireland, under-18s are legally regarded as children. James et al. (1998) organised the discourse on childhood along lines of pre-sociological and sociological perspectives. The difference is that pre-sociological approaches consider a ‘view of childhood outside of…the social context within which the child resides’ (p.10), whereas ‘society shapes the individual’ (p.23) from sociological perspectives.

Pre-sociological understandings of childhood see the child as innocent, immanent, naturally developing, and/or unconscious (James et al., 1998). Puritanical discourse (Hobbes, cited in James et al., 1998) views children as ‘harbourers of potentially dark forces which risk being mobilised if…the adult world allows them to veer away from the 'straight and narrow' path that civilisation has bequeathed to them’ (p.10). This innocent child is ‘to be exorcised by programmes of discipline and punishment’ (p.10). The idea of childhood innocence operates through two further understandings of
childhood – the *tabula rasa* (blank slate) and the Romantic. To John Locke (cited in James *et al.*, 1998), the child is a blank slate who could, with guidance and training, become rational in future; to Rousseau (cited in James *et al.*, 1998) he embodies innocence and natural goodness only contaminated by the outside world from which he needs to be protected so as to express himself freely and creatively. Piaget (cited in Wood, 1998) sees the child as naturally developing, believing that all children pass through a series of developmental stages constructing knowledge through adaptation to their environment. Thence, through assimilation (meshing new knowledge with previous knowledge) and accommodation (modifying old knowledge to meet newly assimilated knowledge), the child is in a continual process of cognitive self-correction or equilibration. The unconscious child has its origins in the work of Sigmund Freud (Wilkinson, 2003). Within the model, ‘childhood is once again dispossessed of intentionality and… absorbed into a vocabulary of drives and instincts, with sexuality becoming the major dimension in the development of self’ (James *et al.*, 1998, p.21). This image perceives childhood as ‘a source of unconscious energy which, if thwarted to any major extent, results in deviant…behaviour’ (Wilkinson, 2003, p.110). Children viewed the Freudian way are highly self-centred, and consideration of others is minimal. Rather, emphasis is on their unconscious instincts in their learning and participation (Wilkinson, 2003). In all of the above there is a perception of children becoming rational beings of the future (James *et al.*, 1998) namely, ‘becomings’ (Qvortrup, 1994), or future citizens. Past understandings disregarded the current understanding of the sociological child as today’s citizen (Dunne, 2005; Neale, 2004).

The sociological child belongs to the socially constructed, social-structured, tribal and/or minority group (James *et al.*, 1998). The socially constructed perspective infers that all learning occurs through the cognitive effort an individual asserts during the process of integrating information alongside prior understandings (Doolittle and Camp, 1999). The social-structural model recognises that there are certain universal characteristics inherent in structures of all societies which influence particular social groups. Children may vary from one society to another, but within each they are a uniform
body of social actors with uniform needs and rights. By comparison, the tribal child inhabits a world where his/her own rules and agendas are learned from his/her peers and are distinct from adults. He learns through his own culture. His autonomy is best illustrated in his engagement with digital technology as a ‘digital native’ besides the adult ‘digital immigrant’, (Prensky, 2001, p.1). Recognising children as tribal acknowledges their difference. Research on the tribal child can be misleading unless researchers inhabit the child-world to claim knowledge of their ways of knowing, as otherwise the researchers’ lens may contaminate evidence (Morrow and Richards, 2002). Lastly, the minority child conveys the notion of powerlessness and inequality with adults (Oakley, 1994). Oakley positions children as powerless, disadvantaged and oppressed whereby they are recipients of imposed disadvantages, not getting equal rights with adults. Thence, power relations are challenged, ‘not from an intrinsic interest in childhood…but…from an indictment of a social structure and an accompanying dominant ideology’ (Jenks, 2009, p.109).

Overall, the sociological child is a product of his environment and, therefore, capable of citizenship today (Neale, 2004). He is ‘rich in potential, strong, powerful, competent and most of all connected to adults and to other children’ (Malaguzzi, 1993, p.10). He is a young researcher actively seeking to interpret the world: a co-constructor of knowledge (Dahlberg et al., 1999). Such understandings challenge the pre-sociological perception of the child as innocent, immanent, naturally developing and/or unconscious. Neale (2004, p.9) sees today’s children as ‘young citizens with an active contribution to make to society’: people in their own right in need of recognition, respect and participation; and capable of influencing their own childhoods. Studies show that children can be care-givers, not just care-recipients (e.g., Becker et al., 1998; Haugen, 2007; Lister, 2007) often described as responsible, capable, competent, and trustworthy in ways generally not ascribed to children (Morrow, 1994, 2008). Viewing children through the lens of their childhood recognises them as young people with strengths and competencies which are ‘not linked simply to age but borne out of social experiences and interactions’ (Neale, 2004, p.7). Lansdown
(2005), in *The Evolving Capacities of the Child*, found that recognising their ‘evolving capacities’ allows them to develop as participating members of society because ‘active recognition of and support for [their] engagement enhances their developmental capacities’ (Lansdown, 2010, p.19). The next section discusses citizenship typologies.

### 2.2 Citizenship typologies

Citizenship typologies, traditional and contemporary, are addressed so as to identify an appropriate mode of engagement for young children.

#### Traditional citizenship typologies

There are four key approaches to what can be termed traditional citizenship: liberalism, civic republicanism, communitarianism and global citizenship.

Liberalism is a dominant approach in Western states, relying on legal and human rights frameworks to support individual rights and freedoms, including participation in the private/public sphere, voting, engaging in economic and family matters and bestowing political status on those who are full members of society (Marshall, 1950). Marshall theorised that membership of a political community entailed specific rights: civic (freedom of speech, thought, justice, property); political (central/local political affiliation); and social (economic and welfare rights).

Civic republicanism is premised on commitment to civic virtue and loyalty to the nation-state, placing commensurate weight on citizens’ rights and responsibilities (Isin and Turner, 2002). Aristotle (cited in Isin and Turner, 2002) argued for the role of the good citizen to engage in actions which seek the common good, emphasising that liberty is based on rewards for positive behaviour and sanctions for negative behaviour. Motivated by need for collective self-government, the individual’s sense of social concern is as a member of the polity. Hence, participation as a republican requires not passive but active citizenship insofar as it promotes rights and responsibilities aimed at furthering the common good.
Communitarianism represents a four-dimensional responsibility (Etzioni, 1993): people have the duty to better themselves; responsibility for doing so lies with those closest to them, like family/community; every community ought to better itself; and society (communities of communities) should help those communities whose ability to help themselves is limited. Communitarianism evolved with Third Way politics which aimed to apply social democratic values (social justice, equality, civic responsibility) to a new political order (Giddens, 1998). Accordingly, by strengthening the bonds of community and trust within society, economic prosperity would follow (Giddens, 2000).

Global citizenship extends communitarianism by taking responsibility for global humanitarian concerns (Williams, 2002). It positions members beyond the nation-state to embrace local, national, European and global dimensions, having regard for peoples of all nations. It typically incorporates positive leadership actions towards advocacy, fund-raising and political lobbying (Williams, 2002).

Not all aspects of the traditional approaches to citizenship accommodate children’s civic engagement (Millei and Imre, 2009). Liberalism precludes children from voting or owning property, thus denying their participatory rights. Civic republicanism is limited because if children experience a world in which they are abstracted from democratic practices because of the limits of their citizenship, then civic virtue is difficult to demonstrate. Communitarianism creates the dilemma of how to enable children to participate fully in political life when they do not have the legal or administrative capacity for such participation. Viewing children as global citizens acting upon global issues (like child exploitation) usually results in these issues being assigned to adults because children cannot independently activate their rights and are only global citizens insofar as they ‘act upon a…shared area of concern…assigned by the prevailing authorities so that they must now think of themselves as ‘global citizens’” (p.287). Given such limitations, contemporary approaches to children’s participation must be considered.
Contemporary approaches to children’s participation

Contemporary approaches to citizenship are constructed in broader terms than in the formal traditional understandings (Werbner and Yuval-Davis, 1999). Examples of contemporary approaches include lived citizenship or citizenship-as-practice (Lister, 2007; Lawy and Biesta, 2006) and/or citizenship as recognition (Neale, 2004). Lived citizenship refers to the ‘meaning that citizenship actually has in people’s lives and the ways in which people’s social and cultural backgrounds and material circumstances affect their lives as citizens’ (Hall and Williamson, 1999, cited in Lister, 2007, p.695). Lister (2007) views citizenship as young people being social actors contributing to society in their practices as citizens. She argues that ‘participation in informal politics, social action or public decision-making that affects their lives may constitute a more important signifier of effective lived citizenship for many people [than voting]’ (p.704). She insists that ‘if we analyze children’s citizenship solely through the lens of rights, we miss much that is important to their experience of ‘lived citizenship’ and…their claims to be recognized as citizens’ (p.717). Youth participation, therefore, revolves largely around finding opportunities for youth to demonstrate their capacities to participate as political and social actors in society. Then, their participation is more meaningful because ‘participation can promote responsibility’ (p.708). She advises that any initiative which enables children’s participation strengthens their sense of belonging to their community as well as equipping them with the skills and capacities required for lived citizenship. She recognises that with its implications for belonging, identity formation and participation, citizenship-as-practice is essential for the well-being of children, even if such practice constitutes them ‘as de facto, even if not complete de jure, citizens’ (pp.717-718).

Lawy and Biesta (2006) also advocate for citizenship-as-practice, whereby youth evaluate democratic practices which ‘need to be experienced at first hand …through their participation in different activities and practices inside and outside of school’ (p.45). They need not move through a pre-specified trajectory into their citizenship statuses, nor should the function of education
be to find strategies to prepare them for transitions to good citizenship. Rather, participation might incorporate children’s reflections and relational experiences. Entitlement to ‘recognition, respect and participation’ is how Neale (2004, p.90) perceives young children’s citizenship, since they are capable of ‘defining their own needs, rights, interests and responsibilities’ (p.9). Such an understanding is necessary to developing appropriate modes of participation. Otherwise participation may become an empty, tokenistic exercise (Neale, 2004; Hart, 1992).

Considering that the greatest outcomes for children’s participation is the strengthening of democracy and better decision-making, Bartlett (2005) advocates for ‘inclusion, consultation and the delegation of responsibility to children’ (p.9), with this ‘most likely to happen if they can actually use these skills to make a difference’ (p.10). Bartlett recommends ‘simple, practical suggestions with benefits not just for children but also for others in their communities’ (p.9). While children’s participation generally entails adults protecting and providing for children rather than empowering them to work for change (Willow et al., 2004; Lansdown, 2005), suggestions for their civic engagement might begin with local forms of involvement within children’s reach (Lister, 2007; Theis, 2010; Bartlett, 2005). Civic engagement is discussed next.

2.3 Civic Engagement

The concepts of youth participation, civic engagement, and active citizenship are broadly equivalent terms (Shaw et al., 2012). Such terminological disputes abound that Berger (2009) calls for ‘the end of civic engagement’, not the end of ‘political participation, social connectedness, associational membership, volunteerism, community spirit or cooperative and tolerant moral norms but rather the umbrella term ‘civic engagement’ used to encompass all of these topics while clarifying none’ (p.335). Therefore, to avoid further misunderstanding, civic engagement in this study is understood as ‘working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivations to make that difference’ (Ehrlich, 2000, p.vi). Put another
way, it generally infers ‘individual or collective actions in which people participate to improve the well-being of communities or society in general, and which provide opportunities for reflection’ (Innovations in Civic Participation, 2010, p.vi). Therefore, terms like active citizenship, participation and civic engagement are used interchangeably henceforward even though children’s participation has derived from understandings drafted in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989, Article 12) which decrees that:

[Governments] assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with [his] age and maturity.

Ireland signalled a move towards a rights-based approach to children’s participation when it ratified the Convention in 1992. The National Children’s Strategy (GOI, 2000), a 10-year strategic plan for children in Ireland, was introduced in 2000 in part-fulfilment of Ireland’s obligation to the Convention. It has three major goals: children will have a voice in matters affecting them; their lives will be better understood; and they will receive quality supports and services from the state. While there is indeed State support for children’s rights in Ireland, there is less support for their participation because their rights ‘continue to be misunderstood as a threat to parents and family or as a manifestation of children’s absolute autonomy’ (Kilkelly, 2008, p.18). Additionally, Government failure to educate people about children’s rights has allowed such myths to dominate public discussion (Kilkelly, 2008) as require change from a ‘protectionist, welfare focus’ to a ‘rights-based focus’ which allows children to participate in decisions affecting their lives at all levels (Hayes, 2002). In keeping with the Children's Strategy (GOI, 2000), children’s rights are relevant to this study insofar as there is need for programmes to be child-centred, community-based, outcomes-focused and integrated with curricula so that the learning needs of children are met.
Civic engagement entails three incremental building blocks: youth development, youth leadership and youth civic engagement (Funders Collaborative on Youth Organising/FCYO, 2003) (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Continuum of youth civic engagement (adapted: FYCO, 2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth Development</th>
<th>Youth Leadership</th>
<th>Youth Civic Engagement</th>
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According to FYCO (2003), ‘youth development’ infers helping youth to form relationships, develop pro-social skills, feel connected to others and undertake new roles. ‘Youth leadership’ approaches help young people to ‘look beyond their personal needs and interests to see their relationship to a collective group, organisation or community’ (p.8). Youth are trained in leadership skills, like decision-making and problem-solving, and through reflective practice they are supported ‘to build ethical codes to guide their relationships within the world’ (p.8). ‘Civic engagement’ relates to ‘young people developing the skills and habits needed to actively shape democratic society in collaboration with others [whereby] groups of young people come together to identify issues that they want to address’ (p.8). Youth development, youth leadership and youth civic engagement are now discussed so as to unpack the constituent elements of civic engagement.
2.3.1 Youth development

Youth development prepares youth to meet the challenges of growing up through activities that help them gain confidence and deal with challenges (Edelman *et al.*, 2004). A framework of positive youth development and an assets-based approach to youth (Shaw *et al.*, 2012) facilitate youth development approaches. Lerner *et al.* (2005) refer to the ‘positive youth development’ (PYD) framework as leading youth to an adulthood marked by ‘effective contributions to self, family, community, and civil society’ (p.25). PYD is conducted through five stages – ‘the 5Cs’ (p.15):

- **Competence** - acting on identified issues by contributing to community academically and/or socially;
- **Confidence** - recognising that their contributions are worthwhile;
- **Connection** - connecting to family, community, school/peers to enable contribution;
- **Character** - displaying personal and civic responsibility (social conscience);
- **Caring** - showing empathy for others through understanding their perspective and emotional experiences (Spencer, 2006).

The sixth ‘C’, ‘contribution’, evolves through the first five and is regarded as being stronger in young people who contribute to their communities (Lerner *et al.*, 2005; Sherrod *et al.*, 2010). Together, the six ‘C’s are associated with pro-social involvement by youth (Busseri *et al.*, 2006), resulting in young people’s self-esteem being boosted through being valued and recognised by others (Brennan, 2008; Brennan *et al.*, 2009). Such recognition can induce the belief that someone can make a difference to his/her community (Kendrick, 1996).

Opportunities to enhance positive youth development can be applied through an assets-based approach (Brady and Dolan, 2007) which, instead of focusing on problems, seeks to identify developmental assets or competencies and resources within young people’s lives that enhance their
chances of positive youth development (Brady, 2010). Youth civic engagement can be seen as both a contributing factor to and an outcome of positive youth development (Sherrod, 2007). The more developmental assets present, the more likely is positive development because youth develop through a combination of both internal and external developmental assets (Shaw et al., 2012). These exist within the family and community/society, and are akin to the strong (Shaw et al., 2012) and weak ties (Granovetter, 1973) that are often cited as shaping community action and engagement (Chaskin, 2008; Gittell and Vidal, 1998; Wilkinson, 1991). Internal and external assets are provided in different contexts. Internal assets constitute commitment to learning; positive values; social competencies; and positive self-identity. In contrast, external assets comprise social supports; opportunities, expectations and boundaries; constructive time management and empowerment strategies (Benson, 1997).

People do better when they feel they are empowered (Kaplan and Greenwood, 2015). Empowerment is a process, the mechanism by which people, organisations and communities gain mastery over their lives (Rappaport, 1984). It can take the form of psychological empowerment whereby people attain a sense of deeper personal control through gaining critical awareness of their environments while acquiring skills and resources needed to affect change. While many definitions of empowerment abound, it is important to note that when designing intergenerational empowerment-oriented interventions, the emphasis should be on participants’ definitions and goals for their own empowerment and should, as warned by Rappaport (1984), accommodate multiple definitions of participant success.

Family and school/community provide unique opportunities to empower young people in their capacity to contribute to their communities (Sherrod, 2007). Engaging in civic action offers positive benefits for resilience, enlisted social support, self-efficacy, confidence and practical skill development (Dolan, 2011). Civic action provides young people with opportunities to practice generosity or altruism, to develop awareness of their own strengths and potential, and to learn skills including planning and problem-solving (Dolan, 2011). Intergenerational civic activity, an often
untapped resource, offers potential for older people to act as mentors to youth and convey wisdom while youth provide practical help and protect their elders (Dolan, 2011). Youth development is the first building block of youth civic engagement (FYCO, 2003) helping youth to form relationships, develop pro-social skills, feel connected to others and undertake new roles. Youth leadership is another building block as discussed next.

2.3.2 Youth leadership development

There is the danger that anything could be construed as ‘youth leadership’ if not properly defined (Zeldin and Camino, 1999). However, this ambiguity offers flexibility to tailor leadership opportunities to the strengths and needs of youth. Conner and Strobel (2007) explain that no core set of skills has been agreed upon as fundamental to leadership development and therefore youth participating in the same programme may acquire different leadership skills and styles depending on their personal dispositions. Notwithstanding, a core feature of many leadership training initiatives is the notion of encouraging exposure to diverse social networks through interaction with people from diverse perspectives that can challenge opinions and lead young people to contemplate broader worldviews (Brady et al., 2012).

There is a dearth of evidence-based youth leadership models (MacNeil, 2006; Avolio et al., 2009; Klau, 2006; Ricketts and Rudd, 2002). However, in Ireland, Foróige’s Leadership for Life Programme has been formally evaluated (Redmond et al., 2013), albeit for 12-18-year-olds. The advice coming from the literature is that leadership development programmes should focus on teaching students how to set goals, resolve conflicts, be assertive, foster teamwork and participation, communicate effectively and run a meeting or public presentation (Wehmeyer et al., 1998).

While leaders can be made (van Linden and Fertman, 1998), certain components are essential for their making. Brendtro (2009) suggests that four components are necessary for youth leadership: attachment or sense of security and belonging; achievement or mastery which induces knowledge, competence and self-esteem; autonomy or self-reliance which brings self-efficacy and self-realisation; and altruism or generosity which induces social
responsibility. However, Brendtro does not specify the skill set that youth require so as to conduct these processes. Kahn et al. (2009) suggested that leadership programmes should possess real leadership opportunities as well as meeting needs, posing challenges, offering support and reflection but they failed to illustrate the particular competencies that someone facing real leadership opportunities requires. Roberts (2009) devised the SEED mechanism to address leadership competencies: S—social and emotional competencies like social/self-awareness and social skills; E—emotional resilience to cope with adversity; E—enterprise, innovation and creativity to shape new situations and be open to new ideas, problem-solving and teamwork; and D—self-discipline. However, Roberts (2009) ignored the practice of leadership. Boyd (2001) found that a combination of experiential learning and service learning significantly increased leadership communication skills: decision-making, goal-setting, group collaboration and community service, although this model lacks guidance on action approaches and communication skills. Wang and Wang (2009) propose a model which incorporates individual and team leadership. Individual leadership includes components of self-confidence, skill acquisition and critical thinking whereas team leadership addresses a sense of responsibility, motivation and encouragement, interpersonal skills and decision-making skills but they fail to consider real opportunities for practice or action.

No one system offers a perfect model of youth leadership. Stoneman (2002) found that young people best develop the skills and mind-set for civic engagement when they experience themselves as leaders in projects benefitting their communities. Thence, the best way that youth can be prepared to take on leadership challenges is through applied activities and the real-life knowledge that comes through focused civic engagement (Shaw et al., 2012). The next section discusses criteria to promote effective leadership.

Criteria to cultivate leadership skills

Leadership is a process for which a set of skills and competencies can be learned through devised programmes if people have capacity for practice
(van Linden and Fertman, 1998; Shriberg et al., 2005) and if exposed to leadership opportunities from youth (Galdwell, 2008). Essentially, it requires development of pro-social skills, leadership opportunities and action.

Pro-social skills include: aspects of ‘social and emotional intelligence, collaboration, articulation, insight and knowledge’ (Redmond et al., 2013, p.30). Social and emotional intelligence can be developed through: self-development, social awareness and relationship management (Boyatzis and Goleman, 2001). Skills in team-building, problem-solving, decision-making and conflict resolution can be taught and youth can learn how to accommodate diverse opinions and know how to articulate ideas to others through good oral and written competencies (Kouzes and Posner, 2007; Rickets and Rudd, 2002; Boyd, 2001). Developing these skills early in life enables them to overcome public speaking challenges, gain competence in expressing opinions and contribute ethically to society (Redmond et al., 2013). Insight and knowledge induce competence through developing critical thinking and problem-solving around a particular domain (Shriberg et al., 2005). Ethical leaders seek fairness, take on responsibility, fulfil commitments, serve others and show courage by standing up for what is right (Zauderer, 1992).

If leadership skills are to be developed, leadership opportunities must be meaningful and authentic (MacNeil 2006): meaningful insofar as actions involve consequences; and authentic so that real decisions involve youth now, not in future. Youth-led participatory models are shaped by youth and possess youth ownership (Edelman et al., 2004). Hart (1992) devised the ‘Ladder of Participation’ as a model of youth participation. Essentially, it possesses eight ‘rungs’ in ascending order of importance. The top three rungs represent varying levels of child-led participation (p.8): ‘adult-initiated, shared decisions with children’; ‘child initiated and directed’; and ‘child-initiated, shared decisions with adults’. Projects on the highest rungs ‘are all too rare [because of] the absence of caring adults attuned to the particular interests of young people’ (p.14). For true participation to occur, children must know: the intentions of the project, who makes decisions...
concerning their involvement and why; have a meaningful role; and volunteer for the project after it has been clarified to them (p.11). Common criticisms of Hart’s ‘ladder’ include that it presents the stages hierarchically (Brady, 2004) and is based on ‘general principles such as empowerment and respect for young people, rather than specific models or theories’ (Shier, 2001, p.108). Hart himself (2008) has criticised the model for cultural bias, being UK/USA culturally-oriented, suggesting that it is misused as an all-inclusive tool for understanding and evaluating projects. Treseder’s (1997) circular model promotes the same idea as did Hart (1992) but in degrees, rather than ‘rungs’ of involvement, whereby each segment can be appropriate under differentiated circumstances according to youth’s needs and capacities. There is no ideal model of youth leadership and ‘what is appropriate will vary from case to case’ (Brady, 2004, p.15). Fundamentally, it is important to avoid ‘tokenism’ (Hart, 1992) and serve children according to their participation needs. However, any initiative aimed at developing youth engagement should be explicit regarding the degree of decision-making and youth ownership of the activity (Brady et al., 2012).

The third skill of leadership is action. It encompasses motivation and mastery (Redmond et al., 2013). To motivate others into action is to understand their needs (Shriberg et al., 2005) and persuade them to pursue a shared vision (Shriberg et al., 2005; Kouzes and Posner, 2007). Coyle (2009) believes that people become motivated through, for example, seeing or hearing about what another can do, or doing something that sparks interest and induces commitment. Such ability requires good communication skills and a belief that the action is worthwhile (Kouzes and Posner, 2007). Then, the follower is motivated to give time, energy and commitment to shared goals (Zeldin and Camino, 1999). Following on, mastery requires critical reflection and willingness to learn from one’s mistakes as well as commitment and persistence (Coyle, 2009) and is a valuable way to help youth to monitor and control their thought processes (Boekaerts, 2002). Additionally, to attain mastery, individuals need to have determination to overcome challenges so as to complete tasks (Roberts,
2009). Self-discipline to stick with something, despite its difficulty, is also needed for mastery and task completion - fundamental components of civic engagement (Finlay et al., 2010).

In sum, the research literature found that benefits accruing from youth leadership include: improved self-identity and pro-social skills (i.e., communication, problem-solving, goal setting, project completion). Such developmental assets enhance youth civic engagement (Redmond et al., 2013; Shaw et al., 2012; Dolan, 2010; Best and Dustan, 2008) which builds on the foundation stones of youth development and youth leadership as now discussed.

2.3.3 Youth civic engagement

To date, there has been a paucity of research on young children’s civic engagement. This contrasts with a substantial body of evidence relating to adolescents and college students (e.g., Nicotera, 2005), even though the concept of civic engagement ‘needs to be expanded to include activities that are not reliant on being a particular age or having particular capacities’ (Golombek, 2006, pp.10-11). In the absence of appropriate research evidence, pertinent to young children in this study, it is necessary to draw on and adapt the literature which widely informs youth civic engagement (e.g., Brady et al., 2012; Shaw et al., 2012; Ungar, 2012; Dolan, 2012, 2011, 2010). Additional to positive youth development and leadership development, as already discussed, the discourses which activate youth civic engagement as desirable activity include: democratic youth participation; belonging and connectedness; social support and resilience; and social justice youth development. These remaining criteria are discussed next.

1. Democratic youth participation

The civic engagement of people is perceived as being good for democracy, and therefore must include youth participation to ensure that the democratic process is inclusive, energised and renewed (Brady et al., 2012). Leading children’s rights theorists (e.g., Lister, 2007; Lansdown, 2005; Hart, 1992) argue that democratic responsibility does not suddenly present in adulthood
but has to be nurtured from childhood. Indeed, young people are more likely to be civically engaged in youth than in early adulthood because there are more opportunities to engage them through school/college (Flanagan and Levine, 2010; Finlay et al. 2010). In light of the National Children’s Strategy (GOI, 2000), which was introduced in Ireland in support of the UN Convention (UN, 1989), democratic youth participation is a child’s right and thence concerns how recognition should be accorded to his/her voice, perspective and participation as a citizen. Schools offer opportunities for such recognition. According to Wray-Lake and Syvertsen (2011, p.20), schools often operate as ‘mini training grounds’ for learning civic skills, whereby a climate of care and openness is ideal for understanding and practising participation and social responsibility. Besides, ‘democratic attitudes and behaviours’ can be better nurtured in a school culture which challenges patterns of exclusion found across society (World Bank, 2007, p.178). Flanagan et al. (2011) give emphasis to schools and community organisations as accommodating spaces where youth can challenge the status quo, participate in governance, and thence gain democratic skills. Accordingly, children’s participation revolves largely around finding ways in which they can demonstrate capacity for engagement as political and social actors in society (Lister, 2007; Lawy and Biesta, 2006; Neale, 2004). Hart (2009) and Bynner (2001) advise a move away from curricula whereby youth are taught what constitutes appropriate citizenship values and behaviour, towards a difference-centred approach which allows children to construct what citizenship means for them.

2. Belonging and connectedness

Civic engagement induces in young people a sense of belonging to something wider than themselves (Dolan, 2012, Shaw et al., 2012). Two key theoretical positions support this notion: social capital and interactionist theory. These two concepts need further discussion in order to understand the concept of belonging and connectedness.
Social Capital

Social capital refers to the benefits that accrue from social connections and trust between people (Field, 2008; Putnam, 2000). It is associated with ‘people’s sense of community, their sense of belonging to a neighbourhood, caring about the people who live there, and believing that the people who live there care about them’ (Portney and Berry, 2001, p.71). Leading theorists on social capital discourse include Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam. Bourdieu defined social capital as the combination of both actual and potential resources of individuals or groups linked to their participation in social networks and is an asset derived only through group participation (cited in Portes, 1998). Coleman (1988) adds that social capital exists in networks that are available to, rather than owned by, individuals. Putnam suggests that social capital infers ‘features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions’ (Putnam, 1993, p.41). Putnam places a strong emphasis on voluntary co-operation of individuals within clubs, churches and other formal associations. Balatti and Falk (2002) add that being both an individual and a community asset, individuals can draw on these resources and relationships to enhance life opportunities because communities in which such trust, reciprocity and social networks are strong benefit from collective action and cooperation.

Following Putnam’s (1993) perspective, the core of social capital is that social networks have value in terms of trust; moral obligations and norms; and social networks. Bridger and Luloff (2001) argue that trust is the most important feature of social capital because it increases the likelihood of cooperation, which by turn reinforces trust. While personal trust is based on familiarity with other people, it is not enough for collective action. What Putnam (1993) calls social trust arises from two related sources: norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement. Norms of reciprocity typically take two forms: specific - the simultaneous exchange of items of equivalent value; and generalised - a continuous relationship of exchange whereby there is a mutual expectation that a benefit bestowed will be later repaid. Generalised reciprocity is most likely found ‘in dense
networks…[which]…foster the development of strong norms [and]…behavioral expectations’ (p.466). Thus, by facilitating the flow of communication and information about the trustworthiness of people/organisations, networks of engagement are strengthened which in turn increase the likelihood of future community action, one of the best predictors of which is previous success (Bridger and Luloff, 2001; Wilkinson 1991). Thus, social ties and social networks are essential to fostering and sustaining civic engagement (Claude et al., 2000) because such ties are integral to people’s sense of community, directly related to attachment, and influencing the willingness of youth to act on behalf of the community (Chavis and Wandersman, 1990).

Community ties take different forms (strong and weak; formal and informal; organisational and casual interaction) which determine the conditions for youth civic engagement and community development in different ways (Chaskin et al., 2001). For example, strong ties, such as those among family/friends, are typically intense and developed over long periods of interaction and are primary contributors to youth civic engagement (Shaw et al., 2012). Conversely, ‘weak ties’ (Granovetter, 1973) include casual friends/acquaintances with whom people do not have intimate relations but function to connect people in the wider community. Through increased social networks and interaction with ‘weak ties’, youth become aware of issues that are in need of action, as well as opportunities to be involved in actions addressing these issues (Chavis and Wandersman, 1990). Such engagement cuts across the diversity of communities and exposes youth to a wide range of people, experiences, skills, and opportunities (Shaw et al., 2012).

Accepting that networks of civic engagement are essential, there is no agreement in the literature about the types of engagement from which social capital is most likely derived (Bridger and Luloff, 2001). Putnam (1993) makes a direct link between levels of civic engagement and a community’s capacity to tackle its own social/economic issues including educational participation. Schuller et al. (2002), supported by Balatti and Falk (2002), found that education creates conditions that help develop the building
blocks of social capital: it extends, enriches, and reconstructs social networks and builds trust and relationships; influences the development of shared norms and the values of tolerance, understanding, and respect; and affects individual behaviours and attitudes that influence community participation. Schuller et al. (2002) found that the wider benefits of learning promote social capital through developing skills, networks and personal identity. Skills acquisition activates civic engagement insofar as basic skills are necessary pre-conditions for participation at any level. Thence, networks are maintained through helping people to develop in ways that might otherwise be inaccessible. Personal identity is enhanced when people link through notions of belonging, through citizenship actions and through values which can be personal or collective, sustaining or transformative. Thus, learning as a tool of social capital, facilitates people to understand another’s perspective and values, helping to ‘dispel blind prejudice and promote social communication at many different levels’ (p.82).

Social capital can be bonding, bridging and/or linking. Bonding capital is based almost entirely on multi-functional ties between similar groups of people. For example, community engagement can strengthen bonds between participants (Milton et al., 2011) but, while important, has little effect on creating social capital in the wider community (Heenan, 2010). Bridging capital forges connections between diverse individuals/groups usually seeking to progress, oftentimes in employment opportunities, whereas linking capital connects individuals in positions of power (Milton et al., 2011). The different forms of social capital are important in all areas of people’s lives (Brodie et al., 2011).

Major limitations of social capital include negative social capital; political misappropriation; and operational difficulties. While there is abundant literature exploring positive associations, few look at the negative potential of social capital (van Deth and Zmerli, 2010). Social capital can be utilised for antisocial purposes (Putnam, 2000). In Bowling Alone, Putnam (2000) reveals that the ‘abundant social capital of the 1950s was exclusionary along racial, gender and class lines’ (p.358). Schuller et al. (2002) highlight the dichotomy between bonding and bridging social capital, arguing that
bonding capital can have potential to be exclusionary while bridging capital can be simultaneously inclusionary. Such a perspective shows potential for reinforcing social inequalities (Gaynor, 2011; Pinkerton and Dolan, 2007). Indeed, the contribution of older people to their community’s social capital interests policy makers (Gaynor, 2011) who are seeking less costly solutions to social problems. Accordingly, there is a benefit for public policy where Governments encompass some element of social capital in programmes which complement other resources (Policy Research Initiative/PRI, 2005). It can only have value for the state, communities and individuals if Governments build in a social capital element when drafting initiatives especially for older people as it can only be sustained with ongoing and consistent support (O’Shea, 1999). While there is no widely held agreement on how to operationalise and quantify the concept (Collier, 2002), it can be used to explain community connectedness and belonging, a key discourse in youth civic engagement.

The social capital concept is relevant to this study in the context of activating young children’s civic engagement and connecting young and old. Aspects of social capital – social support networks, participation in local institutions, trust and safety, quality of schooling and neighbourhood – are associated with positive outcomes for youth (Ferguson, 2006). Being known by adults matters to children in terms of their safety and care (Brady et al., 2012). Flanagan and Levine (2010) highlight that engaging with fellow members of community-based groups helps youth build social capital by forming social networks which connect to opportunities. Such engagement contributes to both the development of community and positive youth development which enhances positive youth leadership and helps shape community life later on (Brady et al., 2012). Thus, young people can contribute to civil society through developing social networks which are integral to their sense of attachment to community, and influence how they engage with community (Claude et al., 2000; Flanagan and Faison, 2001). Also, while there are few spaces in which to practice, civic activities offer possibilities for youth to develop a sense of civic attachment, i.e., have a voice in community concerns coupled with the desire to contribute to the
well-being of that community (Flanagan and Faison, 2001). For example, the Driskell (2002) study, Growing Up in Cities, showed that children who participated civically in community not only increased their self-esteem and self-worth, but also developed a sense of care for their communities, learned to appreciate diversity, and developed positive civic attitudes.

Overall, the important characteristics of social capital which may have relevance to this study include: networks of relationships, reciprocity, norms and trust, and engagement. Interactionist theory is discussed next.

**Interactionist theory**

Interactionist theory infers that community’s emergence is the result of bringing people together to identify and understand common community needs (Bridger *et al.*, 2009). Community is developed, created, and re-created as an emergent process of social interaction (Bridger *et al.*, 2009; Wilkinson, 1991). Community emerges from the central roles played by local interaction and capacity among people who share a common territory of histories, traditions, and cultures unique to a place wherein people organise themselves around various interests/goals or ‘special fields’ (McGrath and Brennan, 2011). These groups represent unbounded fields of interaction representative of age, gender, socioeconomic status, education and others. Therefore, for community to emerge into a cohesive whole from within a local society, there must be a process capable of connecting the acts occurring in these special interest fields. This is accomplished by the development of the broader community field which is made up of actors, agencies, and associations. The special field then creates linkages and channels of communication between and among the actions and interests of the other social fields (Wilkinson, 1991). Thus, community is formed through the intersection of groups/organisations which integrate fields into the generalised whole by creating and maintaining linkages that otherwise would not interact and would be focused on more individual interests (McGrath and Brennan, 2011; Brennan *et al.*, 2009; Luloff and Bridger, 2003): ‘the community field creates a larger whole – one that is unbounded, dynamic, and emergent’ (McGrath and Brennan, 2011, p.342). Through
such interactive process, an awareness of common interests emerges, as do opportunities for involvement in activities for meeting identified needs. In building linkages across entities within a local population, the community field provides the interactional context which supports individual and social well-being (Bridger and Alter, 2008). Then, as relationships between people representing special interest fields are strengthened, local capacity to address identified problems/issues that present in special interest fields emerges. Essentially, the community field arises out of the interaction between various special interest fields, and consequently, it establishes the wider community interest within local social activity (Wilkinson, 1991).

In context of this study, when groups interact over common issues, capacity for action emerges (Brennan and Luloff, 2007) with the result that youth can develop ‘more purposive and focused actions culminating in collective capacity and the emergence of ‘community’’ (Shaw et al., 2012, p.3.9). Thence, youth as civic actors, when supported by collaborative action, can help to create connections between community members through identifying common local issues and offering solutions to them (Chavis and Wandersman, 1990). Such interaction gives direction to collaborative processes and is a source of common identity, attachment, and connectedness (Bridger et al., 2009; Wilkinson, 1991). In consequence, youth’s self-identity is enhanced through being recognised, valued and taken seriously by community members (Brennan, 2008; Brennan et al., 2009). This engagement can develop their capacity to manage, utilise, and enhance available resources when addressing community needs (Brennan et al., 2007). Such process can be exercised through community projects, including for example, ‘activities focusing on traditional music, storytelling and other related activities [which] would be seen as excellent venues for interaction and communication’ (McGrath and Brennan, 2011, p.343). Indeed, by serving community projects, youth may become future community leaders able to contribute to the long-term sustainability of projects (Brennan et al., 2009; Brennan, 2008).

A way for this study to strengthen the community field is by finding points of intersection between and among the special interests of young and old.
This, as McGrath and Brennan (2011) highlight, includes establishing and maintaining communication channels across diverse social divides. Then, as the various social fields interact in response to a constantly changing environment, young and old might develop what is called ‘community agency’ which reflects not only the motives of people to act, but also their capability for action and resiliency (Brennan et al., 2007; Luloff and Bridger, 2003). Such agency can arise when participants (e.g., pupils) show capacity to manage, utilise, and enhance the resources available to them in addressing locality-wide issues. Agency, or capacity to control one’s own thoughts, develop personal competences and use these forces to derive desired outcomes (Baker et al., 2003), can be expressed through civic engagement at all levels (Brady et al., 2012).

3. Social support and resilience

Social supports refer to responsive acts of assistance undertaken or given/received between human beings (Tracy and Whittaker, 1994). Dolan (2010) argues that civic engagement strengthens youth’s social supports and resilience because it allows them to discover reciprocally supportive relationships and to experience how it feels to make a difference in community. He argues that civic activities can buffer youth from adversity thereby helping them to develop resilience and enhance well-being. Thence, having access to social support, inside or outside of family, is key to positive youth development because such access enables youth to withstand stress and develop coping skills which help the transition to adulthood (Dolan and Brady, 2012; Shaw et al., 2012; Dolan, 2010; Cutrona, 2000). Youth reciprocate social support through their participation, regardless of whether the activity is charity work or youth club activity or social justice-based causes (Dolan, 2012). Received supports generally include tangible, emotional, esteem, and advice assistance, which can be readily generated through any civic opportunities with youth (Dolan and Brady, 2012). Tangible support concerns doing practical acts of assistance (Cutrona, 2000) whereby youth are helped to use social/community resources and benefit from opportunities arising from a helper’s/mentor’s own social networks (Dolan, 2010). People draw on emotional support according to their need for
care (Darling et al., 2003) and therefore it can be applicable to any situation (Cutrona, 2000). It requires empathetic understanding of another’s perspective and emotional experiences (Spencer, 2006). Esteem support refers to people’s capacity to express concern for another and is rooted in reciprocity as a quality which is more likely to be stronger for possessing reciprocity/give-and-take (Cutrona, 2000). In consequence, youth’s sense of being beholden, or being obligated to another, is lessened (Dolan and Brady, 2012) and thence, they can be better recognised and respected for their participation (Neale, 2004), thereby seeing themselves in a more positive light when viewed positively by adults (Mead, 1934). Advice support can be more readily received from caring adults when it does not reduce the recipient’s self-esteem (Cutrona and Russell, 1990).

Resilience is the ability to overcome difficulty in the face of adversity through the use of internal and external resources (Rutter et al., 1998). According to Ungar (2012), when resilience is instilled and nurtured early enough in life, it stays with a person throughout life but requires contributors at family, school, community, and societal levels to maintain it. This can be maintained through developing problem-solving skills, external interests or attachments, support from non-familial adults, a purpose in life and sense of self-efficacy (Ungar, 2012). Youth tend to demonstrate resilience in how they muster assistance and deal with the problems they encounter over time (Clarke and Clarke, 2003), thereby enabling protective factors to outweigh the impact of risk factors in their lives (Gilligan, 2008). Besides, through their participation, young people gain insight into other people’s difficulties and learn that other people also have to face adversity (Shaw et al., 2012; Dolan, 2011, 2010). Consequently, in becoming ‘civic actors’ concerned with the well-being of others (Flanagan et al., 1999), they can derive personal satisfaction, increased self-worth, and a feeling that they belong to something bigger than themselves (Sherrod et al., 2002). Such supports can readily be generated through youth civic engagement (Dolan, 2010).

It is important to be alert to negative support, particularly for vulnerable youth. Whittaker (2009) warns that not all support might be positive, as
networks might contain dangers like negative criticism from donors, or lack of reciprocity which might negatively impact particularly on vulnerable youth and, according to Dolan (2012), lead to their having poorer coping capacity. Indeed, where young people over-use their supply of social support, or when negatively-directed or ineffective, it can result in their having poorer coping skills further reinforcing a sense of helplessness and hopelessness (Dolan, 2012). That said, ‘hidden support’ through positive interpersonal relationships creates social support for youth (Bolger and Amarel, 2007).

4. Social justice youth development

Social justice models of youth development include elements of youth development frameworks like emotional and social support, but they also incorporate socio-political elements based on critical understanding about the root causes of social and community problems (Brady et al., 2012). Ginwright and Cammarota (2002) maintain that social justice youth development goes beyond assets-based and pro-social development to ‘foster youth as active agents of change in their own environment based on understanding of socio-political conditions and injustice’ (p.86). They base their argument on principles of self-awareness and social awareness. Self-awareness includes practices and programmes that foster a positive sense of self. Social awareness encourages people to think critically about social/political issues in their own communities which, in turn, promotes enquiry, analysis and problem-solving as components of critical thinking.

Research has shown that while young people may be committed to social justice issues, they do not necessarily consider themselves responsible for doing anything about them until involved in civic actions that are more likely to resonate with themselves (Flanagan and Levine, 2010). Research also shows that youth believe that their participation is not valued and, thence, they feel that their engagement in relation to social issues is not worthwhile (Hart, 2009; Millbourne, 2009; Stoneman, 2002). Generally, the literature on youth civic engagement reports for maintaining the status quo rather than taking action for social justice (Watts and Flanagan, 2007)
The civic engagement continuum has now been discussed as the incremental process underlying civic engagement. A summary chart outlining the key criteria necessary to activate young children’s civic engagement can be viewed at Figure 2.1:

Figure 2.1: The civic engagement continuum (adapted: FYCO, 2003)

**Benefits of youth civic engagement**

As well as enhanced opportunities for democratic participation, community connectedness, increased social support and positive social justice oriented youth development, youth civic engagement leads to increased wellbeing, resilience, self-efficacy and opportunities to practice altruism, which help to
focus away from self and onto the needs of others (Dolan, 2010; Brendtro, 2009). Youth civic engagement benefits communities insofar as civic activity can help to create connectedness between community members, and promote collaboration through identifying and offering solutions to common local concerns thereby emphasising the contribution of youth as civic actors (Shaw et al., 2012). This way, youth experience a sense of contributing to shared norms or values such that ‘one feels at home rather than out of place’ in their communities (Sherrod et al., 2002, p.267). Moreover, there is growing recognition that community and youth resiliency are ‘part of the same cohesive whole that reflects local wellbeing and adaptive capacities’ (Brennan, 2008, p.1). Thence, interaction with others through community-based groups helps form social networks, build social capital and connect to opportunities (Flanagan and Levine, 2010). Outcomes for society include: improved capacity to identify and meet social needs; stronger democracies through youth voice and participation; and incremental generational build up on positive change in society partly attributable to social justice-based inclusivity of youth (Dolan, 2012).

**Promoting young children’s civic engagement**

Deliberate, consistent effort is required to organise people into any form of civic action. Young people may feel that they cannot make a difference when they are not organised into political/social activities (Stoneman, 2002). Notwithstanding, children’s participation can be promoted through school councils, mentoring programmes, service learning and volunteering opportunities (Finlay et al., 2010). It can also be accommodated through civic education, extra-curricular activities and through promoting a positive school climate (Torney-Purta and Vermeer, 2004) and can begin with any local forms of civic involvement within children’s reach (Lister, 2007; Theis, 2010; Bartlett, 2005). Thence, for this study, and considering practicalities associated with children of primary school age, enhancement of curricular knowledge is a form of young children’s participation or engagement. In Dewey’s words (1916, p.338):
‘If the living, experiencing being is an intimate participant in the activities of the world to which it belongs, then knowledge is a mode of participation, valuable in the degree in which it is effective.’

A child’s participation is likely to be best facilitated through literacy and numeracy collaborations. In Ireland, the government initiative to address literacy/numeracy issues amongst children/young people, *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life* (2011-2020), stresses that children need literacy/numeracy ‘to participate fully in the education system, to live satisfying and rewarding lives, and to participate as active and informed citizens in our society’ (GOI, 2011b, p.7). Civic literacy as the learning tool for young children’s civic engagement is discussed next.

**2.4 The civic literacy concept: a learning tool of civic engagement**

The word *civic* is derived from the Latin *civis/civitas* meaning *citizen/citizenship*. In this study, the civic literacy concept represents the key learning, measuring and evaluating tool for developing children’s civic engagement and connecting young to old. It incorporates ‘components of personal responsibility, caring for others and for the community, and leadership to take positive actions’ (Chi *et al.*, 2006, p.6). Finlay *et al.* (2010) advise programmers to outline the specific civic goals they wish to achieve and provide real opportunities for youth to engage in action towards achieving them because then, the learning can be profound (Stoneman, 2002). Accordingly, interventions were devised to develop desired outcomes for the civic literacy concept. The themes, as constructed by Chi *et al.* (2006) are discussed next, and are capitalised throughout for ease of identification: Personal Responsibility, Civic Responsibility and Leadership.
Theme One: Personal Responsibility

Personal responsibility has received limited previous research attention in the context of young children and youth (Mergler, 2007). It is understood generally as being accountable to oneself and to the needs and well-being of others (Ruyter, 2002). According to Chi et al. (2006), Personal Responsibility requires that:

‘The student demonstrates responsible behaviors and good judgment and accepts responsibility for [his] own behaviour [and]…also demonstrates responsible work habits such as staying on task, working independently and showing best effort’ (pp.10-11).

Personal responsibility can be understood in terms of related constructs (Mergler, 2007): locus of control and self-regulation; personal agency and self-efficacy; self-concept and self-esteem; self-regulation and emotional intelligence.

- Locus of control and self-regulation

Locus of control is the tendency to either take responsibility for one’s own actions or attribute outcomes to external forces (Richards et al., 2002). Thus a person possessing internal locus of control perceives an event to be dependent on his/her own behaviour, whereas external control might be attributed to chance. Research shows that youth who possess greater powers of internal control do better academically (Anderson et al., 2002) and are better protected from risk factors for negatively-oriented behaviours (Grossman et al., 1992) than those attributing their outcomes to fate or chance. Thus, a person who understands that his behaviour has consequences may more willingly hold himself responsible.

Self-regulation refers to the effort a person makes to control his/her thoughts, emotions and actions so as to achieve a skill or ambition (Zimmerman, 1989). Self-regulated students are able to develop action plans, set goals, and plan alternative solutions/contingency plans (Ley and Young, 2001). Self-regulation links to personal responsibility in that one
must be aware of one’s own thought processes, emotions and behavioural responses so as to anticipate the outcomes.

- **Personal agency and self-efficacy**

Personal agency refers to how a person can control his/her own thoughts and behaviour, develop feelings of personal competences and inner control, and use these forces to derive desired outcomes (Baker et al., 2003) and act upon the world. Thus, personal agency informs an understanding of personal responsibility insofar as power to make choices (personal agency) resides with oneself. Since people believe that they can control for outcomes affecting them, it would be expected that they would take responsibility for outcomes they have generated.

Self-efficacy infers ‘beliefs in one’s abilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to meet situational demands’ (Wood and Bandura, 1989, p.48). Thence, making deliberate choices and acting upon them infers that one must believe oneself capable of such action. Self-efficacy is the foundation of human agency because unless people believe that they can produce desired effects by their actions they have little incentive to take action (Bandura, 1999). A person judges his self-efficacy based on factors like: skill mastery; comparison against others/peers; and self-reflection and social encounters that highlight capacity for thought and action. According to Bandura’s (1989) social cognitive theory, people learn by observing others. The idea is that when people observe a model performing a behaviour and observe the consequences of that behaviour, they remember the sequence of events and use that information to guide their own subsequent behaviours.

- **Self-concept and self-esteem**

Powell (2004) defines self-concept as the perception one has of his/her identity and achievements across a wide domain including for example, school and social relationships [for children]. Pupils with poor self-concept are oftentimes confused about their identity and feel incapable of changing their situation (Coopersmith, 1967). Self-esteem is the affective response
people have to their self-concept including their sense of self-respect and self-worth (Rosenberg, 1985). Since personal responsibility involves one’s capacity to understand one’s own and another’s emotions (Mergler, 2007), it can therefore be linked to self-esteem.

- Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence is ‘the ability to perceive accurately, appraise and express emotion, the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought, [and] the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge’ (Mayer and Salovey, 1997, p.10). Thus, emotional intelligence involves the interplay of cognitive processes and emotional experiences and includes the ability to manage oneself. Mayer and Salovey (1993) claim that by developing emotional intelligence, a person is more likely to be attuned to his/her emotional experiences and be better able to articulate emotional needs thus making oneself more accountable for one’s thoughts, actions and behaviour.

Personal responsibility, as theorised by Mergler (2007), encompasses related dimensions of locus of control, personal agency, self-efficacy, self-regulation, self-concept, self-esteem and emotional intelligence. In sum, personal responsibility infers ‘the ability to identify and regulate one’s own thoughts, feelings and behaviour, along with a willingness to hold oneself accountable for the choices made and the social and personal outcomes generated from these choices’ (p.66).

**Theme Two: Civic Responsibility**

Civic responsibility involves the autonomous application of behaviour that serves to benefit others due to internally derived principles or values (Collins et al., 1997). It involves having ‘a prosocial value orientation, rooted in democratic relationships with others and moral principles of care and justice, that motivates a range of civic actions’ (Wray-Lake and Syvertsen, 2011, p.14). Being values-driven, it extends beyond personal wants, needs, or gains, and requires a sense of obligation to contribute to the greater good (Berman, 1997; Gallay, 2006).
According to Chi et al. (2006), Civic Responsibility infers that the student shows ‘courtesy and respect for others and finds ways to help others…[and] shows respect for and is able to identify needs and solutions for group and community’ (p.11). The dimensions include (p.15):

‘Caring for others, valuing group work, caring for community, appreciating diversity and demonstrating environmental stewardship.’

Civic responsibility can be activated through: modelling pro-social behaviours, communicating value socialisation messages, and providing opportunities to practice socially responsible behaviours (Wray-Lake and Syvertsen, 2011). The more opportunities youth have to witness others acting in pro-social ways, the more likely they are to copy these actions (Eisenberg and Mussen, 1989). Modelled behaviours are more likely to be internalised in children’s behaviour and thence, modelling pro-social behaviours can be a mechanism for socialising values of civic responsibility (Wray-Lake and Syvertsen, 2011). Direct efforts to socialise children to the needs of others are positively associated with civic responsibility (Wray-Lake, 2010) as well as related understandings of moral reasoning (Pratt et al., 2004) and pro-social attitudes to others (Flanagan and Tucker, 1999). Communicating concern for another and using inductive reasoning can prompt youth to internalise social responsibility through activating empathetic concern (Wray-Lake and Syvertsen, 2011).

Providing opportunities to practice socially responsible behaviours can help youth develop perspective-taking skills, stimulate identity development, and reinforce self-efficacy in the civic domain (Wray-Lake and Syvertsen, 2011). Rich opportunities to practice social responsibility can be developed through peer relationships, community service and school/activity settings (Wray-Lake and Syvertsen, 2011). Through peer relationships, youth can come to understand caring for another, making it necessary to develop perspective-taking and conflict resolution skills (Syvertsen and Flanagan, 2006), thereby enhancing moral development (Eisenberg et al., 2006). Service activities can be boosted through sustained friendships/relationships (Syvertsen and Flanagan, 2006) because by having peer support for
engaging in new activities young people may encourage others to participate in school and community activities (Wray-Lake and Syvertsen, 2011). Service to others, whether through organisations or alone, is instrumental in cultivating social responsibility, providing a forum to display ‘empathetic concern, refine cognitive abilities, and reflect on social issues’ (p.20). Quasi-experimental studies comparing youth in service-learning programmes with non-participating peers show that participation in service activities positively predicts youth’s social responsibility and future civic commitments (Scales et al., 2000).

Overall, developing civic or social responsibility requires a focus on children’s emotional, cognitive, and identity development plus providing environments which cultivate social responsibility (Wray-Lake and Syvertsen, 2011). Social responsibility stimulates a citizenship process rooted in care and driven by obligations to contribute to society. Hence, interventions designed to encourage civic or social responsibility would focus on modelling pro-social behaviour, value-messaging, and creating opportunities to practice civic skills (Wray-Lake and Syvertsen, 2011).

**Theme Three: Leadership**

For the purposes of this study, leadership is understood as: a person’s ability to influence others to work together for a common purpose (Wheeler and Edlebeck, 2006), in response to personal and/or social issues and challenges, so as to effect positive change (Kahn et al., 2009). It involves learning how to participate in group processes, build consensus, and subsume personal ideas and interests to that of the collective (Lewis-Charp et al., 2003). Chi et al. (2006) frame Leadership as (p.11):

‘The student takes initiative and acts as role model to help group, class or school to make a positive difference.’

The student would ideally demonstrate: (a) ‘leadership efficacy’ (‘attitudes and actions of taking leadership positions’); (b) ‘civic/critical thinking’ (‘ability to think critically’); and (c) ‘civic participation’ (‘skills in
perspective taking, communication, group membership and conflict resolution’) (p.16). These skills are now discussed.

(a) Leadership Efficacy

Leadership efficacy is ‘associated with the level of confidence in the knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with leading others’ (Hannah et al., 2008, p.669). Leadership efficacy helps individuals undertake leadership roles under challenging circumstances which can impact on follower outcomes (Hannah et al., 2008; Hoyt et al., 2003; Murphy, 2002). When one gains leadership experience, others expect him/her to act as leader, creating a self-fulfilling prophecy effect based on higher expectations because of increased attention, access to resources, and/or self-efficacy (Eden, 1993). Such response encourages one to have expectations of oneself. A desire to meet those expectations creates a snowball effect (Eden, 1993). Accordingly, as one gains greater leadership efficacy, he/she is more likely to engage in leadership roles, which further serve to increase one’s leadership efficacy (Hannah et al., 2008).

(b) Civic Thinking Skills

Civic thinking infers ‘the ability to think critically’ (Chi et al., 2006, p.16). It requires cognitive skills to analyse arguments, and draw inferences using inductive/deductive reasoning, evaluate, make decisions and/or solve problems, inducing ‘open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, flexibility, a propensity to seek reason, a desire to be well-informed, and a respect for and willingness to entertain diverse viewpoints’ (Lai, 2011, p.1).

To develop critical thinking is to engage with a topic by ‘explaining, finding evidence and examples, generalizing, applying, analogizing, and representing the topic in new ways’ (Perkins and Blythe, 1996, p.13). It is best facilitated through active learning whereby, according to Doolittle and Camp (1999, pp.33-37), learners can consider situations from many perspectives thus enhancing their ability to develop pro-social skills (i.e., communication, problem-solving, goal setting). Accordingly, students are encouraged to be accountable for their own learning being actively involved
in constructing their own knowledge/understandings through planning, monitoring, and evaluation. Thence, greater awareness can be generated in learners through their interaction with the experience and through providing for and encouraging multiple perspectives which promote greater versatility in the student’s thinking on/in different situations.

To develop critical thinking is to teach to, for, and through the multiple intelligences (Hanafin, 2014). In teaching to and through the intelligences, learners derive a solid foundation on which to construct knowledge in action-researched projects. With Hanafin (2014), portfolio journaling was a key learning tool of critical thinking because ‘moments of assessment became moments of learning’ (p.133) giving participants greater motivation, higher academic attainment, improved self-esteem, enjoyable classroom experiences, improved recall and understanding. Such an approach has potential value in developing critical thinking through the different intelligences presented in studies such as this, given that it is applicable to ‘any topic for any subject area’ (Hanafin, 2014, p.132).

The narrow emphasis on literacy and numeracy to the exclusion of other intelligences was the impetus for Gardner’s multiple intelligences (MI) theory. Gardner (1983) claims that there are eight independent but interconnected intelligences: linguistic, logico-mathematical, visual-spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist. He theorises that ‘multiple human faculties are to a significant extent independent of each other’ and that a high level of ability in one does not require a similarly high level in another (Walters and Gardner, 1986). However, he is criticised for: not offering a clear programme for classrooms (Levin, 1994); the subjective nature of the intelligence categories (White, 1998); and limited evidence for informing educational practice (Waterhouse, 2006). Nonetheless, research conducted in the Irish context (Hanafin, 1997; Fleischmann, 1998) was influential in bringing MI theory into the mainstream of Irish education policy from 1999 onwards at varying levels of curriculum development at primary level (Hanafin, 2014).
Civic Participation involves perspective-taking, communication, group membership and conflict resolution (Chi et al., 2006, p.16). Perspective-taking was referred to by Chi et al. (2006) as: ‘[taking] the perspective of others to understand how people feel and what they intend by what they do’ (p.13). The ability to participate depends on a basic competence in taking the perspective of others (Hart, 1992). Selman (1980), theorising on the growth of interpersonal understanding, claims that perspective-taking ability improves incrementally with maturity, such that between ages five and nine children become capable of differentiating physical and psychological characteristics of another. They recognise another’s uniqueness in having a subjective view of the world. Selman (1980) also theorises that children between ages seven and 12 start stepping outside themselves to take a self-reflective look at their interactions with others and to realise that others do likewise. This ‘sequential perspective-taking’ phase means that they now realise they can put themselves in another’s shoes. They also recognise how a person may have mixed feelings, like being adventurous and excited, yet apprehensive. This phase means that they are beginning to understand that they and others are capable of actions they may not condone although they cannot yet reconcile their perspectives with those of others. The next stage, ‘mutual perspective taking’, is necessary for children to be able to organise themselves into enduring democratic groups. This perspective arises between ages 10 to 15. They then spontaneously coordinate their perspectives with those of others. Children are intellectually capable of working with adults, even in early years, but adults need to be sensitive to the limitations of children’s perspectives (Hart, 1992). Moreover, the sequence theorised by Selman (1980) is limited by a child’s intellectual development and cognitive capacity to consider the perspective of others. Selman does not take into account such factors as how the child understands people’s differing roles and powers which might influence their view of others (Hart, 1992).
Communication, another element of participation, infers sharing something between people. In the context of this study, such sharing implies learning collaborations. Interestingly, the verbs ‘to communicate’ (communicāre: ‘to put into a common stock; to share’) and ‘to participate’ (participāre: ‘to take a share in’) are reciprocal entities (Longwood’s Latin-English Dictionary, 1958). Thus, to be shared, learning must be communicated by someone to someone and reciprocally participated in because otherwise it is not shared. Dewey (1916) argues that ‘men live in a community in virtue of the things which they have in common; and communication is the way in which they come to possess things in common’ (p.8). They share ‘aims, beliefs, aspirations, knowledge [or] a common understanding’ (p.8) and ‘the communication which insures participation in a common understanding is one which secures similar emotional and intellectual dispositions…’ (p.9).

In this study, it is envisaged that participants would reach a common understanding by participating and communicating in terms of the civic literacy concept outlined in Figure 2.2:
Figure 2.2: The civic literacy concept

Civic literacy incorporates ‘civic knowledge …and civic dispositions that are critical to the development of civic literacy’ (Chi et al., 2006, p.11).

*Civic knowledge* addresses what students should know about citizenship. It is prescribed on the curriculum (GOI, 1999) and therefore is not a research concern of this study.

*Civic dispositions* infers (Chi et al., 2006, p.13): willingness to balance group needs with personal needs and initiate actions to address issues in the community; responsibility and care towards animals, plants, people and environment; recognising civic authority and institutions in the local community; recognising opportunities for positive change; ability to critically reflect on a process; and show respect for diversity.
The literature discussed in Section One has illuminated contemporary understandings of childhood which suggest participation in the here-and-now. The civic literacy concept was put forward as an appropriate learning tool to activate young children’s civic engagement. Its core themes were found to be compatible with the content of the SPHE curriculum. It would offer possibilities to solve the first problem outlined in this study, namely: weaknesses in the provision of citizenship education at Irish Primary School. Section Two addresses possibilities for intergenerational collaborations which aim to support the civic engagement of young children. It is discussed next as a social vehicle for connecting young and old through the civic literacy concept.
SECTION TWO: INTERGENERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

The numbered headings in this section pick up where Section One left off. This section opens with a discussion of intergenerational practice, programmes and learning (2.5). It then traces the history (2.6), categories of intergenerational programme (2.7) and outcomes/limitations for intergenerational engagement (2.8). The chapter ends by linking together the two parts of this chapter, namely children’s civic engagement and intergenerational engagement (2.9), so as to formulate the central research question.

2.5 Intergenerational engagement: practice and programmes

Insofar as the Latin word ‘inter’ means ‘between/among’, ‘the key to the term (inter)generational, therefore, lies, not in the generational but in the inter, in the between’ (Newman and Sanchez, 2007, p.38). Thus, intergenerational engagement encompasses ‘the full range of ways in which younger people and older adults interact, support, and provide care for one another’ (Kaplan, 2001, p.4). It infers intergenerational practice, programmes and learning. Included are ‘people who are 21 and under and…60 and over, with the intention of benefitting one or both age groups’ (p.4). The Beth Johnson Foundation (BJF, 2001) understand that:

‘Intergenerational practice aims to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promote greater understanding and respect between generations and contributes to building more cohesive communities. Intergenerational practice is inclusive, building on the positive resources that the young and old have to offer each other and those around them’ (BJF, 2001).

In short, it can be understood as ‘linking together a range of processes that build positive relationships between generations, bringing mutual benefits to all involved’ (BJF, 2011, p.5). Hence, intergenerational programmes are ‘vehicles for the purposeful and ongoing exchange of resources and learning among older and younger generations for individual and social benefits’ (cited in Newman and Sánchez, 2007, p.36). Intergenerational learning, as
interpreted by EAGLE (2008), refers to ‘a process, through which individuals of all ages acquire skills and knowledge, but also attitudes and values, from daily experience, from all available resources and from all influences in their own ‘life worlds’’ (p.5). Linkage with active ageing, understood as the ‘process of optimising opportunities for physical, social and mental well-being throughout the life course’ (World Health Organisation, 2002), occurs through intergenerational programmes that oftentimes function as social and cultural interventions (ENIL, 2012).

Over the past 30 years, the United Nations has advocated for intergenerational learning as a mechanism to promote intergenerational solidarity. The Second World Assembly on Ageing, in adopting the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA), recognises that persons, as they age, should enjoy active participation in the economic, social, cultural and political life of their societies (UN, 2002). Accordingly, included in MIPAA’s core concepts is a life-course approach that stresses equity, reciprocity and inclusiveness of all age groups in policy areas. Such is the importance of building relationships based on equity, reciprocity and inclusiveness that 2012 was designated as the European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations. Intergenerational solidarity refers to a process whereby each person makes an exchange with another to get what he needs (Puijalon, 1989, cited in ENIL, 2012). Such process helps to ‘create a framework for going beyond dependence in order to achieve interdependence: each participant feels that s/he needs the others and that they, in turn, need [him/her] (Sánchez et al., 2009, p.7). Intergenerational learning is advocated as an expression of intergenerational solidarity (TOY, 2013) in equally emphasising the value of learning together, learning from each other and learning about each other (Preisser, 2011). Volunteering is one way of expressing intergenerational learning in accommodating ‘a learning partnership based on reciprocity and mutuality involving people of different ages where the generations work together to gain skills, values and knowledge’ (ENIL, 2012, p.3). Developing any learning partnership with a child requires one to follow the core tenets of the child’s learning relationship (Hohmann and Weikart, 1995):
Trust - a child can explore the unknown, confident that the people on whom he/she depends will provide necessary support and encouragement;

Autonomy - the child’s capacity for independence, identity, exploration and thinking that prompts a child to explore and initiate actions is facilitated;

Initiative - the child can take a task to completion, evaluate it, make a decision and act on that decision;

Empathy - the child can be helped to understand how others feel by relating to feelings they have also experienced, and thus, develop a sense of connectedness;

Self-confidence - capacity to believe in one’s own ability to accomplish tasks, communicate and contribute positively to society.

Children who learn actively are intrinsically motivated to learn, experience enjoyment and the likelihood of success through repetition (Hohmann and Weikart, 1995). Thence, to give meaning to the ‘inter’, ‘a supportive interpersonal climate’ is essential for learning (p.43) and intergenerational learning collaborations offer that opportunity. The next section traces the history of intergenerational engagement.

2.6 History of intergenerational engagement

Intergenerational engagement has evolved over three key phases (Newman and Sánchez, 2007). A first phase, initiated in the 1960s/1970s in North America, evolved out of concern for the widening ‘generation gap’ evidenced in negative stereotyping of older people and growing numbers of children needing care. Consequently, governments and foundations organised and funded intergenerational programmes. For example, Foster Grandparents Program, a social grand-parenting idea, was created by the Federal Government of the United States in the mid-1960s as a poverty alleviation strategy ‘to introduce a group of volunteer older persons into relationships of affection with children at social risk who had lost the
support of their families or had special needs’ (Pinazo and Kaplan, 2007, p.82).

The second phase, spanning the late 1980s and early 1990s, evolved from concern for young people who were increasingly presenting problems of ‘low self-esteem, drug and alcohol abuse, poor academic performance, isolation…lack of appropriate support systems, unemployment and…lack of familial and social ties’ (Newman and Sánchez, 2007, p.48). Intergenerational programmes broadened their scope in attempting to revitalise communities which ‘could be expected to re-connect different generations’ (p.48). For example, Experience Corps (Fried et al., 2000) was initiated in 1995 as a national mentoring IP across America. It focussed on connecting young and old through mentoring relationships so as to increase wellness and social participation for elders while simultaneously improving literacy, numeracy and behaviour for children. Mentors received a stipend for volunteering 12 or more hours weekly. Teachers reported improved literacy, numeracy, and language skills for pupils because of improved socialisation skills, study techniques, self-confidence, and school attendance (Pinazo and Kaplan, 2007).

The third phase saw intergenerational practice spreading across Europe from the late 1990s (Newman and Sánchez, 2007) in response to problems like: integration of migrants (The Netherlands); social inclusion and the new roles to be played by older people (UK); and interest in promoting the idea of active ageing (Spain). The Beth Johnson Foundation, established in 1972 in the UK, focussed on new approaches to ageing that linked policy, practice and research (Hatton-Yeo, 2006). They launched small-scale pilot-projects from the 1990s which represent different categories of engagement, as discussed next.

2.7 Categories and examples of intergenerational programming

Intergenerational programmes belong in three categories according to form, function and scales of learning. **Form**—depends on the type of interaction: older adults serving the young as resources in tutoring/mentoring filling the social grand-parenting role; children and youth serving older people as
visitors, companions and/or tutors; both collaborating in community service like environmental and community projects or any other informal learning activities (Brown and Ohsako, 2003). **Function**—usually constitutes friendly and informal social encounters involving transfer of experiences, knowledge, know-how and memories; mutual creations like the arts; and active solidarity towards those in difficulty. While these categorisations capture the breadth of intergenerational engagement, they fail to show the level and quality of intergenerational contact (ENIL, 2012, p.15). **Scales of learning**—There are seven levels on the intergenerational depth of engagement continuum (Kaplan, 2002, p.314): learning about the other age group, but without direct contact (level-1); seeing the other age group but at a distance (level-2); meeting each other (level-3); annual or periodic activities (level-4); demonstration projects (implemented on an experimental/trial basis) (level-5); on-going intergenerational programmes (level-6); and on-going, intergenerational sharing, support and communication (level-7). The most meaningful intergenerational relationships develop when level-5 projects lead to level-6 programmes. At level-7, intergenerational engagement is perceived as having become embedded in the community as a way of working and living (BJF, 2011).

**Examples of intergenerational programmes**

Hatton-Yeo (2007) warns that while a wide range of literature prevails from North America, Germany, the Netherlands, France, Spain and Japan, amongst others, these countries have different cultures and intergenerational emphasis and, while one can learn from them, their practices may not be culturally transferrable. Notwithstanding this note of caution, some programmes have particular relevance for this study.

*The Bigger Picture* and *Points of View* projects (Hatton-Yeo, 2006) are run by the *Magic Me* (2005) company (Magic Me, 2005) in partnership with Tower Hamlets Mediation Service and secondary schools in London. Settings range from Pensioners’ Clubs to nursing homes, schools to cultural organisations. Each project has its own aims in relation to community development including individual participants’ personal and skills
development. The idea is to enable younger and older participants to gain greater awareness of one another’s concerns and points of view, to discover mutual concerns and to examine areas of difference. Three-year programmes are initiated between students and seniors, facilitated by artists from Magic Me. They participate in activities exploring attitudes to older people. Participants study the arts, technology (e.g., photography, video, audio, ICT), and pro-social skills (communication, reflection, teambuilding). Workshops are linked to the prescribed citizenship curriculum and students are encouraged to explore their roles as citizens. Activities are recorded in learning logs and are integrated as project work for GCSE examinations. For example, Points of View projects have facilitated students and seniors to undertake the GCSE Citizenship examination collaboratively after which project findings are presented and discussed with the school/local community. Such projects inform possibilities for developing an interventionist/citizenship programme for participants in this study, albeit in primary school.

Personal Social and Health Education was researched by Martin et al. (2010). They found that key sustainability factors included: developing one-to-one relationships whereby partners with similar interests were paired on needs/resources bases so as to sustain recruitment, commitment and interest. Planners found that wherever projects were informed by the curriculum (e.g., history and citizenship education), ‘there can be positive benefits for academic work’ (p.7). However, challenges arose for older people from concerns about working with youth or from negative criticism. Thence, a code of conduct needed to be agreed upfront to pre-empt negatively-oriented behaviours. Some projects did not include participants with negatively entrenched views about either generation. Yet, evidence of potentially negative outcomes emerged in some evaluations showing ‘potential for negative stereotypes to be reinforced’ (p.8) as verified by Granville (2002). She found that intergenerational programmes often end up producing a negative impact by reinforcing or even deepening (rather than solving) the conflicts they take on.
In Ireland, Finn and Scharf (2012) found that ‘to date no attempt has been made to draw together information about the nature of projects that bring the different generations together’ (p.4). Of 28 programmes reviewed, all possessed criteria for intergenerational engagement, with three-quarters reporting having been evaluated. This included, for instance, *The Maugherow Project: Unwrapping Creativity 1998-2001* (O’Connor, n.d.). Under the auspices of Sligo Arts and Health, this project has been conducted in a rural primary school in Ireland involving children (8-12-years) and older people (55 years and over) in collaborations with professional artists to explore their native place. Aiming to enhance social relationships, and promote greater understanding of health and well-being, it celebrates creativity in older age. Reported benefits include reinforcement of personal and communal identities; positive changes in attitudes towards self and others; improvements in physical, mental and emotional well-being; and altered patterns of social engagement. A possible limitation is that the evaluation did not acknowledge influences outside of the project, including family and community contexts.

2.8 Outcomes and limitations of intergenerational engagement

Perceived positive outcomes for intergenerational engagement have been documented widely (e.g., TOY, 2013; ENIL, 2012; BJF, 2011; Martin *et al.*, 2010; Springate *et al.*, 2008; Sánchez *et al.*, 2009). The most frequently-cited benefits of intergenerational engagement, as documented by the Welsh Local Government and BJF (2012), include:

- Shared skills, experiences, achievements and talents to achieve mutual benefits; enhanced self-esteem and reduced exclusion for individuals and communities; changed negative perceptions of older and younger people; increased participation of people in lifelong learning; increased employment, education and training; enhanced active citizenship across generations; greater intergenerational understanding; increased wellbeing; better neighbourliness; greater understanding of the reasons for people’s behaviour; and better
opportunities for making new contacts with people of different generations.

Notwithstanding the reported effectiveness of intergenerational programmes, leading specialists and evaluators (e.g., Sánchez and Diá, 2009; Springate et al., 2008; Granville, 2002) question the substance of reported outcomes. For example, Sánchez and Diá (2009) found that many studies in Spain were ‘based on anecdotal evidence that eludes to some specific aspect of the programme rather than its general impact’ (p.10). Having analysed 133 programmes, they found that evaluation frequently amounted to just counting the number of participants in different activities. Granville (2002, p.1) preferred to describe outcomes as ‘potential’ rather than ‘proven’. She found that evaluations, when carried out, tend to focus on measurement for specific outcomes rather than the full impact of an intergenerational programme itself. Oftentimes, she discovered that reported outcomes were not directly related to intergenerational practice at all, but to other activities to which the benefits properly accrued (e.g., keep-fit classes).

A possible reason for limited evidence-based research could be that, according to Veerman and van Yperen (2007), researchers typically interpret the randomized controlled trial (RCT) as the ‘gold standard’ for the supply of evidence regarding the effectiveness of an intervention. However, they say that the RCT is rarely performed in youth care practice since it is difficult to conduct because of ethical objections. Additionally, there is the danger that RCTs could be prematurely conducted on interventions that are not yet fully developed or have yet to be accepted into actual practice.

Explanations for positive outcomes, albeit anecdotal, might be attributable to factors other than intergenerational engagement, like: older people’s need to volunteer (Snyder and Omoto, 2009); ‘reciprocal needs’ of younger and older people (Newman and Smith, 1997); and the ‘generativity’ need (de St. Aubin et al., 2004; Erikson, 1963). Firstly, people volunteer to express personal values, develop self-confidence, self-esteem and increase social networks (Snyder and Omoto, 2009). Accordingly, they enjoy personal
growth derived from volunteering which is likely to lead to more sustained service since it comes from personally-motivated reasons. Snyder and Omoto (2009) found that people volunteer to show community concern through concern for others and for themselves. Volunteering, characterised by the absence of financial reward and lack of coercion (Morrow-Howell, 2010), engenders a ‘sense of community’ (Sarason, 1974, p.41) which attracts volunteers whose participation is sustained over time and whose effectiveness is promoted (Snyder and Omoto, 2009). Consequently, as connections to that community increase, participation in that community also increases (Omoto and Malsch, 2005). Thus, if people are incorporated into networks wherein they experience meaningful belonging to ‘a larger collectivity’, they may be less likely to experience social exclusion, thereby enhancing psychological wellbeing and quality of life (Sarason, 1974, p.41). Additionally, recent surveys of the baby-boomer generation conducted in the United States found that older people are seeking to offer meaningful services which fulfil personal development and lifelong learning ambitions and that facilitate extended social networks (Wilson et al., 2006).

Secondly, young and old have ‘reciprocal needs directly linking the generations’ (Newman and Smith, 1997, p.18). Young and old can enrich each other’s lives in reflecting ‘a unique synergy between the two age groups that enables growth and provides the kind of purposeful existence that is important to human development’ (p.19) as outlined in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Reciprocal intergenerational needs (Newman and Smith,1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children need to be:</th>
<th>Older people need to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nurtured, taught, able to learn from the past, have a cultural identity, have positive role models, and be connected to preceding generations.</td>
<td>Nurture, teach, have a successful life review, share cultural mores, communicate positive values and leave a legacy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thirdly, older people have ‘generativity’ needs, i.e., they need to pass on their life’s experiences to the next generation (Erikson, 1963). Erikson claimed that development over the life cycle occurs in a series of stages, each stage contributing to and influenced by the before-and-after stages.
Stage-4 (middle childhood: 7–11 years) and Stage-7 (later adulthood: 50 years and over) could be perceived as twin-track stages, allowing older people to journey together with children in shared learning relationships as charted in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Theory of life-stages (Erikson, 1963)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Erikson’s theory of the life-stages for children and older people</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage-4: Industry vs. inferiority (Children)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children develop ‘a sense of being useful … of being able to make things and make them well and even perfectly’ (Erikson, 1959, p.91). Children who do not master age-appropriate skills are likely to develop a ‘sense of inferiority’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage-7: Generativity vs. stagnation (Older people)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults contribute to society, helping to guide future generations. Success leads to a sense of accomplishment. Failure leads to stagnation whereby adults become self-centred having a shallow involvement in the world.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Generativity (Erikson, 1963) occurs through ‘nurturing, teaching, leading, and promoting the next generation while generating life products and outcomes that aim to benefit the social system and promote its continuity from one generation to the next’ (McAdams et al., 1993, p.221). It is motivated by society’s expectation that individuals should invest greater personal resources in the next generation, but is overwhelmingly driven by ‘the need to be needed’ (Erikson, 1963, p.267) and by what Kotre (1984) referred to as ‘symbolic immortality’ or the desire to live on in others. Erikson himself failed to theorise the negative implications of generativity, or the fact that ‘one’s legacy [may be] a destructive one…or benefit one group but not others… (de St. Aubin et al., 2004, p.266). Indeed, generativity may last longer than in previous generations because life expectancy has increased by about 15 years since Erikson wrote his thesis. Life expectancy in 1950s Ireland was 64.5 years (CSO, 1951) whereas by 2012 it had reached almost 81 years; i.e., life expectancy at birth for women in Ireland was 83.2 years, 4.5 years above the male life expectancy of 78.7 years (CSO, 2012).
2.9 The toolkit of intergenerational programming: the 5 ‘R’s

Bressler et al. (2005) communicate the essential criteria for conducting intergenerational programmes ‘that are most effective at achieving their goals and most fulfilling to participants’ (p.20), namely the 5 ‘R’s’: roles, relationships, reciprocity, recognition and responsiveness.

Firstly, all programme participants should have assigned roles whereby they would undertake tasks that they understand as being meaningful to them. Following Newman and Sánchez (2007), older persons might act as ‘mentors, tutors, carers, coaches, visitors, friends or storytellers’ (p.51). Likewise, children might perform assigned tasks; not being ‘delimited by age but by what each individual in the IP can do to help to secure the defined goals’ (p.52). They cite the Conecta Joven programme, as an example of how youth are able to tutor older persons on how to use new information and communication technologies:

‘This role reversibility, instead of automatically assigning fixed positions to people from different generations, is an indicator of the flexible approach and adaptability which characterise the most successful intergenerational programmes’ (p.52).

Secondly, intergenerational programmes, as potential sources of intergenerational solidarity, need to be approached relationally. Sánchez et al. (2010) see such programmes primarily as opportunities for people to meet and relate:

‘[A]ctivities are only an instrument: what matters in these programs is the development of mutually beneficial relationships through processes such as cooperation, interaction, and exchange. Approaching intergenerational programs from a relational perspective means that relationships happening within their framework become an end in themselves; beyond outputs and outcomes, what people involved in intergenerational programs gain is the experience of being with others, and feeling connected to others’ (p.136).
Thirdly, there should be reciprocity (give-and-take) whereby participants experience a sense of giving to and receiving from people who are not of their age group:

‘Acknowledging the reciprocity that exists across the life course is fundamental to quality intergenerational practice: the understanding that each person gives and receives throughout their lifetime and that people of all generations have value and can contribute to civic life’ (Butts, 2007, p.100).

Fourthly, there should be evidence of ongoing recognition of the participant’s contributions to the programme which should serve as a source of motivation for engagement. According to Pinazo and Kaplan (2007):

Intergenerational programmes can provide adults with validation of their knowledge and contribution, assistance in some of the tasks or activities of the young people with whom they work, …opportunities to continue to learn, receive individual attention and recognition, develop friendships with young people, become reintegrated in family and community life, feel needed, …and refresh their own appreciation of their past experiences (p.79).

Lastly, programmes should focus on satisfying real and clearly identified community needs thus showing potential to be sustainable and, therefore, of producing a greater impact over time. Therefore, there should be evidence of responsiveness to community needs in the participants’ support for each other. Henkin theorises the ‘community for all ages’ (CFAA) from an explicit life span perspective:

‘Rather than viewing children…as secondary beneficiaries of efforts to make a community good for older adults, CFAA starts by bringing all age groups to the table to assess needs/resources and develop strategies that will enhance the quality of life for all generations’ (Henkin, 2007, p.156).

She advocates that communities must take into account their unique needs, resources, and cultural context as they bring people together to address
common concerns and promote individual development across the life course. Values to guide communities for all ages might include (Henkin, 2007, p.157): interdependence, reciprocity, recognition, diversity, equity and inclusion, and social connectedness. With interdependence people feel a sense of shared responsibility for one another and rely on each other for care, support, and nurturing. Respect for diversity ensures that efforts are made to foster understanding across diverse groups, thus promoting recognition of shared priorities and untapped resources. Programmes should be designed on the understanding that improvements to overall quality of life would benefit the whole community. Wider social networks would enhance social relationships thus providing support for all age groups; and formal networks would foster opportunities for connection across ages and cultures, thus building a shared sense of community for all ages.

2.10 Chapter summary

This thesis has as its starting point a two-dimensional problem: weaknesses in the provision of citizenship education at Irish Primary School, and a perceived increasing social distance between young and old in Irish society. Citizenship definitions and approaches were addressed so as to better understand how to activate young children’s civic engagement. Despite the limited empirical evidence to date, intergenerational engagement offers possibilities for activating young children’s civic engagement while simultaneously connecting young and old through collaborations addressing the civic literacy concept. Thence, the study foregrounds young children while keeping the social support of the elders in the background in seeking to find out:

*To what extent and in what ways can participation in intergenerational learning collaborations activate young children’s civic engagement?*

To further elucidate the central research question, the study draws from literature on theories of practice, active learning, and action plus educational values espoused by the research-practitioner, as discussed next in Chapter Three.
CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FOCI

3.0 Introduction

This chapter addresses theoretical foci of practice, active social learning and action. It also addresses educational values which give the study meaning and purpose, namely: practice, connectedness and dialogue. The practice has at its core interventions to develop the civic literacy concept so as to activate young children’s civic engagement. The practice is informed by the living theory approach to action research (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006). Theories of active learning are informed by constructivist/socio-constructivist approaches (e.g., Vygotsky, 1978; Lave and Wenger, 1991; Bruner, 1996). Theory of action (Arendt, 1958) explains actions that children might undertake as expressions of their civic activation. Educational values (3.4) are considered in light of theoretical foci of practice (3.1), active learning (3.2) and theory of action (3.3) (see Figure 3.1).
Figure 3.1: Theoretical foci
3.1 Practice

This section addresses the living theory approach to practice (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) and explains why it was deemed appropriate. Living theory represents a theoretical focus rather than an all-encompassing methodology and informs the practice dimension of the study which incorporates action research. Action research is briefly traced from its origins through to the living theory concept (3.1.1), leading into a discussion of the philosophical assumptions underpinning the concept (3.1.2). The rationale for choosing living theory including its critique is then considered (3.1.3). The subsection concludes with a discussion of its relevance to intergenerational practice (3.1.4).

3.1.1 The living theory approach

Action research infers (Carr and Kemmis, 1986, p.162):

‘Collective self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understandings of these practices, and the situations in which the practices are carried out’.

The idea is to improve education by changing it and to learn from the consequences. Thus, action research is inherently participatory and collaborative and involves participant self-reflection in cyclical plan-act-observe-reflect processes. The living theory approach to action research (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) additionally involves research-practitioners investigating their own practice to produce living theories, meaning their own explanations for what they are doing and why. Hence, theory is living insofar as it evolves through practice which is continuously tested, evaluated and amended. Learning occurs therefore without a defined end because in evaluating actions taken, new awareness emerges on which further actions are to be taken.

Whitehead (1989) highlights that values are embodied in one’s educational practices and their meanings can be communicated in the course of their
emergence in practice. Declaring one’s values and reflecting on their educative influence induces self-reflection, a core component of action research (Carr and Kemmis, 1986). This is done usually through reflection-in/on-action (Schön, 1983). Reflection represents ‘a form of real-life theorizing…[validated]…through the critical feedback of others’ (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006, p.32). The idea is that learning outcomes are presented to a wider critical audience, securing the feedback that is necessary to support one’s claims to knowledge.

Whitehead (1989) encourages research-practitioners to account for their educational development through the creation of their own living educational theories by using their educational values as living standards of judgement for the validity of their claims to educational knowledge. Such values-based influence is what differentiates the living theory approach from other approaches to action research. Values become epistemological standards of judgement for the claims to educational knowledge of the living theory approach: individuals are held accountable, by explaining how they exert educational influence (i.e., transmit educative values) ‘in’ their own learning, the learning of others and the learning of members of social formations’ (p.17). The word ‘in’ is deliberate in that living theory conveys an insider and inter-relational state of being derived from the idea of all phenomena being connected (Arendt, 1958; Bateson, 1972; Capra, 2003; Rayner, 2004, 2005). Accordingly, one’s ‘own learning’ means improving how this research-practitioner might facilitate a civic literacy-themed intergenerational practice; ‘learning of others’ entails the learning of participants (young and old); and the ‘social formations’ involve ‘a group of people who come together with a common focus’ (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006, p.121), or the class/school community in this study.

**Origin of the living theory concept**

Action research originated as critical theory (McNiff and Whitehead, 2006). Oriented toward critiquing and changing society, it acknowledges that social situations are created by people, and can be constructed or deconstructed at will. It places ‘core emphases on being human, social and political’
(Phillips, 2010, p.65). Being human-oriented involves active knowing by those engaged in practice; being socially-oriented recognises that socio-cultural processes of interaction influence practice which in turn are influenced by participants. Therefore, political orientations combine human and social actions which constitute the political thrust of critical theory. McNiff (1988) traces the origins of action research from initial conceptualisation with Lewin (1947) and Freire (1972), through the teacher-as-researcher approach (Stenhouse, 1975) to the practitioner-as-researcher approach (Carr and Kemmis, 1986). Then, Whitehead (1989) theorised the living theory approach with questions-of-the-kind, ‘How do I improve my practice?’

Whitehead’s (1989) thesis on living theory was prompted by Illyenko, a Russian logician, who asked ‘If an object exists as a living contradiction, what must the thought be that expresses it?’ In other words, ‘what kind of logic needs to be used, and what kind of theory generated, to find an appropriate way of communicating…oneself as a living contradiction?’ (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006, p. 32). Whitehead (1989) deduced that the dominant logics in the Western Academy eliminate contradiction from correct thought. Hence, he hypothesised that if he were grounded in living contradiction then he could generate living educational theory from that ground and test to see if it would meet one of his criticisms of education research, namely that it was an invention of the philosophers, psychologists, sociologists and historians. Accordingly, Whitehead theorised living educational theory, distinct from education theory, whereby he argued that practice is grounds for theory generation, and therefore ‘action research should be seen as a form of research, not simply as a form of improving action’ (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006, p.159).

The living-I

Whitehead (1989) starts with the ‘contradiction of the living ‘I’: the experience of holding educational values and the experience of their negation’ (p.44). In dialectics, this would equate to argument and counter-argument. He understood the problems faced by dialecticians
(contradiction/counter-argument) and logisticians (hypothesis) when trying to establish sustained dialogue. Dialecticians claim that contradiction is central to explanations of change (Marcuse, 1964), whereas logisticians claim that contradictions should be removed since theories that contain contradictions are useless anyway (Popper, 1963). Popper rejected dialectical claims to knowledge as being ‘based on nothing better than a loose and woolly way of speaking’ (p.316). Thus, dialectics has no place in the propositional form (Popper, 1963) which in turn masks the dialectical nature of reality (Marcuse, 1964). Consequently, Whitehead developed the concept of ‘living logics’ which are ‘living’, ‘inclusional’ and ‘relational’: ‘living’ in that they have capacity for self-recreation in innovative ways; ‘inclusional’ in including propositional and dialectical forms of thinking; and ‘relational’ in seeing the unfolding nature of relationships in everything (cited in Whitehead and McNiff, 2006, pp.32-39).

While propositional and dialectical logics can communicate meanings through figures and text, the epistemological standards of judgement which derive from embodied values additionally require ‘multisensory forms of communication, such as pictures and graphics…and other electronic technology’ to capture values embodied in practice in ways that text-based reportage cannot do (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006, p.32). Thence, photographic evidence is a necessary feature of this study. Whitehead (1989) developed living theory from a combination of multi-media testimonies to his self-reflective living-‘I’ which allows subjectivity and Wittgenstein’s (1953, in Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) scientific-‘I’ which denies subjectivity.

The ontological/subjective ‘I’ is connected to Sen’s notion of developing the capabilities of people as a means of removing the ‘unfreedoms’ (or lack of freedom) that prevent them from acting for positive change (Sen, 1999). Freedom infers accountability for living one’s values, making good decisions about one’s life, improving learning, and encouraging others to do likewise and recognising oneself as a ‘living contradiction’ when one’s values are denied (Whitehead, 1989). The idea is that the research-practitioner connects his/her ontological ‘I’ to the ‘I’ of others so that ‘the
‘I’ studies the ‘I’ in the company of other ‘I’s’ (McNiff and Whitehead, 2006, p.33). In consequence, the ‘I’ becomes ‘We’ and together the collective has the potential to influence wider social change when everyone is asking ‘How do I improve what I am doing…’ (Whitehead, 1989).

3.1.2 Philosophical assumptions underpinning living theory

Ontology attaches meaning to the nature of being. It informs the epistemological, methodological, and pedagogical assumptions underlying a living theory approach which, for Whitehead and McNiff (2006, p.86), means that inclusion, connectedness and co-creativity underpin the philosophical assumptions:

‘We understand the universe, and ourselves and others as part of it, as involved in constantly unfolding processes of creation…The nature of these processes is that they are free, self-transforming, relational and inclusive. Our belief in the nature of these processes travels to our belief in the nature of all growth processes, as free, self-transforming, relational and inclusive, and therefore co-creative.’

This study’s intergenerational practice aligns with Whitehead and McNiff’s (2006) thinking that: all people possess a wealth of personal knowledge (Polanyi, 1958); have infinite ability to create new language (Chomsky, 1986); everyone and everything is connected through their being an original creation capable of original thought, connected through artefacts and dialogue (Arendt, 1958) and through invisible and intangible ties, with space and boundaries (Bateson, 1972; Capra, 2003); and all phenomena are in intimate relation with one another and, therefore, boundaries can be dissolved into permeable interfaces that dynamically co-create each other over time (Rayner, 2004, 2005). Hence, the living theory approach to the practice element of this study allows transmission of one’s own values (practice, connectedness and dialogue) which are aligned with philosophical assumptions of living theory (inclusion, connectedness and co-creativity): it facilitates inclusion of propositional and dialectical forms of thinking; connectedness of all things, animate and inanimate; and it encourages co-creativity.
Since epistemology questions what constitutes knowledge, an ontological assumption of existing with others in constantly unfolding co-creative processes establishes the conditions for creating and testing living theories arising from this practice. Accordingly, one’s own educational values become epistemological standards of judgment for the study’s claims to knowledge (McNiff and Whitehead, 2006). Consequently, one is enabled to make claims to knowledge based on showing that his/her educational values are evidenced in the pupils as a result of practice, and that such evidence explains educational influences in his/her own and another’s learning. Not all claims to knowledge need to be made in this way but it can be used for the practice/interventions element of the study. Thence, the living theory approach involves describing and evidencing learning from practice. It is based on the assumption that people are accountable for their own learning and capable of offering explanations for educational influences in their learning (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006). Since ways of knowing in living theory incorporate ontological assumptions of inclusion, connectedness and co-creativity, the epistemology is understood to be inclusive, connected and co-creative too, because everyone’s contribution can be submitted as a basis for creating living theories.

Methodology explains the study’s rules/procedures against which data collection methods are informed and claims for knowledge processed. Accordingly, the methodology incorporates ontological assumptions of inclusion, connectedness and co-creativity when constructing knowledge according to the living theory approach (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006). Thence, to derive living theories, the practice is interrogated through reflective cycles of ‘awareness-action-evaluation’ (Foróige, 2010). Research is undertaken with social or universal intent so as to determine ‘what we want to achieve in the social world, and why’ (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006, p.24). Like Polanyi (1958), this research-practitioner understands herself ‘as a person claiming originality and exercising [her] judgement responsibly with universal intent’ (p.327). Polanyi infers that public validation processes depend primarily on one’s own powers of critical reflection to validate one’s own beliefs. Whitehead and McNiff (2006)
encourage researchers to validate their own beliefs as they ask how they can ‘exercise that understanding as educational influence’ (p.25). Essentially, methodological assumptions of this study are that knowledge is constructed by participants in collaborative enquiry which is inclusive, interconnected and co-creative.

Pedagogy can be defined as ‘the practice or the art, science, craft of teaching… it refers to the interactive process between teacher and learner and the learning environment…’ (Siraj-Blatchford, 2004, p.138). It concerns what is appropriate or less appropriate for children to be taught. By ‘appropriate’ Whitehead and McNiff (2006) understand that those whose learning we support should find our influence educational and consequently be enabled to generate their own living theories through practice. In the Reggio Emilia schools, for instance, practitioners, through documentation and dialogue with others, reflect on practice so as to enhance educational influence in children’s learning and their knowledge is seen as meaningful in interpreting educational phenomena (Hawkins, 1966; Malaguzzi, 1993). The rationale for choosing living theory is discussed next.

3.1.3 Rationale for and critique of living theory

The living theory approach (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) was chosen for the practice element of this study for three reasons. Firstly, additional to the theoretical foundations on which it is constructed (3.1.1 above), it involves collective self-enquiry in including every participant in co-creative processes. It is collaborative and participative, thereby activating a sense of responsibility in young children through their having to explain their own learning. Personal and civic responsibilities are key themes of civic literacy, and by participating in a study with an action research element, pupils can be empowered to become responsible for their own learning through hands-on experience. Essentially, the living theory approach facilitates young children to give ‘voice’ in civic matters affecting them, both quantitatively and qualitatively, namely: through completing questionnaires, designing interventions and workshops, and contributing to evidence for educational influence in their own learning.
Secondly, it facilitates ‘methodological inventiveness’ because a researcher’s choice of methodology and methods are as important as the topic itself (Dadds and Harte, 2001, p.165). Therefore, it can be meshed in with a mixed-methods approach through using reflection cycles of ‘awareness-action-evaluation’ (Foróige, 2010) which informed structured workshops through three core questions:

- What issues have you become aware of that you could help to solve?
- What actions do you suggest taking to solve the identified problem?
- What was the result of the action taken?

Moreover, Whitehead encourages research-practitioners to develop their own living theory methodologies by integrating and extending elements of the major qualitative approaches, as categorised by Creswell (2007): narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study. He argues that ‘one can draw insights from each of these approaches without choosing between them in the development of one’s own living theory methodology’ (p.1).

Thirdly, the dual-role of researcher and practitioner (i.e., research-practitioner) is combined in action research (Reason and Bradbury, 2008; Dick, 2000) allowing key criteria of action research to be fulfilled (Dick, 2000): action – to facilitate collaborations; responsiveness – to allow a ‘growing understanding on the part of those involved’ (p.2); and flexibility – to entertain ‘fuzzy beginnings while progressing towards appropriate endings’ (p.2).

The living theory approach (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006; Whitehead, 1989) has its critics. Indeed McNiff (2013) has recently distanced herself from the ‘Living Theory’ term. In her book Action Research: Principles and Practice (McNiff, 2013) she writes:

‘I have become increasingly concerned that the original idea of ‘living theory’ (as a practical form of action) seems to have become reified into ‘Living Theory’ (as a proper noun denoting a movement). This change can be confusing for practitioners...The idea of ‘Living
Theory’ as a reified object presents the theory as something separate from the practice. Once again, ‘theory’ becomes an object of study rather than a living practice, and the reification of the term potentially denies the very principles and values that inspired it. So since about 2010 I have distanced myself from this form of language’ (p.65).

McNiff now prefers to use phrases like ‘living the theory in action’ (p.51). Notwithstanding such critique living theory was selected to inform the ‘awareness-action-evaluation’ (Foróige, 2010) cycles pertinent to practice.

3.1.4 Relevance of living theory to an intergenerational practice

This study is about activating young children’s civic engagement with volunteer support using the civic literacy concept as the learning tool. There is limited evidence-based literature on both young children’s civic engagement and intergenerational engagement. Consequently, living theory offers possibilities to construct knowledge claims based on practice and generated by: photographic evidence of workshops to capture embodied values; explanations of learning submitted by participants, key informants, and this research-practitioner; and pertinent literature. Ontological assumptions of inclusiveness, connectedness and co-creativity inform an epistemology of creating living theories through reflection on practice. Methodologically, the practice is interrogated through reflective cycles of ‘awareness-action-evaluation’ (Foróige, 2010) so as to derive living theories. Pedagogically, assumptions of deep attachment between participants reflect the ontological assumption of existing with others in co-creative processes.

Participants influence the research-practitioner’s practice and reflection. In turn, their learning is influenced through the research-practitioner’s living in the direction of her educational values (practice, connectedness and dialogue), which are the epistemological standards of judgement (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) used to assist in testing knowledge claims arising from the practice. Reflection in/on-practice (Schön, 1983), followed by amendment or improvement, generates evidence of active learning (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006), as discussed next.
3.2 Active learning

Active learning is the principal approach recommended for teaching SPHE:

‘Children need to be actively engaged in the learning process in order to be able to use what they have learned in a variety of situations. Through active learning children can make sense of what they have learned and take increasing ownership of and responsibility for their own learning’ (GOI/SPHE, 1999b, p.5).

Active learning infers a relationship between experience (=‘I do’) and education (=‘I understand’), whereby there must be a having which is contact with the events of life (experience), and a knowing which is interpretation of those events (Dewey, 1938). Thus, active learning infers learning by doing, reflecting, analysing, generalising, and applying knowledge (Haynes, 2007). These criteria are now explained with relevance to this study.

**Doing:** Students perform hands-on tasks with help from volunteers, e.g., making presentations, problem-solving. It illuminates what the students learn from the experience rather than the quantity/quality, or product, of experience.

**Reflecting and analysing:** Students share and compare their results, reactions and observations with one another and, in describing, discussing and analysing learning, they transfer/relate the learning to future experiences: how it was derived; how recurring themes, problems and issues emerged from it; how specific problems/issues were addressed.

**Generalising and applying:** Students connect the experience with real-life examples, find trends in the experience, and identify learning that emerged and apply it to a similar/different situation having application to themselves, like how issues raised are useful to future situations and/or how more effective behaviours could be developed from the learning.
Wurdinger and Carlson (2010), in *Teaching for Experiential Learning*, make suggestions for facilitators of experiential learning: ensure a child-centred approach, explaining objectives and learning outcomes, tying objectives to activities so that learners know what to do and why; identify experiences wherein learners find interest and commitment; expect that all (including children) can share teaching and learning; provide meaningful resources to help learners to succeed and, allow them to discover solutions for themselves; facilitate collaborations which are practical, social and personally interesting but challenging enough to advance learning; and enable self-evaluation as an important means of assessment for learning (AfL).

The idea that active learning is best for students is well supported. Studies (e.g., Romanowski, 2003; Steen *et al.*, 2003) show that students prefer to learn through activities that have real-life relevance requiring an appropriate level of cognition. This applies to youth who like to engage with, for instance, concerns that interrogate issues of moral and social responsibility. Such awareness can be enhanced by any programme which supports personal and social responsibility (Lister, 2007; Theis, 2010). Active learning approaches move from experience to learning: activities lead to concepts which become meaningful, transferable, and memorable when constructed through experience (Cooperstein and Kocevar-Weidinger, 2003).

In this study, active learning has been informed by constructivist/socio-constructivist thought, as discussed next.

### 3.2.1 Constructivist and social constructivist approaches

Constructivism infers that all learning occurs through the cognitive effort an individual asserts during the process of integrating information alongside prior understandings (Doolittle and Camp, 1999). Constructivism dates back around 2000 years in the East and around 300 years in the West. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) is thought to have influenced Jean Piaget, the founding father of Western constructivism. According to Pritchard and Woolland (2010), Piaget theorised that the child progresses through universal
developmental stages: sensori-motor (less than two years); pre-operational (two to seven years); concrete operational (seven to 11 years); and formal operational stage (11 years and over). Children learn through key stages when new knowledge is encountered: ‘assimilation, accommodation and equilibration’ (p.10). Accordingly, they match information, concepts, and skills arising from interaction with their environment and assimilate it with previously formed mental structures which are then modified so as to accommodate new information. Equilibration, the balancing process between understanding what one knows (assimilation) and adjusting to new knowledge (accommodation) follows when their schemata are fully assimilated into their knowledge bank. It pre-empts the process of active learning. While Piaget’s constructivism greatly applied to childhood education in the 1950s-1960s, today it is disputed because of his claim that children are not capable of abstract thought until they reach the 11+ years-stage. Donaldson (1978) argues that schemata happen much earlier if children are encouraged to engage with critical thinking.

Social constructivism or social learning systems derive from constructivism and emphasise the role of others and all forms of social interaction in the process of constructing knowledge and understanding (Pritchard and Woollard, 2010). Since realities vary with individuals, so does knowledge which depends on learners’ pre-existing knowledge and learning processes and/or symbolic tools (Pritchard and Woollard, 2010). The main exponent of socio-cultural learning is Vygotsky (1978). He theorised that: language and communication are at the heart of personal and intellectual development; both cognitive and social development complement each other; learning leads development; learning depends on learners’ socio-cultural backgrounds including their bank of learning tools/symbols; and social interaction with more capable others. His idea of learning from more capable others is central to socio-constructivist thought theorised as the ‘zone of proximal development’ (ZPD):

‘[The ZPD]…is the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving…in collaboration with more capable peers…What children can do with the assistance of others might be in
some sense even more indicative of their mental development than what they can do alone’ (p.85).

Vygotsky infers that in the ZPD, learners can increase the distance between their actual and potential level of development through being helped by more capable others and, therefore, what children might do with assistance from others in group/pair work might more accurately reflect their ability than what they can do unassisted.

Bruner (1983) extended Vygotsky’s (1978) ZPD theory using the idea of ‘scaffolding’, a process of ‘[setting up] the situation to make the child’s entry easy and successful and then gradually pulling back and handing the role to the child as he becomes skilled enough to manage it’ (p.60). For Bruner (1996), tools and artefacts are the scaffolds that define and shape one’s work and thinking, and therefore their ways of knowing. One of the most effective ways of scaffolding is through on-going shared activities (Bruner, 1996). Indeed, any learning relationships wherein learners collaborate on shared tasks results in ‘collective scaffolding’ (Donato, 1994) through which learners working in groups can produce results that none of them would produce alone.

Bronfenbrenner’s ‘ecology of human development’ could be seen as extending Vygotsky (1978) in that his work concurs, but he placed an even greater emphasis on the relationship between adult and child:

Learning and development are facilitated by the participation of the developing person in progressively more complex patterns of reciprocal activity with someone with whom that person has developed a strong and enduring emotional attachment… (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p.60).

Thus, Bronfenbrenner situates the child’s development in the context of his/her relationships within the family, neighbourhood, school, community, and society. He maintains that individuals belong to many different communities, starting at the centre with the *microsystemic* level of one’s family and extending outwards through the *mesosystemic* level of peers,
church and school to the *exosystemic* level of extended family/neighbourhood, to the ultimate global world community at *macrosystemic* level. Accordingly, youth’s internal developmental capacities are bi-directionally connected insofar as each level of development interacts with the other levels such that a child’s development is dependent on such proximal contexts as Bronfenbrenner outlines. Similar to positive youth development (Lerner *et al.*, 2005), Bronfenbrenner’s approach asserts that, to achieve success, practice needs to reflect and address the dynamic relationship that young people have with others, as well as with the wider context of their lives. Berg *et al.* (2009) found that youth-work programmes offer possibilities to youth to ‘use an ecological framework to explore their “multiple selves” in different socio-geographic contexts’ (p.346). In such programmes they can negotiate with one another and engage with community partners in decision-making and take action at multiple levels that reflect the needs of their communities. In consequence, the process reinforces group cohesion and community connectedness and results in positive individual-level developmental outcomes (Berg *et al.*, 2009).

Rogoff developed the notion of ‘guided participation’ (Rogoff, 1990; Rogoff, 1995; Rogoff *et al.*, 1993) whereby children are guided as they learn to communicate with others. It is a mechanism to help children improve their pro-social skills. The more competent peer provides the appropriate amount of support to help a younger, less capable learner acquire knowledge and skills (Rogoff, 1990). More capable others support young children in the development of mental tools like focus, memory/recall, social skills, and other problem-solving skills that help them to think better, mix better, pay attention, and recall learning (Bodrova and Leong, 2007). Children then use these tools to succeed at literacy and numeracy having learned them from others through ‘guided participation’. Children who behave pro-socially fare better academically than those who do not (Corsaro and Molinari, 2005). Children who have at least one peer they consider a friend thrive in a school environment better than those who cannot identify a single friend (Corsaro, 2003). ‘Guided participation’,
facilitated in this study by the volunteers, may offer possibilities to develop young children’s pro-social skills.

Lave and Wenger (1991) theorised situated learning as another dimension of socio-constructivist thought. It is understood to happen through social participation in communities of practice while regarded as normal social activity: a community with shared characteristics: ‘mutual engagement’, ‘joint enterprise’ and ‘shared repertoire’ (Wenger, 1998, pp. 72–85). Learning develops through relationships and interactions that occur in the process of reproducing and adapting communities which form the context in which meaning is actively negotiated between participants. It differs from traditional approaches insofar as the emphasis is on the collaborative development of meaning as against the transference of knowledge through instruction and cognitive acquisition. Consequently, the individual is an engaged agent in the learning process, developing a sense of membership and belonging and is involved in co-constructing knowledge and skills, including the construction/reconstruction of his/her own identity.

Lave and Wenger (1991) emphasise the importance of role models in learning, as they constitute a form of practice which combines the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes required for successful performance. A process of ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ connects the production of persons (newcomers) to the production of communities of practice (old-timers). ‘Legitimate peripheral participation’ acknowledges their activities, identities, artefacts, knowledge and practice. The idea is that ‘newcomers’ learn a skill from ‘old-timers’ by participating peripherally in ongoing community activities, e.g., knitting/embroidery/weaving. The terms ‘master’ and ‘apprentice’ are used, not to disguise teacher-pupil relations, but to provide newcomers to a community with legitimate access to its practices. Hence, apprenticeship usually involves no external tests, progress being visible to the learner and others through the work itself. Thus, ‘situated learning’ and ‘communities of practice’ envelop the entire social situation in which the learning occurs. Occurring in a participatory framework, learners become full members when they have a comprehensive understanding of the processes in which they are involved and can perform a task with mastery.
Wenger (1998) later developed a social theory of learning within which he constructed a four-dimensional typology: learning as experience (meaning-making); learning as doing (practice); learning as belonging (community); and learning as becoming (identity). Thence, the social groupings of family, school and neighbourhood is understood as an interconnected community within which individuals can develop their own identities and learn different identities including the identity of the engaged citizen, i.e., a mesosystemic community (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Further extensions of socio-constructivism include cooperative learning which exists when individuals collaborate in a group so as to promote both their individual learning outcomes and those of their members/peers (Johnson and Johnson, 1989). Cooperative learning has as its basic premise that ‘the way in which social interdependence is structured determines how individuals interact within the situation which, in turn, affects outcomes’ (Johnson and Johnson, 1989, p.5). Accordingly, cooperation is most effective when members perceive that they share common goals; and when members’ goals are positively dependent on the actions of the group. Positive interdependence is assumed to enhance ‘promotive’ interaction, namely: students motivating each other to reach group goals, giving each other feedback, challenging conclusions and reasoning, and taking another’s perspectives to better explore diverse opinions in consequence of which higher academic achievement can be expected (Johnson and Johnson, 1989; Johnson et al., 2000). Indeed, any form of peer interaction can be cooperative if it adheres to two basic principles: positive interdependence and individual accountability (Slavin, 1996). Positive interdependence means that members perceive that the collective effort of the group is essential in order for the individual learners to achieve their goals (Johnson and Johnson, 2009). Individual accountability infers that students are responsible for individual learning outcomes. Accordingly, while working as group members, students might still pursue individual goals and be assessed as such. However, negative interdependence exists when the efforts of group members are unrelated and detrimental to student learning outcomes. Generally, cooperative learning facilitates student interaction in
ways that are likely to increase positive interdependence and promotive interaction such as think-pair-share strategy (Johnson et al., 2000).

Constructivist/socio-constructivist thought has been addressed so as to inform how active social learning might happen in this study. It is also necessary to understand how differing teaching/learning styles apply and how to teach to, for and through them, as addressed next.

3.2.2 Diverse teaching strategies

Wherever student intelligence profiles match teacher intelligence profiles, it is likely that learning takes place with relative ease whereas with intergenerational learning the situation is very different because young and old are reciprocal teachers/learners. Accordingly, different teaching strategies need to be mapped onto learning styles as entry points for teaching/learning (Gardner et al., 1996). Such suggested mapping strategies include:

- **Narrational** – uses story to convey the concept in question;
- **Aesthetic** – uses features which appeal to learners’ artistic abilities;
- **Logical-quantitative** – approaches the topic through reasoning;
- **Foundational** - examines philosophical and definitional aspects of a concept appropriate for people who like to pose philosophical questions;
- **Experiential** - relates learning directly to the materials that embed the concept experientially; and
- **Social-cooperative** - uses collaborative group-work;

These strategies offer multiple approaches to the participants in terms of how to share learning with each other. The problem identified in the delivery of SPHE as revealed in the Inspectorate’s report (GOI, 2009) was that ‘the lesson [SPHE] was overly teacher-directed and the pupils were provided with inadequate opportunities to explore the topic under discussion in an in-depth manner’ (p.57). Meanwhile, the SPHE curriculum demands ‘active learning approaches’ intended to facilitate children to become more
critical and discerning, more able to take responsibility for their own learning and more able to transfer the learning to different situations (GOI/SPHE, 1999a, p.54).

The socio-constructivists offer possible strategies for active learning premised on social interaction, a primary function of intergenerational learning (Newman et al., 1997). The ZPD theory (Vygotsky, 1978) is applicable in that learners can increase the distance between their actual and potential level of development through being helped by the volunteers. Following Bruner (1985), volunteers act as a ‘scaffold’ while children learn a skill. Bruner (1968) found that the more basic the concept that the child learns through discovering principles for himself, the greater his ability to transfer it to new situations. Donato’s (1994) idea of ‘collective scaffolding’ applies wherever children learn to support each other and the volunteers. Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) socio-ecological model has relevance for intergenerational practice because programmes can be adapted to address a combination of individual and environmental factors, including community needs. Situated learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991) relates to the production of ‘newcomers’/pupils which can be connected to that of ‘old-timers’/volunteers in an intergenerational community of practice. The civic-literacy-themed interventions/workshops are discussed next.

3.2.3 The interventions: a rationale

Interventions in this study are devised to develop desired outcomes for civic literacy mediated through curricular content which incorporates the arts: music and dance; arts and crafts; creative writing, local history and storytelling; environmental awareness and information technology (ICT). The arts were chosen because of the impact they have on learning (Eisner, 2002; Nussbaum, 1997; Greene, 1995). According to Eisner (2002, pp.70-92), what the arts teach, and how it shows, tells children that it is judgment more than rules that is paramount and that problems can have multiple solutions. This applies because learning in the arts requires an ability and willingness to surrender to unanticipated possibilities in emergent work. The arts teach how to celebrate difference/diversity because there are many ways to see
and interpret the world. The arts teach that neither words nor numbers exhaust what learners know and limits of language do not define limits of cognition. Thence, the arts facilitate opportunities to discover the range and variety of what one is capable of feeling and doing. In short, the arts teach students to think through and within media like art itself, or music, dance or creative writing or storytelling since small differences can have large effects and all art forms employ some means through which images become reality (Eisner, 2002). Put another way, in creating and responding to the arts, the fires of emotion, perception and appreciation are kindled because one is enabled to look beneath the surface realities of the world and release the imagination (Dewey, 1934). In releasing the imagination, Maxine Greene (1995) found that a curiosity for the world is created, the development and wonder of which creates a personal and social consciousness that is necessary for living with diversity. Greene called this ‘wide-awakeness to imaginative action, and to renewed consciousness of possibility’ (p.43). Such ‘wide-awakeness’ occurs when rich, reflective responses are stimulated by releasing imagination through informed perception, appreciation and relationship with the people of the world (Greene, 1995).

The release of imagination facilitates critical thinking. Storytelling, in asking critical questions about stories, has the potential to engender critical thinking (Nussbaum, 1997). For example, sharing tragedy would acquaint children with understandings of the tragic events that can happen in life but also help them in understanding choices of action which might prevent tragedy (Nussbaum, 1997). Arendt (1970) maintains that storytelling reveals meaning through readers/listeners creating meanings fitting to their own experiences: ‘It is true that storytelling reveals meaning without committing the error of defining it, that it brings about consent and reconciliation with things as they really are…’ (p.105). Bruner (1986) supporting Arendt, suggests that when the reader/listener experiences story he can connect it to his own experiences and can derive hidden meanings from many perspectives suggested by its protagonists such that story prompts different interpretations for different people in different contexts and at different times. Nussbaum (1997) argues that if people are deprived of story their
ability to understand other people is limited. She supports story as pedagogy to teach children understanding of another since human complexity is not always visible to children in everyday human interactions. Understandings of humanity, she argues, are developed by training the imagination through storytelling so that people are first imagined, then understood ‘as spacious and deep, with qualitative differences from oneself and hidden places worthy of respect’ (p.90). Nussbaum maintains that children, in grasping different aspects of humanity (e.g., human suffering and/or injustice), develop compassion which necessitates imagining ‘a sense of one's own vulnerability to misfortune’ (p.91). It involves imagining that such suffering could be happening to oneself. Thus, by imagining another’s suffering, an awareness of our common capacity for human suffering is cultivated. This Nussbaum calls ‘sympathetic imagination’ which is ‘imaginative and emotional receptivity…[and] capacity for openness and responsiveness’ (p.98) to another’s situation. She proposed that we ask the story, as a friend: ‘What does this [story] do to my mind...ask me to notice...desire...care about? How does...[story] invite me to view my fellow human beings?’ (p.100). Thus, sympathetic responses to stories require imagination and emotional receptivity: key features of good citizenship (Nussbaum, 1997). Accordingly, storytelling and its attendant word forms offer children possibilities for developing aspects of the civic literacy concept already outlined in Chapter Two.

The rationale for using story is that it facilitates interactive discussion which contributes significantly to increased vocabulary thence enhancing communication skills (Daniels and Zemelman, 2004; Dickinson and Smith, 1994; Dewey, 1910). Vocabulary building requires working with words, thinking about them, discussing them and seeing them as meaningful (Daniels and Zemelman, 2004). It is the outcome, from reading and thinking aloud through shared, guided, and independent reading experiences, that focusses children’s attention on meanings of unfamiliar words (Allen, 1999; Robbins and Ehri, 1994). Key findings regarding the importance of vocabulary building are that: reading is the single most important factor in increased word knowledge (Anderson and Nagy, 1991); and a rich
vocabulary increases comprehension and learning (Manzo et al., 2006; Robb, 2009).

Music is used in this study to provide an immediate source of individual self-expression and creativity thereby generating positive feelings through performance, interaction, practice and listening (McGrath and Brennan, 2011). Musical performance can provide a means of communicative exchange based on a relational emotional space where performer and listener can enjoy a mutual performance (Aldridge, 2005). Musical materials are used for their power to: change and enhance mood; express and affirm emotional states; reveal oneself to others and enrich one’s own sense of self; and facilitate reminiscence (McGrath and Brennan, 2011).

Knitting, sewing and weaving were important features of this study. Cheek and Piercy’s (2008) research among quilters in Amish, Appalachian and Mormon communities reveals the psychological needs that are resolved through passing on a tradition/skill: the satisfaction of leaving a legacy; and the altruistic feeling gained from passing on traditions and skills. Creative and artistic activity therefore involves more than the actual activity itself. It connects with defining who people are in themselves and in the wider community and in this way becomes a community enterprise (McGrath and Brennan, 2011).

ICT is another cognitive tool used in this study. According to Cohen (2010), the attraction of computer-mediated learning is its ability to engage learners using their emotions, motivation and personality development. Learners’ enjoyment lies in their being able to work at their own pace: they can control the learning because the computer can be tailored to their learning needs and can set appropriately challenging and achievable tasks at appropriate levels. Lajoie (1993) showed that ICT could support cognitive processes such as memory and sharing cognitive load, particularly by engaging the learner in out-of-reach cognitive activities. Accordingly, specific uses of ICT have a positive effect on learners wherever use is closely related to learning objectives and where choice of ICT use is relevant to the teaching and learning purposes (LaJoie, 1993).
3.2.4 Evaluation of active learning

Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning model can help to evaluate learning outcomes through four stages: concrete experience; reflective observation; abstract conceptualisation; and active experimentation (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Kolb’s experiential learning cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning cycle</th>
<th>Learning stages</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>How it can be applied to this study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concrete experience</td>
<td>Hands-on learning of new skills.</td>
<td>Practical exercises, e.g., arts and crafts, speaking in Irish, French or German.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective observation</td>
<td>Reflecting in/on-action (Schön, 1983).</td>
<td>Problem-solving through verbal and action-based dialogue, reflective journaling and feedback.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract conceptualisation</td>
<td>Connect relationships between persons/events.</td>
<td>Identify problems and find solutions: e.g., awareness of older people wanting to learn ICT.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active experimentation</td>
<td>Apply the learning to practice.</td>
<td>Children plan, deliver and evaluate an ICT lesson.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kolb’s model is criticised for being an idealist construct possibly lacking psychometric validity and/or reliability (Friedman et al., 2002). Thence, as a framework concentrating on learning in adults, its application to children’s learning may be disputed.

Honey and Mumford (1986) extend Kolb’s work insofar as they categorise learner types, rather than learning cycles. They maintain that learners represent four main types: activists, reflectors, theorists or pragmatists (see Figure 3.2).
According to Honey and Mumford (1986), ‘activists’ involve themselves fully in new experiences. They like activity-based learning, e.g., role-play, brainstorming, think-tanks, demonstrations, presentations, group-/pair-work. ‘Reflectors’ think about learning experiences. They observe others learning, act on past experiences, the present and the contribution of others. They can offer an overview. ‘Theorists’ like to learn concepts first. The teacher-led lesson suits the theorist; or, the structured group discussion; and/or, structured question and answer sessions. They like to read additional material on the concept or subject matter. ‘Pragmatists’ are keen to try out new ideas, theories and skills. They like real-life learning, like practical decision-making and problem-solving. The idea with Honey and Mumford is to develop the rounded learner who can adjust to any learning/teaching style because lack of flexibility means that pupils may struggle to assimilate new learning into their knowledge banks.

Taken together, the above theorists provide a framework for description, analysis, evaluation and appreciation of the diversity of learner types in this study. Action, as the third theoretical focus of this study, is discussed next.

3.3 Theory of Action

Hannah Arendt’s (1958) theory of action is consulted to help identify what constitutes civic action. Thus, the section addresses: action as new initiations, interactions and relationships (3.3.1); action as speech, identity
and agency (3.3.2); action as narrative (3.3.3); and action in the context of young children’s civic engagement (3.3.4).

3.3.1 Action as new initiations, interactions and relationships

Arendt (1958), in The Human Condition, argues that action is central to existence and constitutes the highest manifestation of the *vita activa* (active life), which is her term for anything *active* that humans do. This is further delineated into labour, work and action:

**Labour** - how one performs everyday activities that keep him/her alive like eating, drinking, or related activities (e.g., cooking, driving) - is judged for its ability to sustain human existence.

**Work** - productive activity which creates one’s world by bringing material objects into operation (e.g., cookers, cars) - is judged for its ability to maintain a world fit for human existence.

**Action** - a productive activity concerned with what humans do when communicating with each other - is judged for its ability to disclose the identity of the agent, to affirm the reality of the world, and to manifest human capacity for freedom.

Thus, while labour, work and action are necessary for human life, action is fundamental to the *viva activa* because it possesses conditions of *freedom* and *plurality*. Freedom infers the capacity to initiate new actions, a faculty with which all human beings are endowed because of their birth, or *natality*, i.e., every birth represents an originality in the world. All activities are connected to *natality*. Labour and work are essential to sustaining a world into which human beings are born. Action is most closely connected to *natality* because by initiating actions, human beings re-enact the miracle of beginning inherent in their birth. Thence, the beginning that each individual represents by being born is actualised every time new actions are initiated: ‘the new beginning inherent in birth can make itself felt in the world only because the newcomer possesses the capacity of beginning something anew, that is, of acting’ (p.9). In short, since action is rooted in *natality*, and manifested in freedom, it possesses capacity to contribute to the original:
‘The fact that man is capable of action means that...he is able to perform what is infinitely improbable. And this again is possible only because each man is unique, so that with each birth something uniquely new comes into the world’ (Arendt, 1958, pp.177-178).

The idea that action is rooted in originality (Arendt, 1958) supports an ontology of ‘understanding ourselves and others as...an original creation who has never existed before and never will again’ (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006, p.86). Thus, their idea of human beings having the ‘capacity to make their original contribution and to engage critically with others, in relation to practices and ideas’ (p.86) finds resonance with Arendt epistemologically.

Arendt (1958) argues that plurality can only be performed in company with others who from their multiple perspectives can judge the quality of the performance: action needs plurality like musicians need audiences. Thence, without the company and critical engagement of others, action is meaningless. In short, its manifestation in word and deed can only exist with others. Such plurality of human interaction is made possible, for example, in the intergenerational collaborations in this study. For Arendt, this web of connectedness is what constitutes humanity, i.e., that space where individuals connect through action and speech.

3.3.2 Action as speech, identity and agency

Arendt (1958) argues that action and speech are interdependent because ‘the web of human relationships’ is sustained by communicative action (pp.178-179). If action without speech were meaningless and impossible to coordinate with the actions of others, so speech without action would lack the means by which to confirm the validity of the spoken word. This connectedness of action and speech suggests Arendt’s understanding of empowerment which develops between people when they initiate actions together: power is not the property of an individual, but of a plurality of actors joining together for some common political purpose revealed in speech. Action as speech also reveals a person’s identity. Neither labour nor work enables individuals to disclose their identities. A person’s individuality may be subordinated in labour (e.g., car manufacture) whereas
there is more scope for individuality when creating an artefact like a knitted piece. Each artefact bears its maker’s imprimatur even though he may be subordinated to the artefact being guided by its construction and the fact that it may outlive him. The artefact tells little about him except that he made it. It does not tell who he is or was. Therefore, it is only through social interaction, through word and deed, that Man can reveal his identity. Thence, action and speech are interdependent because without word, action could not be attributed to its agent: action would lose its powers to support human agency without speech. In context, to be accorded agency infers that the participants in this study are involved in meaningful actions that initiate new ideas with others in the polis (public sphere), namely: through ‘the organization of the people as it arises out of acting and speaking together…no matter where they happen to be’ (p.198). Briefly, people exhibit agency when they initiate actions with others in word and deed. It derives from ‘the fact that men, not Man, live on the earth and inhabit the world’ (pp.7-8), through the conditions of freedom and plurality whereby they are empowered to disclose their identities, their multiple ways of being, through their narrative.

3.3.3 Action as narrative

A limitation of action is that it is subject to the erosion of time and memory. It is unlike the products of work which can become lasting artefacts. Thus, one of Arendt’s most ardent claims is that the meaning of action itself is dependent upon the interpretation retrospectively accredited to it by historians and storytellers/narrators. The storyteller’s function is to preserve words and deeds, and actors’ identities: storytellers’ narratives ‘tell us more about their subjects, the ‘hero’ in the centre of each story, than any product of human hands ever tells us about the master who produced it’ (p.184). Thence, the weaving of story out of the sayings and doings of others ensures the retrospective interpretation of their actions so that when connected to other actions, those connections are further sources of narrative, whether in history, prose or verse. Through narrative, the memory of speech and action is passed from one to another because in re-telling deeds as stories, the actors’ words and deeds can be rescued from oblivion. In ancient Greece, it
was the civic duty of poets and historians to ensure the living legacy of words and deeds for future generations. The Greek *polis* thus created a narrative space wherein lives and deeds of actors could be committed to perpetuity. The notion of preserving speech and action supports Bateson’s (1972) idea that we are connected to all things through invisible ties, with space and boundaries. It further links with his idea that through contemplation of an artefact, the viewer blends his identity with the identity of the artefact. It also links with Rayner’s (2004, 2005) idea that all phenomena are in intimate relation with one another and therefore, boundaries are dissolved into permeable interfaces that dynamically co-create each other over time. Understood this way, all interaction in word and deed between young and old can contribute epistemologically to this study.

### 3.3.4 Action in context of young children’s civic engagement

Arendt’s (1958) understanding of action as political activity informs how civic actions can be interpreted in this study. Her theory is relevant insofar as it offers possibilities to young children to engage civically in their community based on her notion that, through their participation, their actions and words reveal the nature of their civic activation. Accordingly, young children are given opportunities through intergenerational engagement to demonstrate civic actions when they voice their opinions, make decisions and participate in words and deeds that have mutual benefit for each other and for the social good.

So far this chapter has discussed the three theoretical foci that underpin this study. A discussion of the research-practitioner’s declared educational values, which sustain the theoretical foci, now follows.

### 3.4 Linking educational values and theoretical foci

This research-practitioner believes, like Carr and Kemmis (1986), that ‘education is a practical value-laden activity…and…any educational theory worthy of the name cannot rest content with providing value-neutral theoretical accounts, but must be able to confront questions about practical educational values and goals’ (p.99). Like Alexander (1995), she believes
that ‘the most basic test of the rightness of one’s teaching is the degree to which it is true to the educational values, which the teaching claims to manifest’ (p.304). Like Latstone and Pavitola (2013), she believes that children’s values can be influenced by others’ values outside of the social milieu of their class, religion, ethnicity, and/or socio-historical context while accepting, like Harrison and Kagan (2006), that they are transmitted by family, religion, the media and education and that children are ‘wired’ to their family’s values and reflect their behaviours (Amighetti, 2006). Thence, she believes that she can have influence in and be influenced by another’s values, i.e., by ‘the flows of life-affirming energy through which we give meaning and purpose to our lives’ (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006, p.24) as opposed to being ‘destructive of life’ (p.86). Consequently, the educational values promoted relate to the study’s theoretical foci. They are practice, connectedness and dialogue (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Theoretical foci and related values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical foci</th>
<th>Educational Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practice</td>
<td>Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Learning</td>
<td>Connectedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Dialogue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These educational values can be used as explanatory principles for the credibility of claims to knowledge emanating from the practice element of this study, as explained next.

3.4.1 Practice

This study began with an interest in activating young children’s civic engagement through intergenerational learning collaborations. A value for practice was present from the outset. It foregrounds the research-practitioner because, as well as conducting the research, she is also facilitating a practice whereby children engage in intergenerational collaborations to explore the civic literacy concept. A living educational theory approach (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) supports an ontological value for practice, cultivating insider views which in turn influence the epistemology, methodology and pedagogy of the study. Ontologically, a living theory approach supports a
practitioner’s view of engaging in collaborative practice with others. Epistemologically, critical reflection of practice contributes to bringing validity to the research-practitioner’s claims to knowledge. Methodologically, practitioner-research enables her to understand the lived experiences of the participants thus helping to generate her own living theories from practice as theorised by Whitehead and McNiff (2006). Pedagogically, like Dewey (1916), she believes that children should learn from practice.

3.4.2 Connectedness

The research-practitioner sees an Omnipotent connection between ‘all things in heaven and on earth…and…before anything was created, He existed, and He holds all things in unity’ (St. Paul’s letter to the Colossians, 1:15-20). Like Whitehead and McNiff (2006), she belongs to ‘an inclusive and relational universe’ (p.86), whereby each person is an original creation capable of an original contribution and, like Arendt (1958), she sees humanity as connected in a web of relationships. An ontological view of all things as connected in a web of relationships shaped the epistemology, methodology and pedagogy for this study. This perspective is informed by theoretical underpinnings from living theory (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006), informed by the works of Bateson (1972), Capra (2003), Arendt (1958) and Rayner (2004, 2005) who subscribe to the notion that all things are interconnected. Epistemologically, she understands that knowledge is created by ‘drawing insights from the knowledge of others’ (Whitehead and McNiff, p.25). Methodologically, all elements and individuals in this research are connected, drawing from relational and inclusive views of humanity underpinning the living theory approach (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006). Pedagogically, children’s learning is understood as connected through intergenerational learning collaborations.

3.4.3 Dialogue

The word dialogue comes from the Greek word *dia-logos* (between+logic), inferring an understanding between people. From Arendt’s (1958) perspective, such understanding consists of speech and actions, i.e., verbal
and action-based dialogue between people. People can choose between the *I-Thou* and *I-It* attitude (Buber, 1958): *I-Thou* infers subject-to-subject relationships: reverential, inclusive and equal. *I-Thou* affirms the person, because when another chooses, or is chosen in *I-Thou*, that person engages in a direct interpersonal relationship which is not mediated by any other intervention, and so, ‘no objects of thought intervene between *I* and *Thou*’ (1958, p.58). *I-It* infers subject-to-object relationships: unequal and exclusionary, whereby people fail to dialogue and treat things, including people, as means-to-ends. Ontologically, Buber’s (1937/1958) ‘I-Thou’ thinking enables people to progress from positions of disconnectedness, social isolation and inequality to connectedness, inclusion, reciprocity and equality through conversation, debate/discussion and attentive listening. Buber’s emphasis on *I-Thou* dialogue resonates with Aldridge (2005, pp.28-47) who highlights ‘mutual performance’ as a form of dialogue. Here, Aldridge is referring to people who suffer neuro-degenerative trauma, like forms of dementia. Connectivity through performance is core to Aldridge’s thinking, because ‘other people degenerate when we fail to interact with them’. Accordingly, it is the responsibility of others to reach us if we disconnect because ‘the challenge is to communicate with one another…to promote a performance in which the other achieves understanding in us’ (p.30). Aldridge stresses that we are ‘not simply a sender and receiver, a player and a listener, me and you, but a mutual performance’. Understanding connectedness this way means that children come to know that responsibility for dialogue resides in them too, because ‘through dialogue, we achieve the social…and…to put the being into human being we have to perform’ (pp.28-47). Epistemologically, all participants in this study are viewed as instrumental in cultivating ways of knowing and understanding the civic literacy concept through verbal and action-based dialogue. Such dialogue may emerge through: word and deed (Arendt, 1958); conversation, debate/discussion and attentive listening (Buber, 1958); and performance (Aldridge, 2005). Methodologically, through the ‘awareness-action-evaluation’ (Foróige, 2010) process, young children can participate as researchers in their own learning. Then, rather than having adults interpret their voice they can interpret it themselves and therefore,
uncover ways to advance youth voice and participation (Dolan, 2011). Pedagogically, teaching and learning are viewed as dialogic exchanges based on active learning theories. In democratic education, group members freely interact, change, and adjust in response to their engagement with another and external influences (Dewey, 1916). Such pedagogical assumptions incorporate ontological assumptions of connectedness to others in processes of creation.

3.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has addressed the theoretical underpinnings of the study, namely: practice, active learning and action. Additionally, it has addressed the educational values underpinning the practice, namely: practice, connectedness and dialogue. These values form the standards of judgement which help to interrogate the research-practitioner’s claims to knowledge: practice of civic literacy-themed intergenerational collaborations; connectedness to an inclusional view of humanity existing in a web of relationships (Arendt, 1958); and dialogue to enjoy the mutuality of the ‘I-Thou’ relationship (Buber, 1958).

Chapter Four addresses the methodology and methods necessary to conduct this enquiry.
CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter is divided into two sections. Section One addresses the methodology underpinning the design and philosophical assumptions of a mixed-methods approach (4.1). Section Two addresses ethical considerations (4.2), sampling procedures (4.3), the quantitative (4.4) and qualitative (4.5) streams and the volunteer profile (4.6) for the study. A summary posing the specific research questions (4.7) brings the chapter to a close.

SECTION ONE: METHODOLOGY

Insofar as methodology infers a ‘system of explicit rules and procedures upon which research is based and against which claims for knowledge are evaluated’ (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 2005, p.13), it informs the methods used which in this study are quantitative and qualitative with an embedded intervention, or intergenerational practice.

4.1 Mixed-Methods Design

This section explains mixed-methods design and why a particular approach was selected. A mixed-methods study involves (Creswell, 2003, p.212):

‘The collection or analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study in which the data are collected concurrently or sequentially, are given a priority, and involve the integration of the data at one or more stages in the process of research’.

4.1.1. Embedded mixed-methods design

Having reviewed the relevant literature on mixed-methods approaches (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, pp.53-106), a method was sought that would mesh with a living theory approach to action research (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) structured through reflection cycles of ‘awareness-
action-evaluation’ (Foróige, 2010). The embedded mixed-methods design was identified as being most appropriate (Creswell, 2003, p.212):

‘[O]ne data set provides a supplemental function in a study based primarily on the other data type. A single data type is not enough. Different questions require different data. A qualitative component can be embedded within a quantitative design, or vice versa. Researcher needs quantitative and qualitative data to develop an intervention and to examine the process and follow up on the intervention’.

In embedded mixed-methods design, the researcher combines the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data within a traditional quantitative or qualitative research design (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). The collection and analysis of the second data-set may occur before, during, and/or after the implementation of the data collection and analysis procedures traditionally associated with the larger design. One data-set provides a supplemental role to the other. Researchers make interpretations by bringing the two data-sets together in the concurrent approach or keeping them separate in the sequential approach. This study adapts a sequential approach because the qualitative aspect is conducted before, during and after the quantitative phase. The purposes of including the qualitative data are tied to but different from the purpose of the experiment, i.e., ‘to assess whether a treatment has a significant effect’ (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.91). This is what distinguishes the embedded design from other designs: the researcher is using both methods to address a single overarching question which is the basis of the quasi-experiment. Thus, the central research question—*To what extent and in what ways can participation in intergenerational learning collaborations activate young children’s civic engagement?*—has three dimensions: quantitative—measures to what extent children’s civic literacy scores changed between time-points; intervention—an action research element giving pupils hands-on experience of the civic literacy concept; and qualitative—seeks explanations for how desired outcomes for civic literacy were developed over that timeframe. Thence, the embedded design was chosen because it
requires different qualitative data to supplement the primary quantitative strand. Additionally, embedded design was appropriate when conducting a quasi-experiment/intervention with whole-class groups for whom it would be unethical to make random allocations to experimental or non-experiment groups. Consequently, whole-class groups were chosen for the intervention and control groups.

4.1.2 Philosophical assumptions underpinning mixed methods

The philosophy underpinning living theory is based on ontological assumptions of the connectedness of all things, animate and inanimate, in an interconnected world (Rayner, 2004/2005; Capra, 2003; Bateson, 1972/1979; Arendt, 1958) as discussed in Chapter Three (3.1). However, a dilemma emerges when combining philosophical perspectives for mixed methods with those of the living theory approach (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) which informs the practice and the consequent reflection cycles of ‘awareness-action-evaluation’ (Foróige, 2010). Whitehead (2009), in ‘responding to Creswell’ (p.1) encourages research-practitioners to develop their own living theory methodology by combining insights from the major qualitative research approaches including narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study. The idea of adapting a social-constructivist worldview would be compatible with such approaches. Social constructivists hold that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work through deepening subjective meanings of their experiences: meanings directed toward certain objects/things (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). These meanings are diverse and multiple, leading the researcher to seek a complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas. Accordingly, the research-practitioner must rely on participants’ perspectives of the situation under study. This suggests using a constructivist approach for all qualitative data.

A further dilemma arises when quantitative data are introduced with qualitative approaches. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) advise that when a primary quantitative approach is used, a post-positivist stance, or mathematical model that describes and codifies observations made (Popper,
be adopted. However, constructivism rejects post-positivism and *vice versa*: dialectics have no place in the propositional form (Popper, 1963); and the propositional form masks the dialectical nature of reality (Marcuse, 1964). To circumvent this *impasse*, Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) suggest that a constructivist approach be adopted if strands run sequentially, as they do in this study. Therefore, a post-positivist stance is applied to quantitative data and a constructivist stance to qualitative data including the action research element.

### 4.1.3 Section summary

Embedded design is based on the notion that quantitative and qualitative data are deemed necessary to address different aspects of a study. Embedded design does not compare and contrast qualitative and quantitative data. In this study, qualitative data are collected primarily to supplement the primary quantitative phase, to understand contextual factors during the intervention that could affect the outcome, and/or explain results after the interventions are completed (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). Embedded design uses ‘the supporting data before, during, or after the major data collection procedures’ (p.73). Embedded mixed-methods design can be used when the researcher does not have sufficient time or resources to commit to extensive quantitative and qualitative data collection because one data type is given less priority than the other. However, for during-intervention approaches, the qualitative data collection could introduce potential treatment bias which could affect the outcomes for the subsequent quantitative stage. Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007, p.120) warn that ‘it is possible that one form of data might confound the results from the other…if collected from the same participants’. A solution is ‘to collect unobtrusive qualitative data’ (p.121) throughout the research process. This would occur when reflective journaling is used as a basis for deriving data. Figure 4.1 provides an overview of the procedures necessary to implement an embedded mixed-methods design for this study:
**EMBEDDED (QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL) DESIGN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1: QUAL Before Experiment</th>
<th>Stage 2: QUAL During Experiment</th>
<th>Stage 3: QUAL After Experiment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decide reasons for QUAL strand</td>
<td>In addition to the steps in Stage 1:</td>
<td>In addition to Stages 1 and 2:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State qualitative research questions</td>
<td>Describe the interventions</td>
<td>Describe why outcomes occurred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine qualitative approach</td>
<td>Describe participants’ learning experiences within interventions</td>
<td>Describe participants responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify participants; obtain permissions</td>
<td>Describe the learning outcomes in terms of the civic literacy concept</td>
<td>Describe what long-term effects are experienced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect data</td>
<td></td>
<td>Explain, in light of the literature, desired outcomes for young children’s civic engagement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyse qualitative data using thematic analysis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use QUAL data to refine interventions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.1: Embedded design (adapted: Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011)
SECTION TWO: METHODS

This section addresses ethical considerations (4.1), sampling procedures (4.2), and how quantitative (4.3) and qualitative (4.4) data were managed for the study. A volunteer profile (4.6) and summary (4.7) bring the chapter to a close.

4.2 Ethical considerations

Permission was sought from school Boards of Management to accommodate intergenerational collaborations aimed at activating young children’s civic engagement through the civic literacy concept. Alternative arrangements were initiated for students who might not wish to participate. BOMs granted permission, requesting that volunteers be briefed on ethical guidelines for engaging with children which were informed by *The Children First National Guidelines* (GOI, 2011a) and the Sociological Association of Ireland (2014). Additionally, it was understood that children should be sufficiently competent to understand the purpose of the research, why they were invited to participate, and what they were asked to do. Research must be in their best interests (beneficence principle); their participation must be indispensable because fieldwork otherwise could not be conducted; they should know how data were to be recorded, accessed and coded, including matters of anonymity and confidentiality, and what happens to data when research is complete. Pupils and their parents/guardians received information packs including forms requesting their consent to participate in the study and allow photographic evidence of workshops in the thesis write-up. They were informed that *Childline* is an accessible resource at all times.

Volunteers complied with Garda vetting procedures. They also needed to be sufficiently competent to provide their informed consent (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992) and not have experienced substantial functional decline which might alter their behaviour or prove debilitating to them during the course of the study; and would not have suffered from communicative or sensory losses that would prevent their participation. All volunteers were deemed competent, as were key informants (teachers/principals and parents/guardians). Key informants are persons
who, as a result of their knowledge, experience, or social status in a community, can provide insights and access to information valuable in understanding local issues, problems, and needs (Schwartz et al., 2001). Volunteers were unlikely to come to harm, unless they might experience emotional or psychological distress, in which case they were informed that counselling services are accessible at *Senior Help Line*. Teachers were present in classrooms at all times and all workshops took place on school grounds during school hours.

Data, including audio-recordings collected during the study, are stored on the research-practitioner’s password-protected computer, and otherwise only available to the Academy on request. In accordance with Academy research policy on data retention, data will be kept for a five-year-period after completion of the study. The study was guided by principles of beneficence, right of withdrawal and anonymity/confidentiality. Ethical approval for the study was granted by the NUI Galway Research Ethics Committee.

The initial documentation includes information packs and consent forms to Boards of Management, principals/teachers, parents/guardians, pupils and volunteers. These information packs incorporate an ethics statement; and the research plan with proposed timetable, scheme of work and lesson plans (see Appendices 1-12).

### 4.3 Sampling procedures

Sampling procedures were ‘purposive’ for pupils and ‘snowball’ for volunteers. Purposive sampling infers the deliberate selection of participants for in-depth study where rich information about phenomena of importance to the study can be obtained to answer the research questions (Patton, 2001). Children were selected on the basis that they were third- and fourth-class girls and boys (modal age nine years) attending Primary School and with capacity to participate. They were the preferred choice of principals/teachers, because time could be afforded for research with them. The research sites were selected on the basis that they were within ten kilometres of the town centre around which most of the volunteers reside.
The control school was 60 miles away and there was no known connection between it and the research sites.

The older people were chosen using ‘snowball sampling’ techniques (Cohen et al., 2000) which identifies ‘a small number of individuals who have the characteristics in which they [volunteers] are interested’ (p.104). They are ‘then used as informants to identify or put the researchers in touch with, others who qualify for inclusion, and these in turn, identify yet others…’ (p.104). Informants were sourced through organisations in which the research-practitioner participates like music, sports and charities. Five or six people were selected and asked to recruit five or six additional peers committed to helping in intergenerational collaborations around young children’s civic literacy. Thirty-four people volunteered (profiled at Appendix 13) and were deemed suitable by schools’ managements to participate in workshops/interventions (see Appendix 14). Sampling procedures are described in Table 4.1.
Table 4.1: Sampling procedure

| Research Sample | 130 children, Third and Fourth class (modal-age-9). Year-1: Pilot-School-A (22 pupils and teacher) and Research-School-B (41 girls and 2 teachers); Year-2: Pilot-School-C (5 pupils and teacher) and Research-School-D (32 boys and teacher); Control/non-intervention (30 pupils and teacher). 34 retired adults, aged 60 years and over and author/research-practitioner. |
| Setting: west of Ireland | Pilots and research schools: Rural town and hinterland; Control: Small seaside town and hinterland, 60 miles away |
| Programme description | Civic-literacy-themed intergenerational learning collaborations addressed through the arts (music and dance; arts and crafts; creative writing, local history and story-telling, environmental awareness and information technology (ICT)). |
| Recruitment | Third- and fourth-class pupils were recruited to participate for an academic year. Retired people were recruited through local voluntary organisations. |
| Selection criteria | **Participants:** inclusion—capacity to agree consent; exclusion—incapacity to consent. **Teachers:** inclusion—teaching cohort; exclusion—not teaching cohort. General willingness to engage in intergenerational learning collaborations. |
| Survey instruments | Self-reported civic literacy questionnaire (School-B/D and control); and teacher’s observational checklists (School-B/D). Qualitative data, including photographic evidence, were derived from participants (pupils and volunteers), key informants (teachers/principals; parents/guardians) and researcher. |
| Delivery | Questionnaires despatched and returned before interventions began (September) and finished (June). |
| Written consent | Sought from: Boards of Management, principals/teachers, parents/guardians, pupils and volunteers. |
| Sample obtained | 130 students returned consent forms. 103 completed questionnaires (73 research, 30 controls). 34 retired adults returned consent forms. |
| Acceptance | All persons who volunteered to participate were accepted. |
| Data analysis | Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS 20 and Microsoft Excel (2010). Qualitative data were analysed thematically. |
| Ethical approval | Ethical approval was granted by NUI Galway. |
Including procedures for ensuring rigour and validity, the study now continues with a discussion on how quantitative (4.3) and qualitative (4.4) data were managed. It ends with a profile of the older participants (4.6) before summarising the chapter (4.7).

4.4 The quantitative stream: data management

The measurement instruments used in this study were constructed by Chi et al. (2006). They include: a self-rated student survey (Civic Literacy Questionnaire, i.e., ‘the questionnaire’: Appendix 15) and a set of corresponding grade level observational checklists of student civic skills and behaviours that relate to civic dispositions maintained by class teachers (Student Observational Checklist, i.e., ‘the checklist’: Appendix 16). Expectations for civic literacy from ‘Second/Third grade’ and ‘Fourth/Fifth grade’ of Chi et al. (2006, pp.13-14) are integrated for third- and fourth-class pupils in this study.

Questionnaire and checklist were administered at year-beginning (September/Time-1) and year-end (June/Time-2). While acknowledging that more time-points might have created more statistical data, collection at year-beginning and year-end was the most realistic option for the student population. Multiple baseline design or interrupted time-series designs, for example, did not suit because multiple observations would be needed prior to interventions to establish a baseline; and afterwards to demonstrate whether such observations would deviate from expectations derived from baseline projections. Pre-/post-intervention quantitative tools had potential to also fulfil such criteria. Further, since there were only four categories of response, it was possible that pupils might have remembered their responses if they fell too closely together. Additionally, this research-practitioner and class teachers regarded that post-intervention data collection would make more sense at year-end when all the workshops were completed and when the SPHE course for third/fourth class was covered. Besides, this was a mixed-methods study, and therefore, reflective cycles of ‘awareness-action-evaluation’ (Foroige, 2010) were intended to provide supplementary data to support the quantitative function.
Data were analysed using SPSS (Version 20) to determine statistically significant difference ($p \leq 0.01$) in pupils’ civic literacy self-reported scores, between Time-1 and Time-2. Measurements included: paired-samples t-tests to determine pupils’ changed ratings; independent-samples t-tests to measure mean differences between intervention and control groups for combined civic literacy scores; and independent-samples t-tests of the intervention group to measure mean differences on the grounds of gender, class grouping and academic ability levels.

In establishing the worth of the quantitative tools, checks were conducted on structure, validity and reliability (4.2.1); parametric versus non parametric measurement (4.2.2); normality (4.2.3); and minimising error (4.2.4). They are now considered.

**4.4.1 Validity and reliability**

Validity indicates that a tool measures what it purports to measure (Rudestam and Newton, 2001). The two instruments used in this study, namely the student questionnaire and corresponding teacher checklist, were developed by Chi *et al.* (2006) using a comprehensive conceptual framework for civic indicators at elementary level. The questionnaire was already tested for validity and reliability whereas the observational checklist has not been tested heretofore. Chi *et al.* (2006) acknowledge that ‘there is much more work to be conducted to verify the validity and reliability of the observation checklists’ (p.8). The questionnaire, constructed by Chi *et al.* (2006, pp.10-17), while devised for another cultural setting (USA), was selected for this study because of its content compatibility with the SPHE curriculum (GOI/SPHE, 1999a, 1999b). It addressed Personal Responsibility, Civic Responsibility and Leadership and their respective subthemes.

Evidence for content validity is strong because the instrument includes items from other established measures of civic development which were adapted from existing validated instruments (Chi *et al.*, 2006). Examples include: *Developing Citizenship Competencies Kindergarten through Grade 12* (Torney-Purta and Vermeer, 2004); *California Civic Index* (Kahne and
Middaugh, 2005), KIDS Consortium Student Survey (Melchior/Brandeis University). Additionally, the instrument was reviewed for its content by teachers/administrators experienced with civic education at elementary level; and ‘by a national advisory group of experts in service-learning, youth development and civic education’ (p.22).

Evidence for construct validity of the questionnaire is good. Chi et al. (2006) report ‘high correlations of .50 to .60 among some of the scales’ (p.22). While anything over .7 is deemed a good rule-of-thumb (Agresti and Finlay, 2009), Chi et al. (2006) regard inter-scale correlations high at 0.50–0.60 because items measured some component of civic literacy that ‘holds concern for others and community as a valued attitude and motivation to use skills and demonstrate certain behaviours’ (p.22). For example, the Civic Participation scale was highly correlated with most scales including Personal Responsibility (.65), Concern for Others (.68) and Leadership Efficacy (.61). The study now under investigation also showed ‘good’ correlations between Civic Participation and Personal Responsibility (.57), Concern for Others (.68), Value of Group Work (.56), Care for Community (.61), Appreciating Diversity (.54), Environmental Stewardship (.47), Leadership Efficacy (.61), and Civic Thinking (.6). Plausibly, students who possess a strong sense of personal responsibility and concern for others/community would possess dispositions for civic participation. Aside, there are ten items in Civic Participation which would have improved chances of correlation. This was not so with the other subthemes. Appreciating Diversity and Civic Thinking were considered unreliable with low correlations. (Note: ‘School as Community’ is not a civic literacy main theme and therefore is excluded from analysis in this study. It is a separate unit under Chi et al. (2006) because ‘it assesses students’ school climate and does not represent a self-assessment of knowledge, skills or attitudes’ (p.22). While there is no corresponding between-themes correlation in Chi and colleagues’ project, the present study shows high correlations when questionnaire items are collapsed into main themes (Table 4.2):
Table 4.2: Pearson’s between-themes correlation: questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Personal Responsibility</th>
<th>Civic Responsibility</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n=103 Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Responsibility</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Readings of .65 to .88 mean an association between questions ranging from between two in every three to four in every five questions. To further enhance construct validity, Pearson’s correlation was applied to the teacher checklist, collapsing a 43-item tool into the same three themes (Table 4.3):

Table 4.3: Pearson's between-themes correlations: checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Personal Responsibility</th>
<th>Civic Responsibility</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n=73 Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Responsibility</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is an almost linear relationship with, at least, three in every four questions being correlated. Considering that all the scales in the checklist measure civic behaviours, it is plausible that the correlations between themes would be high.

The quantitative tools were also examined by Chi et al. (2006) for construct validity by gender, racial and ethnic groups. Tests of significance for findings by racial/ethnic origin were not research concerns of this study. However, Levene’s tests showed equality of variance between scores: by gender; academic ability levels; and Intervention versus Control Group differences in mean ratings (see Chapter Five: 5.6).

**Reliability**

Reliability addresses the consistency of the measuring tool, over time and within measurements (Rudestam and Newton, 2001). Reliability is important because otherwise it is impossible to have any validity associated
with the scores of a scale (Pallant, 2007). Reliability was measured by generating Cronbach’s Alpha scores for each of the nine subthemes of civic literacy (see Figure 4.2):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reliability Statistics</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha based on Standardised Items</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>.911</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.2: Cronbach’s alpha for reliability of civic literacy themes

The Alpha statistic of .9 is based on Time-1 scores of student self-reported scores. Essentially, .9 could be considered true score variance, meaning: 90 per cent internally consistent reliability variance. Thus the alpha figure of .9 justifies interpretations of aggregated scores in this study.

While anything over .7 is acceptable (Pallant, 2007), Chi et al. (2006) report ‘good reliabilities for most scales ranging from .64 to .78 while making an exception of two scales Appreciating Diversity (.49) and Civic Thinking Skills (.48)’ (p.18). They explain that: the addition of more items would likely increase reliability and that language difficulty may have been a contributory factor affecting reliability. For example, they found improved reliability after combining Moral and Conventional Responsibility under Personal Responsibility. By comparison, this study showed alpha reliabilities of between .88 and .9 based on Time-1 statistics. The questionnaire was distributed without adjustment, but teachers were asked to explain it in ‘local English’ as necessary when students asked questions around word-meanings.

The questionnaire showed evidence of good correlations between themes, and good reliability on conducting independent analyses. The Student Observational Checklist, while not validated by Chi et al. (2006), was used in this study to supplement data for the self-reported student questionnaire being completed by class teachers who knew their students best. The next section explains why parametric analyses were chosen over non-parametric analyses.
4.4.2 Parametric vs. non-parametric options

In deciding whether to use parametric (interval/scale) or nonparametric (nominal/ordinal) techniques for measuring numerical data, a basic principle applies (Pallant, 2007): parametric techniques assume that the sample population is normally distributed and variables have values indicating both order and distance whereas nonparametric techniques cannot make assumptions about the underlying population distribution and, while possessing meaningful order/rank, measurable distance cannot be ascertained. Anyhow, SPSS techniques are robust enough to withstand violations of this assumption and, with large enough samples (30+) such violation should not cause major statistical problems. Neuman (2000) warns that the distances between the ordinal categories, although numbers are not intervals: ‘the numbers are used for convenience only’ (p.185). Aside, Agresti and Finlay (2009) acknowledge that ‘while the position of ordinal scales on the quantitative-qualitative classification is fuzzy…ordinal scales more closely resemble interval scales…[because]…every level has a greater or smaller magnitude than another level’ (p.13). They suggest using ‘the more powerful methods available for quantitative variables’ (p.13) because ‘when an ordinal response has several categories, in practice it is common to assign scores to its levels and treat it as a quantitative variable’ (p.371). This is a reliable strategy for focussing on the mean ‘rather than on the proportions in particular categories’ (p.371). On comparing the difference in parametric means to non-parametric medians at Times-1 and 2, the questionnaire showed significance at p<0.05 for 94 per cent of the items, the remaining 6 per cent showing insignificance in both, when tested parametrically and non-parametrically. Consequently, ordinal variables were used as interval variables for this study. The next section interrogates the study’s robustness, namely how normality and minimising error were addressed.

4.4.3 Normality

Normality was investigated using: histogram and normal probability plots; skewness and kurtosis; and Levene’s test for variance (see Appendix 17).
**Histograms** and **Normal Q-Q Plots** provide visual descriptions of normality. In this study symmetrical bell-shaped curves showed greatest frequency of scores falling towards the middle with smaller frequencies towards the extremes; and normal probability plots indicated a reasonably straight line for normal distribution when plotted against a theoretical trend line.

**Skewness and kurtotic-values** of ±1 are considered excellent for most psychometric purposes and ‘a sample size of about 30 is sufficient…’ (Agresti and Finlay, 2009, p.94). Even a figure of ±2 is regarded as acceptable (Pallant, 2007). In this study negative skewness (-1.11, SD=.24) indicated wide dispersion of scores for n=103 (mean=3.33; SD=3.5); kurtotic values (.67, SD=.47) indicated right-sided peakedness within ±1. In light of the literature, skewness and kurtotic values are acceptable across all themes of civic literacy (Appendix 17).

**Homogeneity** was tested using Levene’s test for equal of variances (EV). Levene’s test determines how far away each value is from its own group mean. Themes being aggregated, Levene’s test (F=1.52, Sig.=.22) showed that EV could be assumed between the Intervention and Control Groups for mean differences.

In sum, normality assumptions apply to this study when results for histogram and probability plots; skewness and kurtosis; and Levene’s test for equality of means are considered. Thence, parametric techniques are justifiable. Besides, ‘a statistical method is robust if it performs adequately even when an assumption is violated’ because the Central Limit Theorem ensures that ‘when n is roughly about 30 or higher, an approximate sampling distribution occurs for ŷ [=mean] regardless of the population distribution’ (Agresti and Finlay, 2009, p.155). Accordingly, third- and fourth-class combined is the unit of analysis in this study, having at least 30 students. To analyse classes separately would violate the normality principle, being less than 30 per class. Minimising the likelihood of error is considered next.
4.4.4 Minimising errors

Statistical significance in the social sciences is acceptable at a probability of \( p \leq 0.05 \) (Agresti and Finlay, 2009). However, there are two potential dangers in extracting statistical inferences, namely: when the null hypothesis is true, Type-1 error occurs if it is rejected; when the null hypothesis is false, Type-2 error occurs if it is not rejected (p.160). Type-1 would happen if the null hypothesis is not accepted when proven that there is no significant difference between an intervention and control group. Error can be minimised if statistical significance is reduced from \( p \leq 0.05 \) to \( p \leq 0.01 \) (p.113). Then, results can be interpreted at 99 per cent-confidence-levels (\( p \leq .01 \)). However, statistical power of a test is also dependent on sample-size, effect size (the magnitude of the difference between groups), and alpha/p-value (Pallant, 2010) and according to Stevens (1996), there is the danger of non-significant results due to insufficient power with smaller sample sizes, for example \( n=20 \). The unit in this study is 30 minimum. Bonferroni testing (dividing the \( p \)-value by the number of repeat tests) can be applied to further minimise risk (Pallant, 2007). For example, with paired/independent samples at \( p= .01 \), from two repeated measures (pre-post), a Bonferroni adjustment (.01÷2=.005) doubles the strength of the inference, minimising likelihood of Type-1 error.

A Type-2 error happens if it is accepted that there is a significant difference between the intervention and control group when it is untrue. Thence, in controlling for Type-1 the likelihood of Type-2 happening is real. Therefore, in following Agresti and Finlay (2009, p.160), risk is minimised (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Decision regarding the null hypothesis \((H_0)\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circumstance</th>
<th>Reject (H_0)</th>
<th>Do not reject (H_0)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When (H_0) is found to be false</td>
<td>Correct</td>
<td>Type-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When (H_0) is found to be true</td>
<td>Type-1</td>
<td>Correct</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The quantitative stream was interrogated for validity, reliability, modes of measurement, normality and error minimisation. There now follows consideration of the qualitative stream of this study.

4.5 The qualitative stream: practice and data management

This section addresses how practice was conducted (4.3.3); and how data were managed (4.3.4) or collected, evaluated, analysed and interpreted.

Considering that the embedded design is quasi-experimental, a discussion of practice is necessary.

4.5.3 Practice

This section addresses practice as evidence-informed and evidence-based (4.5.3.1), reflective cycles (4.5.3.2) and the rationale behind the interventions (4.5.3.3).

4.5.3.1 Practice: evidence-informed and evidence-based

According to Veerman and van Yperen (2007), youth care research models have been increasingly successful at showing the effectiveness of psychosocial interventions in research settings where sufficient control can be achieved to demonstrate evidence-based practice. Veerman and van Yperen (2007) offer a four-stage model for the classification of effective interventions carried out in actual youth care practice which progress incrementally from potential, to plausible, to functional, to efficacious interventions and which can inform whether the interventions are responsible for the observed effects or not (see Table 4.5):
Table 4.5: Levels of evidence (adapted: Veerman and van Yperen, 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of evidence</th>
<th>Considerations for this study (levels are incremental)</th>
<th>Types of research required at each level</th>
<th>Effectiveness in achieving its objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level-1 Descriptive</td>
<td>Explain key elements of the interventions (e.g. aims/objectives, participant profile, types of intervention).</td>
<td>Descriptive Observational Interviews</td>
<td>Potentially effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level-2 Theoretical</td>
<td>Integrating level-1, communicate rationale explaining why interventions might work and with whom.</td>
<td>Literature reviews Theoretical explanations supporting interventions</td>
<td>Plausible due to theoretical evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level-3 Indicative</td>
<td>Integrating levels-1/2, show that interventions lead to desired outcomes (e.g. improved civic literacy, increased connectedness).</td>
<td>Quasi-experimental (e.g., pre-post studies)</td>
<td>Functional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level-4 Causal</td>
<td>Integrating levels-1/2/3, provide supporting evidence that the outcomes are caused by the interventions.</td>
<td>Action research studies or Repeated case studies RCTs</td>
<td>Effective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research at levels-1/2 is understood as evidence-informed practice whereas by levels-3/4 it is considered evidence-based. Being an incremental process, levels-1/2 ideally need to be undertaken before levels-3/4. Level-1 provides a clear description of the intervention and its core elements which form the foundation for subsequent levels. Level-2 permits theoretical evidence to go beyond description in that a rationale is specified together with why and how intervention activities with particular participants may lead to desired outcomes (i.e., for civic literacy): ‘A good theory indicates where to look for effects and how to adjust interventions to elicit better effects’ (p.217).

Considered evidence-based practice, level-3 is indicative insofar as systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of an intervention shows whether desired changes have occurred or not. Indicative evidence can be derived through pre-post studies that monitor the outcomes of an intervention; and/or, through quasi-experimental studies (QESs) whereby the results of...
the relevant intervention can be compared to the results of a non-intervention control. Such data can be used to improve the quality of interventions—‘not only when the services are found to be unsatisfactory but also when they are found to be satisfactory but with room for improvement’ (p.217). Because of the lack of randomisation due to ethical considerations with children, the QES provides indicative rather than causal evidence. Therefore, to provide evidence that the interventions are associated with change, rather than the cause of it, various qualitative methods are necessary in order to support explanations in a QES. Overall, such research designs can be used to build a monitoring system for planning and evaluation purposes thereby providing the researcher with systematic feedback on intervention effectiveness. Level-3 interventions are considered functional because the evidence generated can validate the theory underlying the intervention, and can show whether the intervention leads to the desired outcomes or not, and/or whether the results may lead to adaptation of the intervention or not. However, the degree to which the actual intervention accounts for the observed results must still be tested more rigorously with level-4 research to conclude that the intervention causes the desired outcomes.

Evidence-based practice at level-4 requires causal evidence, i.e., whether the intervention itself has caused the outcome or not. To be judged efficacious, level-4 study should reveal the elements responsible for desired outcomes. There are two research designs that can produce level-4 evidence, namely the randomised controlled trial (RCT) and the single case study. The RCT is considered the most powerful design because the results lead to a high degree of certainty that the intervention causes the observed effects. However, if the RCT is taken as the gold standard for evaluation purposes, then ‘other research designs are often deemed to have a lesser value or even to be unscientific’ (p.218). Notwithstanding that RCTs are difficult to conduct in youth care settings, ‘most of the interventions…do not have descriptive, theoretical, indicative, or causal evidence on their behalf’ (p.218) and therefore, the gap between evidence-informed and evidence-based practice might hinder the development of empirically supported youth
practice. Aside from ethical considerations, RCTs could not be conducted in this study because the interventions are a work-in-progress and have not yet been accepted into actual practice in Irish Primary School.

Alternatively, the case study can also produce causal evidence for the effectiveness of an intervention. Here, the student/class can be observed before, during and after an intervention so that the course of the problem behaviour, emotions, skills, and/or cognitions may be recorded. When the results of a series of single case studies consistently show change in the same direction following an intervention, there is strong evidence that the treatment is responsible for the observed changes and therefore, as posited by Veerman and van Yperen (2007) and others whom they cite, ‘when carefully designed, repeated single case studies can provide evidence that is just as convincing as the evidence from RCTs’ (p.218).

A critical feature of the Veerman and van Yperen (2007) model is, however, that ‘the demonstrated effectiveness of a particular intervention cannot be pushed to a higher level than the level of development of the intervention permits’ (p.218). They mean that in conducting an RCT, there is a waste of resources if that intervention has not yet been adequately developed. Notwithstanding, they advise that researchers need not wait until others have conducted their RCTs nor withhold their own interventions when no better researched alternatives exist just because they have yet to be shown to be effective. Instead, researchers should participate in practice-driven evaluations to gain greater insight into the effectiveness of their own interventions so as to improve daily practice and accountability to their stakeholders. In short, practice-driven studies can generate practice-based evidence for the effectiveness of one’s own interventions (Barkham and Mellor-Clark, 2003) which infers that novel interventions, such as those contemplated for this study, can be used to show higher levels of effectiveness on the four-stage continuum theorised by Veerman and van Yperen (2007).
4.5.3.2 Practice: reflective cycles

In order to give the reflective cycles some structure, practice followed the ‘awareness-action-evaluation’ sequence used by Foróige in their Citizenship Programme (Foróige, 2010). It was considered a straightforward model for working with the participants in this study (see Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3: Reflection cycles (permanent tsb Foróige, 2012, p.4).

The ‘awareness-action-evaluation’ model asked three core questions throughout the study:

- What issues have you become aware of that you could help to solve?
- What actions do you suggest taking to solve the identified problem?
- What was the result of the action taken?

‘Awareness’ was facilitated whenever pupils and volunteers came together for learning collaborations. Following ‘awareness’, action-oriented programmes were planned, thus providing real opportunities for children to engage in civic actions. ‘Action’ workshops, while broadly informed by the civic literacy concept (Chi et al., 2006), evolved according to participants’ reciprocal teaching/learning needs. For example, volunteers led off with a presentation on artefacts which sparked diverse interests among the children, and prompted a wide array of learning collaborations, like music-making; craft-making; storytelling and local history. Consequently, children discovered areas where the volunteers wanted to learn new skills, like
modern dance, Irish reading, and ICT skills. ‘Evaluation’ took place after project completion in workshops. Evaluation was based on the critical reflection of participants and key informants as well as this researcher’s observations in discussion with participants and class teachers. Observation is a deliberate, systematic and planned data gathering process guided by a particular issue and is a useful technique for evaluating intergenerational programmes being complementary to data gathered with other tools (Pinazo, 2009). Participants gave their evaluative feedback verbally and from their own reflective logs/journals. Texts from reflective journals were used for methods triangulation (Bryman, 2004) between participants’ oral and written submissions. Younger and older participants analysed what went well, and how they could have done better and decided collaboratively on future actions derived from a growing awareness of practice. The method is further outlined in Table 4.6.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Meaning for pupils</th>
<th>Method adapted by pupils</th>
<th>Desired outcomes for civic literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>Enhance awareness of what is going on in their community and raise awareness of different social needs.</td>
<td>Pupils did a virtual ‘Walk About’ finding out what volunteers were interested in learning from them. They prepared lesson plans with teacher and researcher support.</td>
<td>Research skills to explore an issue, assess needs, decide a plan, and take action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Develop organisational skills. Pupils learn to a ‘need-resources-activities-goal’.</td>
<td>Pupils planned, organised and engaged in action. They set goals and decided how they were going to achieve them. They found ways to connect to community by initiating actions.</td>
<td>Set a learning goal; plan the lesson; achieve the goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Combine action with reflection and discussion and learn how to evaluate their own progress.</td>
<td>Process evaluation: Pupils reviewed what went well and decided what further action was needed to improve learning. Show case: They displayed their work.</td>
<td>Outcome evaluation: Participants assessed whether themes of civic literacy were learned or not. They gave/got feedback and planned next actions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There next follows a discussion on the interventions chosen for this practice.

4.5.3.3 Practice: the interventions

The first step in workshops was to facilitate discussion around pupil participation in planning and decision-making processes. In support of Article 12 (UNCRC, 1989), the participatory models of Hart (1992) and Treseder (1997) had greatest application: ‘child-initiated, shared decisions with adults’ and/or the ‘adult-initiated, shared decisions with children’. Accordingly, children were empowered to actively engage in reasoning out how the workshops might be constructed so as to derive desired outcomes for civic literacy. The ‘KWLH’ technique (Ogle, 1986) was used to determine prior knowledge; plan how learning was to be constructed; and assess learning outcomes: K—infers helping students recall what they know of a subject; W—means helping students determine what they want to learn; L—means helping students identify what they learned; and H—conveys how they can find sources of additional topic information.

The interventions included: music and dance; arts and crafts (knitting, sewing and weaving); conversational French, German or Spanish; interviewing; storytelling (including history and artefacts), vocabulary building and creative writing; technology skills; and environmental awareness.

1. Music and dance

Music and dance served to facilitate interaction between young and old. Intergenerational communication is a sequential process that most naturally begins with the type of superficial contact that is generated by ‘ice-breakers’ or ‘warm-ups’ which can give way to additional activities designed to yield more intensive, in-depth communication later on (Kaplan and Hanhardt, 2003; Kaplan and Lawrence-Jacobson, 2006). Volunteers would teach children an old song. In return, children would teach volunteers a modern song with a dance routine. The idea was that participants would find a mutual performance together (Aldridge, 2005) through shared music and dance.
2. Arts and crafts (knitting, sewing/embroidery and weaving)

The objective of this intervention was to facilitate the volunteers who passed on the tradition and manual skills of embroidery, knitting and weaving to the children. Children were taught basic knitting and sewing stitches by the volunteers. The products included headbands/hairbands, scarves and ‘Trauma Teddies’. Those who became more proficient more quickly, including those who already had learned knitting at home, went on to form a group of intergenerational knitters (fourth-class girls) who knitted Trauma Teddies for the ambulance service. Sewing (third-class girls) involved embroidering a ‘Santa-stockings’ to accommodate Santa’s presents. Weaving involved learning how to make the different types of Saint Brigid’s Cross to reflect different local traditions.

3. Artefacts

The purpose of presenting artefacts was to connect children to life long ago through the older generation and to promote critical thinking. Artefacts included: shoe last, darning mushroom, the sampler, rib bones/percussive instruments, clay pipes used at wakes, the slean for turf-cutting, candle reading lamp, hot water jar, (ironing) iron, carpentry tools and samples of timber/woods, sculpting tools and samples of stone/marble; war veteran’s letters and memorabilia from World War Two. In the presentation, each artefact became a story. For example, the slean became a story on turf-harvesting whereby the meitheal (group collaboration) approach was fundamental to success. The darning mushroom and the shoe-last became stories of environmental conservation. The candle-lamp told of how people would gather and share the light when performing duties like homework. The sampler narrated how people learned to embroider. Clay pipes told of the customs, food and drink consumed at the Irish wake. Rib bones showed how a percussive invention could be constructed. Carpentry and sculpting tools told of how people performed carpentry or sculpting skills before the advent of modern technology.
4. Conversational French, German and Spanish

The objective of these interventions was to help the pupils to appreciate diversity. These interventions were presented by retired secondary school teachers who had been subject teachers in these fields. The languages followed a common format for introductory initiations: courtesies, naming, age/counting numbers up to 20, family members, days, months, seasons, pastimes, customs and etiquette. Role-play featured strongly in these interventions with partners pretending to be German, French and/or Spanish and copying the facilitator’s directions for the spoken word. The idea was to practice courtesy and respect for another through communication in a different language while also getting the children accustomed to another’s culture and country. It also offered the volunteers an opportunity to learn a new language.

5. Interviewing

Interview Day was the learning tool used to develop research skills. The idea was that students would conduct research by finding and analysing multiple sources of information, drawing conclusions and presenting findings. Volunteers presented themselves to be interviewed on special interests/careers in which they might have given presentations previously and about which pupils wanted to learn more: business and banking, creative writing, world history, volunteering, forestry, farming, stone-cutting, life long ago and world travel. Volunteers’ consent was sought and signed.

Being a participatory approach, it allowed pupils to have the ideas, plan the interview schedules, interview the volunteers, take turns with roles of responsibility, and cooperate in the write-up while drawing on volunteer assistance. The model reflects the top ‘rung’ of Hart’s (1992) ladder of participation (section 2.1.3). Pupils were prepared ahead in interview protocol by this research-practitioner and their teachers. Data were sourced from curricular work; learning logs from previous workshops; and/or library/internet. Interview schedules were circulated to the interviewees ahead so that they could prepare data and teaching tools. Children worked in
teams of four/five: interviewer plus assistant/s; reporter plus assistant/s and listener/s. Roles were rotated throughout and teams changed tables every twenty minutes so that every child could experience a different responsibility throughout the interview process. Interviewees awaited rotations. Ten topics were undertaken across two classrooms. A plenary discussion followed the interview process.

6. Storytelling, word-building and creative writing

The idea behind the storytelling was that volunteers would narrate stories to children, authored, adapted or based on history so as to fire children’s creative imaginations and powers of critical thinking. To enhance vocabulary, ‘Word-Club’ and *Focal-Eile* were chosen workshops in English and Irish. To facilitate creative writing, volunteers showed children the techniques involved in writing poetry/story and wrote poetry for them. Volunteers presented slide shows on local history including archaeological sites and artefacts (e.g., local dolmens, fairy forts, passage tombs), and local monasticism. Volunteers also presented on aspects of world history. The idea was to connect children to the past so that they would develop an awareness of their place in European history. Local and European history were interwoven with wartime literature, including writings by the volunteers themselves.

7. Technology skills

The objective of this workshop was to facilitate the pupils to teach the volunteers a skill in which they had competence, e.g., Information and Communication Technology/ICT. Volunteers brought along technological accessories like iPads, iPhones and laptops for the lesson with their child-teachers. The idea was that in being able to teach technology, children might develop the confidence to teach other subjects to volunteers like modern song or dance or Irish reading.

8. Environmental awareness

The intention was to create an awareness of local flora and fauna so as to protect the environment. Volunteer presentations included discussion about
where various trees, plants and wild animals are to be found locally. Presentations included: samples of wood, timber and leaves and how to recognise and grow trees, such as chestnut and oak; waterways, fish species and habitats, fishing gear and safety tackle necessary for fishing; and a botanic presentation on the local wild flowers.

So far, this section has discussed practice as evidence-informed, evidence-based, reflection-based and interventions-based. The discussion now continues with data management.

4.5.4 Data management

The qualitative stream refers to the collection, evaluation, analysis and interpretation of qualitative data as discussed next.

4.5.4.1 Data collection

Data were derived from group/class discussions and the learning logs of participants; research-practitioner’s observations; and written submissions from key informants (teachers and parents/guardians). Group discussion with volunteers lasted generally one hour and focussed on achieving desired outcomes for civic literacy with questions-of-the-kind: *How could workshops be improved?* Volunteers were invited to write down their reflections during workshops and/or before group discussion. They were encouraged to refer to their notes when group discussing so that spoken and written data could be corroborated. Group discussions were transcribed *verbatim*. Children likewise discussed how the interventions might be improved. Children were familiar with the terminology pertaining to the civic literacy concept both from logs to which they could refer and from information sent to their homes (Appendices 3-6). Children in Schools A and C made oral submissions. Children in School-B made oral submissions, artwork/drawings and/or written reflections. Children in School-D, at their teacher’s behest, wrote descriptive passages for homework describing what they learned with/from or taught to volunteers during workshops which formed the bases of their critical reflections during follow-up visits. Each intervention necessitated a follow-up visit to School-D. It was integrated in workshops in the pilots. It entailed four extra visits to School-B.
4.5.4.2 Data analysis

Qualitative data were analysed thematically. The quantitative tool inspired the design of the interventions and the subsequent thematic analysis. Themes are patterns that describe and organise observations and interpret phenomena (Boyatzis, 1998). Thematic analysis was chosen because it ‘captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set’ (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.88). Rubin and Rubin (1995, p.226) consider analysis exciting because ‘you discover themes and concepts embedded throughout your interviews’. However, the logic of Ely et al. (1997, pp.205-206) makes more sense for this study. They argue that we derive themes driven by research questions. They consider it ‘unrealistic’ to expect that ‘if we just look hard enough they will ‘emerge’ like Venus on the half shell’. They maintain that ‘if themes ‘reside’ anywhere, they reside in our heads from our thinking about our data and creating links as we understand them’. In context, it meant gathering data from workshops (see Appendix 18) and connecting them to civic literacy themes which were sourced through Chi et al. (2006). Consequently, qualitative data were analysed thematically as was done with the quantitative tool so as to give the analyses structural consistency (see Appendix 19). Effectively, the data collection system centred on gathering the data from participants and key informants and then attaching it to the pertinent theme/subtheme of civic literacy. Qualitative analysis therefore addressed the construct of civic literacy under three themes (Chi et al., 2006): Personal Responsibility; Civic Responsibility, and Leadership.

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), there is no real formula for thematic analysis: it is a flexible tool to be used whenever ‘the theoretical framework and methods match what the researcher wants to know’ (p.85). Silverman (2000) offers workable guidelines: analyse the whole dataset rather than selected excerpts; monitor the applicability of findings through a process of cross-comparison throughout the analysis which questions whether data are restricted to a particular instance in the dataset; seek out cases in the data that deviate from the pattern being described because such comparisons
between the deviant and non-deviant cases might strengthen the validity of the analysis. Braun and Clarke’s (2006) ‘15-point checklist of criteria for good thematic analysis’ (p.96) was additionally consulted to guide transcription, coding, analysis and write-up.

**Transcription**—data/transcripts were transcribed to an appropriate level of detail, and checked with participants for accuracy.

**Coding**—was thorough, inclusive and comprehensive for each data item (theme), so that themes were supported across relevant extracts rather than across a few vivid examples. Themes were checked against each other and against the original data-set to establish internal coherence and consistency.

**Analysis**—involved searching across the data-set to find repeated patterns of meaning. Data were analysed and interpreted, not just paraphrased or described. Participants’ interpretations of learning were evidenced in their own reflective writing and/or verbal submissions. Thence, extracts illustrated analytical claims. A balance between analytic narrative and illustrative extracts was sought so as to convey a convincing story about the themes.

**Write-up**—the method and reported analysis endeavoured to show a good fit between desired outcomes and actual outcomes for civic literacy and in consequence, young children’s civic engagement. The over-riding guideline is that ‘the finished product contains an account – not necessarily that detailed – of what was done, and why’ (p.93). The language and concepts used in the write-up strive to take cognisance of ontological assumptions of inclusion, interconnectedness and co-creativity invoked by Whitehead and McNiff (2006) for living theory approaches. Thus, every participant’s contribution is submitted as grounds for a valid knowledge claim being premised on an epistemology understood as inclusive, interconnected and co-created.
Themes of civic literacy were addressed through the interventions and inspired by the quantitative tools constructed by Chi et al. (2006). In consequence, the write-up for the quantitative and qualitative analyses follows the same structural format. Qualitative findings were analysed using the ‘Setup-Quote-Comment model (SQC)’ informed by Weaver-Hightower (2014). This model has three phases:

**Set-up** (S): Researcher sets the scene for the thesis being tested. The thesis is stated as a theme/subtheme. Then, some context is presented that backs up the thesis statement. It indicates the quotation to come, who said it and the context. Since this is primarily an action research project, descriptions of workshops/interventions set the scene by offering evidence of work done. Descriptions are both photographic and verbal. Photographic evidence is used to capture the embodied values (i.e., dialogue, connectedness and practice) of the practitioner-researcher in ways that text-based reportage cannot do. Accordingly, Whitehead and McNiff (2006) advise using ‘multisensory forms of communication, such as pictures and graphics…’ (p.32).

**Quotation-stage** (Q): Quotations follow the S-stage and is another name for any data which articulate the theme, for example: field-notes, observations, visual representations/photographs, and data collected from participants (pupils and volunteers) and key informants (i.e., teachers/principals, parents/guardians, and this research-practitioner). Quotations (Q) demonstrate the learning that took place in workshops.

**Comment** (C): Analyses of the findings follow the Q-stage. Evidence is sought for pupils developing skills and dispositions of civic literacy. It involves tying the data back to the given construct or theme/thesis being built. It may require explanation through support from the literature. The next theme is signposted and the ‘SQC’ (Weaver-Hightower, 2014) process is repeated until all themes are analysed.

Thence the qualitative data are analysed thematically and presented separately as discussed next.
4.5.4.3 Presentation of data

Quantitative and qualitative streams are presented sequentially in this study because they are analysed separately. Results from the quantitative data collection procedure informed theme-building in the qualitative phase. While the two databases were not merged, the qualitative data collection and analysis were embedded before, during and after the quantitative phase.

Narrative integration informed by Fetters et al. (2013) was the approach chosen to incorporate quantitative results with qualitative findings in this study. It involves three basic approaches: weaving comprises writing both qualitative and quantitative findings together on a theme-by-theme/concept-by-concept basis; staged reports which produce results of each step in stages as the data are analysed and/or published separately; and contiguous which involves presenting findings within a single report, but with the qualitative and quantitative findings being reported in different sections. Brady (2010) used the contiguous approach in her doctoral study on an assessment of the viability and value of youth mentoring as a policy option in the Irish context. Since both types of data yielded important findings independently, integration was not required in her case until the end. The contiguous approach worked in this study too and thence, qualitative findings (Chapter Six) while supplemental to quantitative results (Chapter Five) were separate from them.

Rigour and validity are discussed next as criteria to interrogate the study’s methodology and claims to knowledge.

4.5.4.4 Rigour and validity

Rigour concerns choosing the methodology which ‘best allows the researcher to conduct systematic inquiry in order to present a warranted assertion’ (Swepson, 2000, p.8). Essentially, rigour is a process to interrogate if and how young children learned civic literacy skills, and in consequence, if and how their civic engagement was activated. In this study, rigour was ensured through: selection and use of multiple research methods; reflective cycles of awareness-action-evaluation (Foróige, 2010); and a focus on participants and what and how they were learning.
Winter’s (1989, pp.38-66) criteria of rigour guide the study’s qualitative stream in addressing: reflexive critique, dialectical critique, multiple resources, risk, plurality, and theory-practice transformation.

**Reflexive critique**—relates to judgements made by the participants from their own personal experiences. To improve this practice, reflection on their role in the research process was needed.

**Dialectic critique**—engages with the idea of contradiction which, in living theory (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006), is revealed when one’s values do not translate into practice. The research-practitioners’ educational values of practice, connectedness and dialogue were scrutinised constantly to determine if they were transmitted in practice.

**Multiple Resources**—include the voices of co-researchers, namely: participants, key informants, the Academy; research literature, and research-practitioner. Questioning of statements and actions provided insight into practice.

**Risk**—there are risks and challenges to established research paradigms when one engages with living theory (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006). Accordingly, other perspectives need to be consulted for what also constitutes valid research.

**Plurality**—multiple forms of research require multiple forms of reportage. This study incorporates viewpoints represented by written text (reflective journaling), spoken data submissions, audio recordings, and photographic displays.

**Theory-Practice Transformation**—theory and practice are interconnected in the living theory approach: one informs the other. Thence, the researcher shows how a contribution is made to practice which, by turn, can inform living theories. One’s own learning emerges through engaging with the literature, the enquiry and practice.
Validity concerns whether the research does what it claims to do and whether the reader can believe the results. Validity is about making a truthful and trustworthy claim to knowledge, i.e., ‘showing the authenticity of the evidence base, explaining the standards of judgement used, and demonstrating the reasonableness of the claim [to knowledge]’ (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006, p.98). Habermas (1987) states that when language is used for reaching an understanding with another there are certain ‘musts’ which constitute the validity basis of such communicative action. In short, it must be truthful, understandable, sincere and appropriate:

‘The speaker must choose a comprehensible expression so that speaker and hearer can understand one another. The speaker must have the intention of communicating a true proposition…so that the hearer can share the knowledge of speaker. The speaker must want to express his intentions truthfully so that the hearer can believe the utterance of the speaker. Finally, the speaker must choose an utterance that is right so that the hearer can accept the utterance and speaker and hearer can agree with one another in the utterance with respect to a recognized normative background. Moreover, communicative action can continue undisturbed only as long as participants suppose that the validity claims they reciprocally raise are justified’ (pp.2-3).

The above ‘musts’ strengthened validity in reducing the possibility for bias by gathering a wide spread of evidence from: participants (young and old) key informants (teachers/principals, parents/guardians); and research-practitioner) who are deemed responsible in the research process through engaging in and reflecting in-/on-action (Schön, 1983). Additionally, the researcher consulted with ‘critical friends’ to ensure the accuracy of data submitted for critique and to benefit from their ideas on ways to improve learning. A ‘critical friend’ is a ‘trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers critiques of a person’s work…’ (Costa and Kallick, 1993, p.49). By consulting Winter (1996) for rigour and Habermas (1987) for validity the research-practitioner ensured as far as possible that the research was rigorous and valid. The volunteer profile is presented next.
4.6 Volunteer profile

Thirty-four volunteers participated in this study (see Appendix 13). Their education varied from lower secondary (24%) through upper secondary (33%) with 43% having attained third-level education (Figure 4.4).

![Volunteers' educational attainment](image)

Figure 4.4: Volunteers’ educational profile

Volunteers brought their experience from diverse careers (Figure 4.5):

![Volunteers' Occupations](image)

Figure 4.5: Volunteers’ career profiles

Approximately one-third of volunteers were retired teachers (4 primary, 6 secondary), some of whom acted as ‘critical friends’ (Costa and Kallick, 1993) to the study. Primary teachers helped to induct the other volunteers, including the research-practitioner, into a deeper understanding of primary school children and their learning needs.

Being retirees, the volunteers were aged 60 years and above. Over half were aged over 70 years (Figure 4.6)
Most of the volunteers were female (Figure 4.7):

Figure 4.6: Volunteers’ age profile

Figure 4.7: Volunteers’ gender profile

4.7 Chapter summary: the research questions

The central research question—*To what extent and in what ways can participation in intergenerational learning collaborations activate young children’s civic engagement?*—can now be broken down into specific research questions informed by: the research literature on youth civic engagement and intergenerational engagement; theoretical foci of practice, active learning theories and action; and methodology and methods.
The research questions have thus become:

**QUANTITATIVE:**

The hypothesis is that young children who participate in intergenerational learning collaborations will score more positively on measures of the civic literacy concept than children who are not involved in such collaborations.

Therefore the quantitative question is:

1. To what extent did children’s civic literacy scores change over an academic year when measured at two time-points? (Chapter Five)

**QUALITATIVE:**

The questions in the qualitative stream are intended to supplement the primary quantitative phase, to understand contextual factors during the intervention that could affect the outcome, and/or explain results after the interventions are completed (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). Thus the questions are:

2. How do intergenerational learning collaborations impact on the development of young children’s civic literacy skills? (Chapter Six)

3. In light of the literature, how can desired outcomes for civic literacy be conceptualised as young children’s civic engagement? (Chapter Seven)

4. How can such engagement be attributable to intergenerational learning collaborations? (Chapter Seven)

5. What issues arise from the research that are worthy of further consideration? (Chapter Eight)

The next two chapters address the quantitative results (Chapter Five) and qualitative findings (Chapter Six).
CHAPTER FIVE

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS AND ANALYSES

5.0 Introduction

The research hypothesis for the quantitative stream of this study is that young children who participate in intergenerational learning collaborations will score more positively on measures of the civic literacy concept than a control group who are not involved in such collaborations.

To test this hypothesis, the following analytical tools were used:

- Pre-/post-intervention paired-samples t-tests of the Intervention Group’s self-reported civic literacy scores;
- Pre-/post-intervention paired-samples t-tests of teachers’ observational checklists of the Intervention Group;
- Independent-samples t-tests to compare mean differences in students’ scores for Intervention versus Non-intervention/Control Group;
- Independent-samples t-tests to establish if mean differences for the Intervention Group’s scores accrue to:
  - Gender (boys versus girls), or
  - Class grouping (Third versus Fourth class), or
  - Academic ability range (lowest versus average and highest).

Civic literacy scores were measured over two time-points: Time-1 or academic-year beginning (September); and Time-2 or academic-year ending (June). The primary school year is generally 1st September to 30th June. Data were drawn from: pupils’ self-reported civic literacy questionnaires (Chi et al., 2006) (Appendix 15) applicable to School-B (third- and fourth-class girls), School-D (third- and fourth-class boys) and School-E (third- and fourth-class control); and the Student Observational Checklist of Civic Skills and Behaviours (Chi et al., 2006) (Appendix 16) which applies only to Schools B and D where interventions took place.

Quantitative data were processed using SPSS (Version 20). Figures, indicating statistical significance, extracted from SPSS (see Appendix 20)
are presented using MS Excel and are rounded to two decimal places in the write-up.

The confidence interval, set at 99 per cent, infers that significance is sought for \( p \leq 0.01 \) (2-tailed) on all themes/subthemes of civic literacy.

**Effect size or eta-squared**

Whereas statistical tests of significance reveal the likelihood that experimental results differ from chance expectations, effect-size measurements, or eta-squared \((\eta^2)\), show the relative magnitude of the intervention by telling the size of the intervention effect (Thalheimer and Cook, 2002). Formulae to derive computations are presented in Figure 5.1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formula: Paired samples t-tests</th>
<th>Formula: Independent samples t-tests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( \eta^2 = \frac{t^2}{t^2 + (n-1)} )</td>
<td>( \eta^2 = \frac{t^2}{t^2 + (n1+n2-2)} )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.1: Formulae for magnitude of effect size

**Coded terms:**

Observational checklist compiled by class teachers, i.e., ‘checklist/s’;

Third- and fourth-class girls=‘girls’; third- and fourth-class boys=‘boys’;

Third- and fourth-class control=‘Control or Non-intervention Group’;

Third- and fourth-classes girls and boys=‘the Intervention Group’;

Time-1=Year-beginning/September; Time-2= Year-end/June.

**Statistical terms:** \( m=\text{mean}; \ SEM_1=\text{standard error of the mean at Time-1}; \ SEM_2=\text{standard error of the mean at Time-2}; \ MD=\text{mean difference}; \ SD=\text{standard deviation}; \ p\text{-value}=\text{probability value (two-tailed)}; \ 99\% \ CI=\text{99\% confidence interval of the difference}; \) and \( \eta^2=\text{magnitude of effect size of the interventions}. \)

**Format for analyses:** The unit of analysis is third- and fourth-class combined per cohort of girls, boys and/or control. It was important to
compute data for units of \( n \geq 30 \) (Agresti and Finlay, 2009) (see Section 4.2.3) which was the case when classes where combined.

To answer the research question—*To what extent did children’s civic literacy scores/ratings change over an academic year when measured at two time-points?*—the civic literacy concept is reported for three main themes (Chi et al., 2006):

1. Personal responsibility (5.1) (Subthemes: Moral Responsibility; Conventional Responsibility);
2. Civic responsibility (5.2) (Subthemes: Concern for Others; Value of Group Work; Care for Community; Appreciate Diversity; and Environmental Stewardship);
3. Leadership (5.3) (Subthemes: Leadership Efficacy; Critical Thinking; Civic Participation).

Themes and subthemes were constructed by Chi et al. (2006) and are capitalised throughout for ease of identification. Statistical data are first presented subtheme-by-subtheme in sequence reporting statistical data for girls, boys and control separately. Then, a summary overview of each theme is presented statistically. It aggregates subthemes into main themes from the perspective of students and teachers separately and then compares them both for effect size.

**5.1 Theme One: Personal Responsibility**

By Personal Responsibility, it is understood that a student accepts responsibility for his/her own behaviour and generally displays good judgment (Chi et al., 2006). The student also demonstrates responsible work habits like ‘staying on task, working independently and showing best effort’ (p.11). It encompasses two subthemes: Moral Responsibility and Conventional Responsibility.
5.1.1 Moral Responsibility

Questions in this subtheme generally concerned doing one’s best and improving one’s work. Girls and boys significantly improved Moral Responsibility scores over the academic year whereas the Control Group did not as shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Personal Responsibility: Moral Responsibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtheme 1: Moral Responsibility</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Time-1 ±SEM1</th>
<th>Time-2 ±SEM2</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Girls (n=41)</td>
<td>2.82±.11</td>
<td>3.31±.05</td>
<td>-0.49</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>-4.62</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys (n=32)</td>
<td>3.05±.09</td>
<td>3.56±.07</td>
<td>-0.51</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>-5.69</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control (n=30)</td>
<td>3.2±.1</td>
<td>3.19±.1</td>
<td>+0.01</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>p=.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Improvement may be due to the provision of workshops whereby children were taught the value of moral responsibility. For example, one volunteer introduced the children to aspects of pet-care in anticipation of getting a pet for life, not for Christmas while the other volunteers worked with the children in dialogue to help them understand the importance of taking responsibility for a pet. They also learned responsibility from learning to sew a button onto fabric. These interventions are more fully reported in Chapter Six (see 6.1.1).

5.1.2 Conventional Responsibility

Questions in this subtheme generally concerned doing one’s duty independently of any supervision and following through on tasks undertaken. Unlike the Control Group, girls and boys showed significant improvement in self-reported mean scores for Conventional Responsibility over the academic year as presented in Table 5.2.
Table 5.2: Personal Responsibility: Conventional Responsibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 1: Personal Responsibility: student self-reported scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme 2: Conventional Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls (n=41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys (n=32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control (n=30)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The significant improvement for girls and boys could be accredited to active learning opportunities whereby children practised teaching older people different skills for which they had to know the rules before imparting the skill to the older person. Such skills included teaching the rules for modern dance steps, or aspects of information technology or song as is explained in Chapter Six (see 6.1.2). While it might appear that there was almost statistical significance for the Control Group, in fact they showed lower mean scores at year-end. The minus integer when squared comes around to plus and this accounts for $p=+0.013$.

There now follows summary results for the main theme Personal Responsibility. It includes: student self-reported scores; teachers’ observations; and comparison of students’ and teachers’ ratings for magnitude of effect size.

### 5.1.3 Overview: Personal Responsibility

The combined results, from Moral Responsibility and Conventional Responsibility, while equal as the sum of their parts (see 5.1.1, 5.1.2), facilitate comparison against the teachers’ checklists for the overall theme of Personal Responsibility. Girls and boys combined, namely the Intervention Group, showed significant improvement for Personal Responsibility from Time-1 ($m=3.08±0.06$) to Time-2 ($m=3.55±0.03$; $t(72)=-8.59$, $p<0.01$) whereas the Control Group showed overall dis-improved scores at Time-2 ($m=3.26±0.09$; $t(29)=1.79$, $p=.084$) besides
Time-1 \( (m=3.37\pm0.08) \). Mean scores are displayed for each cohort separately in Figure 5.2:

**Figure 5.2: Personal Responsibility: students’ self-reported scores**

Corroboratively, teachers report significant improvement in pupils’ civic behaviours over the year for Personal Responsibility. Girls improved from Time-1 \( (m=2.89\pm0.08) \) to Time-2 \( (m=3.65\pm0.08, t(40)=-14.31, p<0.01) \) and boys showed even greater improvement from Time-1 \( (m=2.09\pm0.13) \) to Time-2 \( (m=3.6\pm0.13, t(31)=-13.9, p<0.01) \) (see Figure 5.3).

**Figure 5.3: Personal Responsibility: teachers’ observations of pupils**
The findings support each other for the overall theme of Personal Responsibility.

**Magnitude of effect size (eta-squared/ŋ²)**

According to the students’ self-ratings, eta (ŋ²) is .51 (73.79÷145.78) or 51% magnitude of effect size whereas based on the teachers’ ratings of them, it is .76 (233.48÷305.48) or 76% magnitude of effect size. Considering Cohen’s (1988) guidelines (.01=small effect; .06=moderate; .14=large), the effect size is large whether from pupils’ or teachers’ perspectives. This means that the average score of the pupil in the Intervention Group is at least .51 standard deviations above the average score of the pupil in the Control Group. This suggests that the variance between the two groups may plausibly be due to intergenerational collaborations aimed at developing personal responsibility in young children whereas the Control Group do not engage in such collaborations. Civic Responsibility is analysed next.

**5.2 Theme Two: Civic Responsibility**

The theme of Civic Responsibility is defined and measured as: ‘caring for others, valuing group work, caring for community, appreciating diversity and demonstrating environmental stewardship’ (Chi et al., 2006, p.15). Results for each subtheme are presented separately below.

**5.2.1 Concern for Others**

Questions in this subtheme were generally about helping people in need and being kind to others. Significantly improved scores were evidenced in the self-reported ratings of girls and boys from Time-1 to Time-2 whereas the Control Group showed no change. Quantitative results relating to Concern for Others are presented in Table 5.3.
Table 5.3: Civic Responsibility: Concern for others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 2: Civic Responsibility: student self-reported scores</th>
<th>Subtheme 1: Concern for Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Time-1 ±SEM1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls (n=41)</td>
<td>3.2±.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys (n=32)</td>
<td>3.14±.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control (n=30)</td>
<td>3.57±.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The improvement may be attributable to the interventions designed towards demonstrating concern for another through intergenerational collaborations. For example, Lá-Gaeilge was an intervention designed to help the oldest volunteers, aged 70 years and more, to read modern Irish, the print of which had changed since they had left school. Lá-Gaeilge is more fully explained in Chapter Six (see 6.2.1).

5.2.2 Value of Group Work

Questions on this subtheme were generally about problem-solving and learning to work with others. Statistically significant improvement was evidenced for girls and boys compared to the Control Group for whom little change occurred as shown in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Civic Responsibility: Valuing Group Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 2: Civic Responsibility: student self-reported scores</th>
<th>Subtheme 2: Value of Group Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Time-1 ±SEM1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls (n=41)</td>
<td>2.45±.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys (n=32)</td>
<td>2.14±.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control (n=30)</td>
<td>3.58±.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significance may accrue to the weaving intervention whereby children learned how to weave in group collaboration with the volunteers. Through cooperative learning young and old were enabled to contribute to the group goal of weaving differentiated Saint Brigid’s Crosses for the different
county traditions. The issue of cooperative learning is more fully discussed in Chapter Six (6.2.2).

### 5.2.3 Care for Community

Questions on this subtheme generally concerned making a difference in community. Girls and boys showed significantly improved mean scores over the academic year whereas the Control Group did not (Table 5.5).

#### Table 5.5: Civic Responsibility: Care for Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtheme 3: Care for Community</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Time-1 ±SEM1</th>
<th>Time-2 ±SEM2</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Girls (n=41)</td>
<td>2.34±.08</td>
<td>3.65±.01</td>
<td>-1.31</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>-15.67</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys (n=32)</td>
<td>2.4±1</td>
<td>3.66±.06</td>
<td>-1.27</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>-12.46</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control (n=30)</td>
<td>3.23±.12</td>
<td>3.18±.12</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>p=.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significance may be accredited to the knitting and sewing interventions whereby pupils engaged in knitting and sewing as community projects (see Chapter Six: 6.2.3).

### 5.2.4 Appreciation of Diversity

Questions on this subtheme were mostly about having friends and learning from people who have different backgrounds from oneself. Pupils’ self-reported mean scores are presented in Table 5.6.

#### Table 5.6: Civic Responsibility: Appreciation of Diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtheme 4: Appreciation of Diversity</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Time-1 ±SEM1</th>
<th>Time-2 ±SEM2</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Girls (n=41)</td>
<td>2.78±.13</td>
<td>3.87±.06</td>
<td>-1.09</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>-8.24</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys (n=32)</td>
<td>2.17±.08</td>
<td>3.64±.07</td>
<td>-1.47</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>-14.65</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control (n=30)</td>
<td>3.02±.13</td>
<td>3.33±.11</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>-2.88</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>p=.008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All three centres showed significance for Appreciation of Diversity. This is the only time that the Control Group’s scores improved significantly ($p=0.008$). A possible explanation might be that the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment/NCCA (2005) produced guidelines, *Intercultural Education in the Primary School*, to support teachers in enabling children to respect and celebrate diversity, promote equality, and challenge unfair discrimination. NCCA stipulate that ‘a respect for and an appreciation of human and cultural diversity can and should be promoted at every level of the primary school’ (GOI/SPHE, 1999, p.10). Plausibly, a multi-cultural approach may account for significance for all pupils rather than intergenerational collaborations. Aside, the interventions may also have been a factor in the significantly increased mean scores for girls and boys due to their being taught French, German and Spanish by retired teachers in the project and having learned about different peoples, cultures and languages. This element is further explained in Chapter Six (6.2.4).

### 5.2.5 Environmental Stewardship

Questions on this subtheme generally referred to recycling, keeping the community clean and doing one’s part to help the environment (Table 5.7).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Time-1 ±SEM1</th>
<th>Time-2 ±SEM2</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Girls (n=41)</td>
<td>2.42±.1</td>
<td>3.26±.09</td>
<td>-0.84</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>-8.41</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>$p&lt;.01$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys (n=32)</td>
<td>2.66±.1</td>
<td>3.16±.09</td>
<td>-0.49</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>-5.08</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>$p&lt;.01$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control (n=30)</td>
<td>2.91±.08</td>
<td>2.95±.11</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>-0.51</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>$p=.62$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Girls and boys showed significant improvement over the school year, during which they were actively engaged in interventions which were geared towards stewarding the environment. For example, they learned about local flora and the function of pollination (see Chapter Six: 6.2.5). As a class group, they instigated civic action on behalf of the environment which may
have been a factor in their increased mean scores for Environmental Stewardship. The Control Group showed little change.

There now follows an overview of Civic Responsibility. It includes: student self-reported scores; teachers’ observations; and comparison of students’ and teachers’ ratings for magnitude of effect size.

5.2.6 Overview: Civic Responsibility

When combined, statistically significant difference was shown by the Intervention Group from Time-1 \((m=2.57\pm0.05)\) to Time-2 \((m=3.61\pm0.03, t(72)=-22.16, p<0.01)\) whereas the Control Group hardly changed from Time-1 \((m=3.26\pm0.07)\) to Time-2 \((m=3.31\pm0.08, t(29)=-0.39, p=.697)\). Mean scores for each cohort are displayed in Figure 5.4.

![Figure 5.4: Civic Responsibility: students’ self-reported scores](image)

Overall, teachers reported that their students significantly improved their civic behaviours over the year for Civic Responsibility. Checklists reveal that girls improved from Time-1 \((m=2.92\pm0.08)\) to Time-2 \((m=3.74\pm0.07, t(40)=-14.8, p<0.01)\) and boys showed greater improvement still by Time-2 \((m=3.59\pm0.12, t(31)=-13.96, p<0.01)\) besides Time-1 \((m=2.2\pm0.12)\), as seen in Figure 5.5.
The findings of pupils and teachers corroborate each other for the overall theme of Civic Responsibility.

**Magnitude of effect size**

Eta ($\eta^2$) according to the students’ self-ratings is .88 or 88% magnitude of effect size and the teachers’ ratings of them is .82 or 82% magnitude. Based on Cohen’s (1988) guidelines (large=.14), such a large variance is due to something more than general classroom textbook-style citizenship education. It is reasonable to believe that it is due to intergenerational learning collaborations because the content of the questionnaire and teachers’ checklists informed the nature of the interventions. Unlike the Control Group, children participating in this programme had to investigate, identify and analyse social issues and needs pertaining to another and then devise ways in which to demonstrate civic responsibility. They were enabled to identify their own learning needs and seek the knowledge and skills from the older people. They were facilitated to reciprocate the learning by teaching the older people needed skills. This may help to explain their improved ratings and large eta-effect sizes. Such issues are explored in greater depth in Chapter Six.
The next section presents findings for the third civic literacy theme, Leadership.

5.3 Theme Three: Leadership

This theme inferred that the student takes initiative and acts as role model to help his/her class to make a positive difference’ (Chi et al., 2006). They would be expected to show ‘attitudes and actions of taking leadership positions’ (p.16). Leadership is addressed under three subthemes: Leadership Efficacy; Civic/Critical Thinking; and Civic Participation.

5.3.1 Leadership Efficacy

Questions in the Leadership Efficacy subtheme mostly referred to: believing in one’s ability to identify necessary action; planning and conducting subsequent action; enlisting the cooperation of others; and making others feel important as team players. Additionally, it investigated believing in one’s ability to stand up for what is right, and trying to change what is wrong. The following statistics are reported for Leadership Efficacy (see Table 5.8).

Table 5.8: Leadership: Leadership Efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtheme 1: Leadership Efficacy</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Time-1 ±SEM1</th>
<th>Time-2 ±SEM2</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Girls (n=41)</td>
<td>2.78±1</td>
<td>3.41±0.09</td>
<td>-0.63</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>-6.31</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys (n=32)</td>
<td>2.83±0.09</td>
<td>3.3±0.09</td>
<td>-0.47</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>-5.04</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control (n=30)</td>
<td>3.09±0.08</td>
<td>3.18±1.11</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>-1.17</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>p=.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unlike the Control Group, girls and boys showed significantly improved mean ratings over the school year during which they were enabled to practice leadership skills through the various interventions. For example, the Word Club/FocalEile intervention was aimed at raising literacy levels in both English and Irish language through vocabulary enhancement. Pupils would share reading with the cuairteoirí and work on word-meanings through group dialogue. They would then make word-presentations to their
class with the support of the *cuaíreoir*. This and other interventions may account for their improved scores in Leadership Efficacy and is more fully described and explained in Chapter Six (6.3.1).

### 5.3.2 Civic/Critical Thinking Skills

This subtheme was defined as ‘the ability to think critically’ (Chi *et al.*, 2006, p.16). Questions generally referred to the importance of getting information to support one’s opinions; and the ability to give reasons for one’s opinions and keep one’s mind open to different ideas when decision making. Girls and boys showed significant improvement for Civic Thinking unlike the Control Group (Table 5.9).

**Table 5.9: Leadership: Civic/Critical Thinking**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtheme 2: Civic/Critical Thinking</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Time-1 ±SEM1</th>
<th>Time-2 ±SEM2</th>
<th>Mean Diff.</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>2.4±.1</td>
<td>3.09±.07</td>
<td>-0.69</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>-6.71</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>2.15±.12</td>
<td>3.42±.06</td>
<td>-1.27</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>-11.01</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>3.28±.11</td>
<td>3.32±.11</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>-0.41</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>p=.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Workshops may have been a contributory factor in the significantly improved scores because prediction and research skills were addressed. For example, volunteers presented old tools and artefacts and asked children to guess what they were used for. This had the effect of stimulating their curiosity to seek out further information. In consequence they were taught research skills which enabled them to interview the volunteers about their life histories and careers. Chapter Six explains the learning that took place within these interventions (6.3.2).

### 5.3.3 Civic Participation

Civic Participation constitutes four subthemes (Perspective Taking, Communication, Conflict Resolution and Group Membership). Questions generally concerned: people’s understanding of another (Perspective Taking); what people mean by what they say or do (Communication);
resolving or avoiding conflict (Conflict Resolution); and turn-taking (Group Membership). The Control Group failed to show significance on all four sub-elements of Civic Participation. The girls significantly improved their mean scores on all sub-elements whereas boys, for the first time, failed to significantly improve their Group Membership scores. Data are shown in Table 5.10.

Table 5.10: Subthemes within Civic Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subthemes: Civic Participation</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Time-1 m±=</th>
<th>Time-2 m±=</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perspective-taking</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>2.67±0.11</td>
<td>3.42±0.07</td>
<td>-8.18</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>2.72±0.08</td>
<td>3.35±0.08</td>
<td>-7.46</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>3.26±0.11</td>
<td>3.4±0.08</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>p=.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>2.5±0.11</td>
<td>3.25±0.08</td>
<td>-7.40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>2.73±0.1</td>
<td>3.27±0.07</td>
<td>-5.29</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>3.21±0.11</td>
<td>3.12±0.11</td>
<td>-0.68</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>p=.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Resolution</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>2.94±0.12</td>
<td>3.32±0.07</td>
<td>-7.40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>2.79±0.12</td>
<td>3.21±0.09</td>
<td>-3.59</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>3.36±0.1</td>
<td>3.34±0.11</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>p=.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Membership</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>3.27±0.11</td>
<td>3.76±0.08</td>
<td>-7.38</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>3.41±0.13</td>
<td>3.59±0.1</td>
<td>-1.44</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>p=.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>3.7±0.15</td>
<td>3.56±0.12</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>p=.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When all four elements were aggregated, only the Control Group failed to reach significance as seen in Table 5.11.

Table 5.11: Leadership: Civic Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 3: Leadership: student self-reported scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme 3: Civic Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time-1 ±SEM1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time-2 ±SEM2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls (n=41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.76 ±.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.37 ±.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-7.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys (n=32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.81 ±.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.31 ±.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-7.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control (n=30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.34 ±.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.32 ±.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p=.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significance may be due to the interventions which were designed to develop the pupils’ participation skills. For instance, they included: technology workshops whereby pupils taught volunteers; creative writing in prose and verse; local history and storytelling; and interpretation of Irish
These interventions may have contributed to the pupils’ improved scores. These aspects are described and analysed in Chapter Six (6.3.3).

There now follows an overview of summary results for Leadership. It includes: student self-reported scores; teachers’ observations; and comparison of students’ and teachers’ ratings for magnitude of effect size.

5.3.4 Overview: Leadership

Combined, statistically significant difference was shown by the Intervention Group from Time-1 \((m=2.62\pm0.06)\) to Time-2 \((m=3.32\pm0.03, t(72)=-11.55, p<.01)\) whereas the Control Group made no significant gain at Time-2 \((m=3.27\pm0.08, t(29)=-.64, p=.53)\) over Time-1 \((m=3.24\pm0.07)\), as shown separately in Figure 5.6.

![Figure 5.6: Leadership: students' self-reported scores](image)

Overall, the teachers perceived that both boys and girls improved their civic behaviours for Leadership over the academic year. Girls improved from Time-1 \((m=2.54\pm0.07)\) to Time-2 \((m=3.57\pm0.09, t(40)=-13.42, p<.01)\) and boys improved from Time-1 \((m=2.28\pm0.11)\) to Time-2 \((m=3.44\pm0.11, t(31)=-15.93, p<.01)\), as shown in Figure 5.7.
The children’s self-perceived leadership skills and the teachers’ perceptions of their leadership behaviour are corroborated.

**Magnitude of effect size**

Based on Cohen’s (1988) guidelines (large =.14), the strong magnitudes, of .68 reported by the students and .85 reported by their teachers, suggest that the improvement most plausibly accrues to intergenerational collaborations which included aspects of age-appropriate leadership development within the workshops such that pupils were facilitated to show attitudes and actions of taking leadership positions.

The civic literacy concept as a singular unit is summarised next.

**5.4 The civic literacy concept**

This section facilitates a grand overview of the sum of all the parts of the civic literacy concept already computed. Thence, main themes (Personal Responsibility, Civic Responsibility and Leadership) are summarised into one grand theme called ‘The Civic Literacy Concept’ to present the whole picture. Paired-samples t-tests confirm the previous statistics showing that the Intervention Group gained at Time-2 ($m=3.49\pm0.02$, $t(72)=-16.43$, $p<0.01$) on Time-1 ($m=2.76\pm0.05$) whereas there were lesser scores for the
Control Group from Time-1 \((m=3.3\pm0.06)\) to Time-2 \((m=3.28\pm0.07, t(29)=.23, p=.82)\). Teachers’ checklists of pupils’ ratings fully corroborate the pupils’ self-reported scores because Time-2 \((m=3.6\pm0.06, t(72)=-19.87, p<0.01)\) shows significant improvement over Time-1 \((m=2.49\pm0.07)\) as shown in Figure 5.8.

**Independent samples t-tests**

Independent-samples t-tests were conducted to determine the extent of the significance of differences in mean scores when comparing the Intervention Group and the Control Group over a school year. Levene’s test showed that equality of variance could be assumed \((F=1.52, \text{Sig.}=.22)\). The test revealed that the mean differences when aggregated for the civic literacy concept between Time-1 and Time-2 were greater for the Intervention Group \((m=0.73\pm0.04, \text{SD}=0.38; t(101)=9.68, p<01)\) than for the Control Group \((m=0.01\pm0.05, \text{SD}=0.27)\). The magnitude of the difference in the means \((\text{mean diff.}=0.74, 99\% \text{ CI: .54 to .94})\) contributes to the eta-squared statistic of 0.48 which is large according to Cohen’s (1988) guidelines (.14=large). This magnitude of effect size implies that the mean differences of the average pupil in the Intervention Group is approximately 0.48 standard
deviations above the mean differences for the average pupil in the Control Group. This statistic suggests that the variance between the two groups may accrue to the fact that the Intervention Group belongs to an intergenerational learning programme aimed at developing citizenship skills in young children through the civic literacy concept whereas the Control Group do not engage in such collaborations.

**5.5 The research hypothesis**

The research hypothesis, *that young children who participate in intergenerational learning collaborations will score more positively on measures of the civic literacy concept than children who were not involved in such collaborations*, has been tested with paired-samples t-tests across all subthemes of civic literacy. It was established that students showed significant improvement in skills and dispositions of civic literacy over an academic year as corroborated by students and teachers alike. Supporting evidence is derived from independent-samples t-tests which were used to cross-check the paired-samples statistics. Independent-samples t-tests have shown that the mean differences in civic literacy scores were significantly greater for the Intervention Group than for the Control Group.

Accordingly, the research hypothesis holds true: pupils who participate in intergenerational learning collaborations score more positively on measures of the civic literacy concept than children who are not involved in such collaborations.

While the hypothesis holds true, various dimensions of children’s participation still need to be scrutinised more closely to decipher whether different groups within the Intervention Group scored more positively on self-reported measures than others. There may be higher ratings coming from one cohort over another which would have the effect of raising the mean for the entire group, thereby distorting statistical interpretations. This scrutiny is based on factors that can be controlled for in this study, namely: gender, class grouping and academic ability levels. These issues are now scrutinised.
A. Gender

In order to ascertain if gender was an issue for boosting the averages for the Intervention Group, independent-samples t-tests were conducted to compare boys versus girls in terms of the mean differences between self-reported scores over two time-points (Time-2 minus Time-1). Levene’s Test established equality of variance (F=3.33, Sig.=.07) between both groups. While girls scored marginally higher in their mean differences than did boys, nonetheless statistically significant difference (t(71)=.41, p=.68) could not be found when comparing girls (m=.75±0.05, SD.26) to boys (m=.71±0.07, SD.45).

B. Class grouping

It was also essential to ascertain whether a year group might have elevated the averages. Accordingly, independent-samples t-tests were conducted to establish if there were any differences in mean scores accruing on the basis of class grouping (Third versus Fourth class). Levene’s test (F=1.46, Sig.=.23) showed that equality of variances could be assumed. While Third slightly outperformed Fourth Class, there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups (t(71)=1.41, p=.16) when comparing the mean differences of Third class (m=.78±0.07, SD.42) and Fourth class (m=.66±0.05, SD.31).

C. Academic ability levels

It was deemed necessary to check whether differing ability ranges might have impacted on statistical significance for the Intervention Group. Therefore, independent-samples t-tests were conducted to establish if there were any significant differences in mean scores accruing to academic ability on all three themes of civic literacy. In consultation with class teachers, pupils were categorised on three levels of academic ability: lowest, average and highest. The results in this category are extracted from two sources: students’ self-reported civic literacy scores; and teachers’ observational checklists of students’ civic behaviours.
To compare the results for the respective academic ability categories (lowest, average and highest), children’s self-reports were compared against teachers’ observational checklists for each category of student, and for the three themes of civic literacy: (a) Lowest vs. Average, and (b) Lowest vs. Highest (see Appendix 20).

(a) Lowest versus Average

Independent Samples Tests were conducted to ascertain whether there was significant difference between lowest and average academic abilities for themes of civic literacy. Levene’s tests for equality of variance was assumed across all three themes (Theme 1—Personal Responsibility, Theme 2—Civic Responsibility and Theme 3—Leadership). Data are presented in Table 5.12.

Table 5.12: Academic ability levels: Lowest vs. Average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least vs. Average</th>
<th>Levene’s test: equality of variance</th>
<th>$t$-tests for equality of means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F-value</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 1 Students</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 2 Students</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 3 Students</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

T-tests for equality of means, based on student ratings, showed no significant difference between Lowest and Average across civic literacy themes. T-tests based on teacher ratings showed no significant difference between lowest and average ability levels for two of the three themes. However, Average outperformed Lowest on Leadership measures showing significance at $p = .03$. 

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2. Lowest versus Highest

Independent Samples Tests were conducted to ascertain whether there was significant difference between lowest and highest academic abilities for themes of civic literacy. Equality of variances could not be assumed for Personal Responsibility (Theme1) or Civic Responsibility (Theme 2) which means that the teachers saw a significant difference between these groups for these two themes. Equality of variance can be assumed for Leadership (Theme 3). Otherwise, there is no significant difference between Lowest and Highest for equality of the means as shown in Table 5.13.

Table 5.13: Academic ability levels: Lowest vs. Highest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Levene’s Test: equality of variance</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>MD.</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme 1</td>
<td>Students Teacher</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.14.1 8</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 2</td>
<td>Students Teacher</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8.05</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 3</td>
<td>Students Teacher</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although Lowest scored marginally higher than Highest on all three themes, there was no significant difference in the rate of their respective mean improvements.

5.6 Limitations of the quantitative tools

Scores for the Control/Non-Intervention Group were higher at Time-1 than they were for the Intervention Group when all questions were aggregated, as seen in Figure 5.9.
At Time-1 the Control (Non-intervention) Group rated themselves at 3 or above out of 4: the lower quartile (25%) at 3.09, interquartile (50%) at 3.33, and the upper quartile (75%) at 3.53. By comparison, the Intervention Group rated themselves under or at 3 out of 4: the lower quartile (25%) at 2.6, interquartile (50%) at 2.84, and the upper quartile (75%) at 3.01.

Follow-up investigations revealed two possible explanations for why the Intervention Group had more room for improvement: length of time allowed for completing questionnaire; and absence of piloting procedures in the non-intervention locale. Firstly, the teacher of the Control Group reported completion of the questionnaire within the recommended 20-minute timescale reported by Chi et al. (2006, p.9). There is no information on whether time was given over to explaining any language which students might have misunderstood. Teachers at the intervention centres gave the children approximately 40 minutes to complete the questionnaire reporting that they encouraged them to answer the questions as honestly and accurately as possible. Secondly, the questionnaire was not piloted in the non-intervention locale and therefore there may have been questions which respondents might have misinterpreted. Notwithstanding, it was piloted with a mixed third- and fourth-class cohort in a school equidistant by 30 miles from both. Teachers at the research sites reported that they found the language of the questionnaire (Appendix 15) difficult for third-class
children although considered grade-appropriate in the USA where it originated. The language was appropriate to cohorts in elementary school there, but it may not have been appropriate without explanation and adaptation in the Irish context. Teachers at the research sites explained the language if/as needed, but teachers at all centres were encouraged to explain any words/expressions which pupils might have misinterpreted. The questionnaire was distributed in accordance with best research practice and the data obtained were considered to be true and fair.

5.7 Chapter summary

The conclusion from this chapter is that young children who participated in intergenerational learning collaborations scored more positively on measures of the civic literacy concept than children who were not involved in such collaborations. The statistically significant improvement across all three themes of civic literacy is plausibly attributable to the intergenerational collaborations aimed at developing the civic literacy concept in young children.

Firstly, Personal Responsibility was facilitated through workshops in which pupils could practice personally responsible behaviour which helped them to exercise good judgment and accept responsibility for their own behaviour. Further, they were facilitated to demonstrate responsible work habits like staying on task, working independently and showing best effort.

Secondly, Civic Responsibility was developed in interventions which allowed the pupils to care for others and for community including the environment. They were exposed to opportunities whereby they could learn to show respect for and be able to identify another’s needs and give assistance to them. Their awareness of the environment was enhanced through additional learning about the eco-system.

Lastly, Leadership was enabled wherever pupils were given chances to take initiative and act as role models to help their group, their class and/or their school to make a positive difference. This was accommodated through interventions aimed at developing attitudes and actions of taking leadership
positions such as making presentations in front of a class; hands-on learning
of how to think critically such as researching and interviewing the
volunteers and, general participatory skill development of perspective
taking, communication, and group-membership.

Overall, when measured between academic year-beginning and year-end, a
significant improvement ($p \leq 0.01$) was found for student self-reported civic
literacy scores compared to a Control Group who did not reach significance
on the civic literacy concept. On a set of corresponding grade-level
observational ratings, teacher checklists of student skills and behaviours
corroborate the students’ self-reports. Non-significance was found between
class groupings when children’s ratings were compared on the grounds of
gender, class grouping and academic ability ranges, even though children
from the perceived lowest ability range outperformed the upper ranges on
their own self-reported scores and mostly on the teachers’ observational
checklists. Effectually, children from the lowest academic ability levels
derived better results from intergenerational collaboration on the civic
literacy concept than did their more academically able peers.

Quantitative results cannot be generalised because of non-probability
sampling. Besides, there is concern for the initial high scores on the Control
Group self-reports which raised their class mean from the outset leaving
them little room for improvement if they were scoring 3s and above.
Because of the limitations of statistical data, a qualitative element is
necessary to explain the quantitative results in greater depth. Thence, the
qualitative findings (Chapter Six) are analysed next to see what explanations
are offered for pupils’ improved scores regarding desired outcomes for the
civic literacy concept.
CHAPTER SIX

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS AND ANALYSES

6.0 Introduction

The central research question—*To what extent and in what ways can participation in intergenerational learning collaborations activate young children’s civic engagement?*—has been partly answered. The quantitative results have confirmed that young children who participated in intergenerational learning collaborations scored more positively on measures of the civic literacy concept than a control group who were not involved in such collaborations. In order to assist in interpreting the quantitative results, this chapter addresses two further research questions which may explain how the mean ratings were significantly improved for the boys and girls in this study. Accordingly, the qualitative questions are:

*a. How did intergenerational learning collaborations affect the development of young children’s civic literacy skills?*

This question seeks evidence for derived outcomes for the civic literacy concept and transmission of educational values of practice, connectedness and dialogue.

The chapter ends with an analysis of the question:

*b. How do the qualitative findings explain convergence with or divergence from the quantitative results?*

Data are not synchronised to match the quantitative analysis because, with an embedded mixed-methods design, different questions require different answers (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). Besides, interventions and workshops were informed by the content of the quantitative tools. Data have overlapping aspects which could fit under different themes. Thence, to avoid duplicity, pertinent qualitative data are cited once and other themes to which that data might apply are indicated. Participants’ names are anonymised and are indicated as girl, boy or volunteer/cuairteoir as
appropriate. The pupils referred to the volunteers as *cuairteoirí* or visitors. Data are derived from:

1. Third- and fourth-class pupils in the pilot and research schools;
2. Volunteers/ *cuairteoirí*;
3. Photographic evidence testifying to embodied educational values evidenced in action;
4. Key informants: teachers/principals and parents/guardians;
5. Research-practitioner field-notes/observations.

The ‘Setup-Quote-Comment’ model (Weaver-Hightower, 2014) is applied to data analysis (see Section 4.3.4). Briefly, the process entails:

1. Set-up: The format of each theme/subtheme states the thesis and presents context from Chi *et al.* (2006) to elucidate the thesis statement. The interventions are described in order to set the scene.

2. Quotation-stage: Quotations include data collected through field-notes, observations, verbal and visual representations. The focus alternates between participants, key informants and research-practitioner who evidenced the learning outcomes.

3. Comment: Takes the form of tying the data back to the theme/thesis being built, indicating supporting research literature.

Oral submissions (field-notes/digital) were transcribed verbatim. Children’s data were oral and recorded in the author’s field-notes, and/or self-reported in learning logs. Volunteers’ data were digitally recorded, and/or oral, and/or self-reported in their logs. Teachers’ data were oral and written. Parents/guardians made written submissions only. Research-practitioner’s observations were recorded as field-notes.

Civic literacy has three main themes, each having desired outcomes or subthemes (see Section 2.4; Figure 2.2). It encompasses: Personal Responsibility (subthemes: Moral and Conventional Responsibility); Civic
Responsibility (subthemes: Concern for Others, Value of Group Work, Care for Community, Appreciation of Diversity and Environmental Stewardship); and Leadership (subthemes: Leadership Efficacy, Civic/Critical Thinking and Civic Participation).

For ease of reference, the analyses that follow are on a theme-by-theme basis in line with the structure of Chapter Five.

6.1 Theme One: Personal Responsibility

Drawing on Chi and colleagues’ (2006), Personally Responsibility infers that the student exercises good judgment and accepts responsibility for his/her own behaviour. Further, he/she demonstrates responsible work habits such as staying on task, working independently and showing best effort. The data are analysed for evidence of Moral and Conventional Responsibility.

6.1.1 Moral Responsibility

Morally Responsibility generally infers doing one’s best and improving one’s work (Chi et al., 2006). Thence, evidence is sought for pupils engaging in activities/behaviours conveying moral thought. The puppy-care workshop is cited as an example of children learning moral responsibility and reflecting it as moral thought afterwards. Pet-care emerged from a fact-finding mission by the research-practitioner when consulting with the children about what they wanted to learn from or teach to the volunteers. It was November 2011 and the students would be writing to Santa any day now. On investigation, all wanted technological accessories, most wanted a ‘surprise’ and nine out of 30 girls wanted a pet. On further questioning, it became apparent that they did not understand the implications of having a pet. Concessa-na-bPeataí, a volunteer, introduced them to pet-care through puppy-Noodles. Such care constituted a presentation on sleeping/dietary requirements, feeding guidelines, core vaccinations, exercise regimens, and toilet/obedience training. Her message to the children was:

*Puppy is for life, not for Christmas, and if ye want him, there are things to be seriously considered...He is a big responsibility...I’m*
here to ask ye to be responsible, not be just buying a dog for Christmas and...throwing it on the bypass [afterwards]...it’s so-so wrong.

Puppy would be introduced to the children after pet-care work was delivered and learned, i.e., after group dialogue was over. Volunteers worked with the pupils to embed pet-care. They helped them to develop questions pertinent to pet-care but pupils mostly asked Concessa-na-bPeataí questions like, What can/does he do...can he play any tricks. There was no evidence of deeper pet-care questioning, although pupils remembered the facts as reported by the volunteers. She impressed on pupils the seriousness of deciding to get a pet:

Pets suffer when wrong decisions are made about them...Ye’d want to think seriously before ye ask Santa to bring a pet down the chimney on Christmas Eve.

Concessa-na-bPeataí, came away sceptical, observing:

They’re young but if they want to get a pup they have to know these things [care/responsibility]...They asked questions indeed—what was its age...breed...a boy...girl, how often I had to wash him, but they mostly asked ‘When will you bring Noodles back again?’ I’m not too convinced...Maybe the responsibility thing will soak in later...but it has to be taught first.

Concessa-na-bPeataí conceded that children must first be taught their responsibility through creating awareness of pet-care. A value for connectedness is evident in how Noodles brought her, the other volunteers and the pupils together through his pet-care.

Checking back with third- and fourth-class girls in January 2012, field-notes records show that:

None got pet for Christmas. Two wrote promising Santa they would mind him but didn’t say how.
When checking what vision of *Noodles* they remembered best, apart from his cuteness, it was ‘being thrown out…on the bypass’ that haunted most. Perhaps this vision was further discussed at home after *Noodles’* visit. This example does not of itself prove that moral responsibility was engendered through intergenerational engagement. It shows, however, that children absorbed Concessa-na-bPeataí’s message and conveyed it as an attitude at school in January 2012. While the volunteer may remain unconvinced, she instigated moral thought whereby two wrote for a pet, promising to care for it, but not the original nine. The impact of the intervention was that the children showed evidence of developing a sense of moral responsibility through internal locus of control (Richards *et al.*, 2002). Some showed improved self-regulation in their efforts to control their thoughts, emotions and actions (Zimmerman, 1989) by not writing to Santa to request a puppy. Aligned to Mergler’s (2007) understanding of personal responsibility, pupils showed an improved ability to identify and regulate their own thoughts, feelings and behaviour, along with a willingness to hold themselves accountable for their actions and outcomes.

Conventional Responsibility is analysed next through descriptions of other types of intervention.

### 6.1.2 Conventional Responsibility

Following Chi *et al.* (2006), Conventional Responsibility infers doing one’s duty independently of any supervision and following through on tasks undertaken. Evidence is sought for ways whereby pupils carried a task through to completion working independently. Workshops and interventions involved children teaching skills to the volunteers like computers and dance; and learning sewing from them like how to sew a button on a garment.

**Information and Communication Technology/ICT**

At School-B, children taught volunteers how to access information by computer. They were anxious to contribute as a reciprocal gesture to the volunteers. *As Ríomha*, a fourth-class girl asked:
When can we start helping them? They are always helping us. We could show them loads that they don’t know...like computers...and games...and stuff.

Cormacnalámha, a volunteer, explained how they arrived at such reciprocity:

*The kids see us volunteering for them...the thing that was bred in us...the meitheal mentality [group collaboration]. They heard it in...the stories...it rubbed off.*

The idea was that children would teach volunteers how to access online data through sharing interests like travel and online shopping. In return, volunteers would help children to search out key information so as to become informed consumers, e.g., Sale of Goods and Supply of Services Act, 1980; Consumer Protection Act, 2007. Children showed volunteers how to book a holiday after first locating the destination on *GoogleEarth* and checking it out on *Trip Advisor*. In return, volunteers taught children how to compare for prices/time schedules of flights and airlines. As Séamus-na-bFoigne, a volunteer, said:

*We checked insurance...for cover; airports...for distance; hotels...for location. These kids are excellent teachers. When you show them what to look out for...they can find anything...click...click...click...so easy to learn from them...I’d never know this only for you [to child]...should be more of it.*

Or, a child and volunteer were checking out ‘the Sales’ in the shops online:

*‘We compared prices in the high-street-stores and looked for good quality and value...I’m so delighted I can do this now...She [child] was a marvellous teacher’* [Maedbhíseach].

Maedbhíseach and Séamus-na-bFoigne infer that once students showed them the technology, the volunteers could then teach students how to be informed and responsible consumers when shopping anywhere, online or otherwise. The class extended the learning afterwards by relating their
narratives for class discussion. As Bella-na-Soilse, a fourth-class girl, reported:

*I was good at finding things [ICT]...but didn’t know...what to look out for...going on holidays...I told mammy...I always thought what it said [advertising] was true...like...about hotels being beside the beach and they not...and ending up paying more than it said.*

Bella-na-Soilse has extended her learning to her family and her class. In return for teaching technology, she is coming to understand false and misleading information about goods, services and their prices. Such mutual support could be identified as a way to build social capital (Putnam, 2000, 1993), because Bella-na-Soilse and her classmates can now utilise social/community resources so as to share knowledge bi-directionally and avail of learning opportunities presented through the volunteers. Putnam (2000) theorises that reciprocal social relationships create conditions for people to collaboratively resolve social problems (e.g., teaching technology to older people), cultivate feelings of trust, and highlight that one’s actions have implications for others, a core tenet of personal and civic responsibility according to Chi *et al.* (2006).

**Modern Song and Dance**

Children in School-A (pilot) taught song and dance routine to the *cuirteóíri*. They were preparing for the ‘Hallelujah Concert’, a national event held annually in Dublin whereby children participate in a grand Primary School choir with dance. In preparation, children needed to learn a prescribed set of songs *plus* dance routines from diverse musical genres, e.g., *Power in me, Rock around the Clock*. To ensure they knew the programme, they offered to teach it to the volunteers. Teaching dance to the volunteers carried responsibility because if they did not know the routine, mutual performance could not be enjoyed, as discovered by Daimhsín, a third-class girl:

*We got to teach them all the actions for ‘Power’ and ‘Rock around the Clock’...We had to help them not to be shy and after a few goes we*
made them good. They were not old at all...they copied us when they knew it but we had to know it first.

Daimhsín shows that she had to take on the added responsibility of thoroughly knowing the dance routine before she could teach another. This heightened sense of duty earned the children a sense of their own self-worth, as LuasLasrach, a third-class boy explains:

You felt important because they didn’t know it and we did...I never thought I could teach big people dancing and stuff...You had to know every move or they...just wouldn’t be able to learn from you.

The outcome was that the children gained confidence in their ability to contribute to another’s learning and in the words of their teacher ‘this very thing itself gave them more responsibility’.

Pupils at School-D reported improved self-worth after teaching a skill to another. As SéoHanna, a fourth-class girl, puts it:

M kept telling us ‘Ye’re just brilliant’...That was the first time I was ever told I was brilliant...I like myself more now...I like school better too...I want to get better at speaking up so I can talk to them [volunteers] and show them stuff. I thought I was...useless...but...I’m not...I love Tuesdays [project]...even though other days I used pretend I was sick...I don’t anymore...‘cos I’d miss showing them stuff.

SéoHanna is displaying an improved sense of self-esteem emanating from an improved sense of self-concept, self-respect and self-worth as supported by Mergler (2007) and Rosenberg (1985). Her teacher confirmed that SéoHanna was, heretofore, an irregular school attender and would typically be categorised as within the lower academic ability range. The above example illustrates SéoHanna and her peers, as Neale (2004, p.9) puts it, as ‘young citizens with an active contribution to make to society’. Citizenship, for them, is ‘an entitlement to recognition, respect and participation’ (p.1).
Indeed, such citizenship needs are as crucial for them as their need for care and protection.

In learning to undertake their duty with diligence, children facilitated ‘a mutual performance’ (Aldridge, 2005) with volunteers. Such mutuality connected young and old such that power imbalances arising from age and status were minimised because both groups seemed to feel easier when the relationship was more equal, reciprocal and inclusive. To quote Mairéad-na-dTéidí, a volunteer:

*It...brought back memories...sharing...doing things together...as equals. When you meet children outside...you’re something different, you’re older...but inside there today you belong. Nobody was any different. You were Marie, I was M, I wasn’t Mrs, I wasn’t anything. I was just a person...It was nice to feel I could do the same thing as the children...I felt I could keep up with them. Then when we taught them something that we knew, that made them and us equal.*

Mairéad-na-dTéidí is describing the dialogue of equals. Her submission reflects criteria for ‘intergenerational solidarity’ (UN, 2002): a relationship between young and old based on principles of equity, reciprocity and inclusiveness.

**Sewing on a button**

Personal Responsibility, as a task completion exercise, was addressed through a sewing intervention which created opportunities for children in the third- and fourth-classes of Schools C and D to learn how to sew on a button. This skill required two workshops: knotting-threading-measuring-matching; and sewing-on. With assistance from more capable others (Vygotsky, 1978), all children produced a sewed-on-button (Figure 6.1).
Together with their parents/guardians, children almost unanimously reported that having the skill to sew on a button equipped them to take responsibility for their own button-sewing thereafter, as articulated by BuachaillínRua, a third-class boy in School-D: ‘I can do it myself anymore every time I chew them off…Daddy won’t have to do it for me anymore.’

Some boys could see that taking responsibility for their own button-sewing equipped them to extend concern to family and community:

\[\text{Now I can show responsibility if I sew on my brother’s buttons and then she [Mammy] could do other things like...minding Granny...and I could sew my neighbour’s...he’s old}\ (\text{CaoimhínDonn, a third-class boy in School-D}).\]

Some pupils learned that because they acquired a competence they had increased responsibilities:

\[\text{I never knew we had all these responsibilities...just because I learned how to sew, or learn my Irish...now we have to help others more...Before this you could say ‘I don’t know’}\ (\text{Aeoghán, a fourth-class boy at School-D}).\]

The above reflections show that through socio-cultural/socio-constructivist learning (Vygotsky, 1978) children were better able to perform a task; take
on greater responsibility; and consequently, offer help to another through
developing self-regulation and self-awareness in concurrence with Doolittle
and Camp (1999). Now, they could reflect on the thinking behind their
choices, a process that enables them to monitor and control their thought
processes, another aspect of personal responsibility (Boekaerts, 2002).

As time progressed, students were beginning to show evidence of
independent learning as observed by Cealla, a volunteer, concerning third-
and fourth-class girls:

_I have missed two weeks here and I just want to remark on the
difference I found...They [children] knew much more about what it
was all about. They were ready to go when we went in...they knew
what we were doing and why we were here...I just noticed that they
were much more independent._

In short, they are presenting behaviours consistent with the Chi et al. (2006)
interpretation of personal responsibility: students are exercising good
judgment and accepting responsibility for their own behaviour; they are
demonstrating responsible work habits such as completing tasks, working
independently and showing their best effort.

6.1.3 Overview: Personal Responsibility

The interventions in this section were intended to develop Personal
Responsibility which generally inferred that the student exercises good
judgment and accepts responsibility for his/her own behaviour as well as
demonstrating responsible work habits. In Chapter Five, significantly
improved scores were evidenced for the Intervention Group for subthemes
of Personal Responsibility whereas the Control Group did not achieve
significance. The qualitative findings offer possible explanations. Firstly,
pupils learned to better understand the theme of Personal Responsibility, as
per Chi et al. (2006), through hands-on activities. For example, they saw it
as their responsibility to know the dance moves so as to teach another, or
deliver a computer lesson such that another could follow their instructions.
Responsible work habits were demonstrated in their showing ability to stay
on task, work independently and show best effort in the different workshops like sewing a button. Secondly, there is evidence that educational values of practice, connectedness and dialogue are conveyed as educative influence in the participants’ learning. For example, practicing dance routines, connecting through dance movements, and engaging in dance-based dialogue is evidence for educational influence as understood in the living theory approach (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) to validation of knowledge claims. Such explanations may show why the Intervention Group achieved significantly improved skills and dispositions of Personal Responsibility over the school year.

There is no conflicting evidence in the data which would challenge whether the children learned Personal Responsibility from intergenerational collaboration or not. The lack of challenging opinion may be explained by the fact that young and old had a voice in the teaching/learning process and only volunteered for those interventions that interested them. While accepting that ‘not all intergenerational programs can be linked with positive changes to those who participate in them’ (Kuehne, 2003b, p.80), interventions such as those cited above were not provided to those children during that year elsewhere in this community. Some participating children may have absorbed such values and appropriate behaviour in their homes and communities anyway. However, had this programme not existed, opportunities to learn the civic literacy concept through intergenerational collaborations, and be influenced by educational values of practice, connectedness and dialogue, might have been missed.

There now follows analysis of Civic Responsibility.

**6.2 Theme Two: Civic Responsibility**

Civic Responsibility is understood as caring for others and community (Chi et al., 2006). Ideally, the student ‘shows respect for and is able to identify needs and solutions for group and community’ (p.11). Chi and colleagues subdivide the theme into: Concern for Others; Valuing Group Work; Caring for Community; Appreciating Diversity; and Environmental Stewardship.
6.2.1 Concern for Others

Concern for Others generally involves (Chi et al., 2006): being kind to others and helping those in need or with problems; being aware of other people’s feelings; and reflecting on how one’s decisions affect others. The workshops endeavoured to develop those qualities in the children. Lá-Gaeilge provides an illustration of ‘Concern for Others’.

Lá-Gaeilge

Lá-Gaeilge was an intervention devised so that pupils could take action on an identified need. Boys in third- and fourth-class in School-D (n=32) had been alerted to watch for opportunities to teach some skill to volunteers which they might not have known. Part of their workshops at School-D involved singing as Gaeilge. Pupils discovered that when people aged 70 and over were singing with them as Gaeilge, they were unable to read the words of the songs. Cormacnalámha, a volunteer, explained that while he knew what they were saying or singing, he could not read it because the print had changed since he left school in the mid-1960s, i.e., from the Cló Gaeilg to the Cló Rómhánach. In his day lenition was marked by placing a dot over the letter, instead of writing “h” after it as is done today. For instance, one of their shared songs, 'Sé mo laoc mo ġile mhear now reads as 'Sé mo laoch mo ghile mhear. It looks and spells differently. Thence, Cormacnalámha and others of his birth cohort could not read it. Consequently, pupils, with assistance from the research-practitioner and their teacher, devised an intervention called Lá-Gaeilge whereby they would interact with older-old participants through speaking and reading as Gaeilge while seeking support from the younger volunteers present as necessary. The class teacher confirmed that Gaeilge was revised for homework in preparation for Lá-Gaeilge. Role-play exercises were taught ahead by the research-practitioner, to prepare the boys for how to work with possible physical impairments which might obstruct learning in volunteers aged 70 and over (hearing, sight, speech, memory or limb). The intention was that the boys would become competent at their Irish reading; develop confidence from delivering an Irish reading task; show care for older volunteers by
offering them help to overcome Irish reading difficulties; and connect through speaking and reading as Gaeilge. In short, the Lá-Gaeilge plan was to engage the pupils in positive youth development (Lerner et al., 2003) and teach them how to offer social support (Tracy and Whittaker, 1994) to another. To do this, they were supported at workbenches by the younger volunteers (aged 60-69 years) who became ‘key informants’ (Schwartz et al., 2001) for Lá-Gaeilge.

On Lá-Gaeilge, participants introduced themselves as Gaeilge. Pupils offered volunteers a choice of topic from their readers, e.g., ag siopadóireacht/shopping. With younger volunteers supporting, participants got to work. Field-note observations read:

Children reading ‘as Gaeilge’...writing words on bigger cards...bending over seats to be heard...Craic mór ar fad. Children learning new vocab. Workbenches ar fheabhas. Very busy with Álúsrú, Cormacnalámha agus [and] TomásÁine.

Álúsrú suffered a stroke some three years earlier, with consequent partial speech loss. She was now aged 89 and liked to dialogue as Gaeilge so as to practice her speech, have fun with children and enjoy a day out. In her words:

I was delighted down with the children...so helpful...and they laughed with me and were delighted to see me because I was talking about their grandmothers and great grandmothers. Am I telling it right? It meant a lot to me.

Álúsrú is accompanied at the workbench by another volunteer, Peigin-ant-Suímbneacä who minded her while also observing this workbench. Peigin-ant-Suímbneacä reports the experience of seeing how the boys responded to Álúsrú’s need for learning:

The boys took wonderful care of her and explained the Irish words to her. Then when she knew one they ‘praised’ her and told her she was great...You could see them looking at her and wondering. I would say
that day they changed…they were much quieter and very conscious of Álúsrú.

Following up afterwards on how ‘they changed’, Peigín-an-tSuibneac explained:

They were more settled…they were less about showing themselves off...Maybe more about showing off what they could do for Álúsrú. I think they realised that...people need to be helped…they just rose to it really...We all helped them to help too.

Peigín-an-tSuibneac sees that young children need to be made aware of another’s difficulties and then they are enabled to help when shown how. Those who helped Álúsrú felt they had made a worthwhile contribution, as reported by Leamhóir_OisBláth, a third-class boy:

She learned loads of Irish from us...she was the best...if she couldn’t say it we helped her...and when the teacher asked us questions afterwards, we put up Álúsrú’s hand for her and told her what to say, and she said it...and our table won.

Such appraisal of their contribution seems to corroborate what Peigín-an-tSuibneac already suspected: that instead of self-adulation, they placed Álúsrú at the centre of their world helping her overcome her difficulties, as she herself confirms:

It meant an awful lot that these children could...That I was able to...think...remember...I wasn’t as skittled up altogether...I’m much better than I thought I was...Do you understand? I can remember...and I could probably...after a while be better again. I thought everything was gone and it isn’t...If I could remember...that’s the problem. Peigín was so helpful and the young fellas...Ohhh! they were great.

While the boys thought they gave Álúsrú her speech as Gaeilge, and maybe they did, perhaps her long-term memory was activated by sitting in their midst speaking Irish. With support from the boys, she experienced hope
because they supported her speech while being supported by Peigín-an-tSuibneac to do so. In short, there is evidence of social support being given and received so that Álúsrú could speak and read as Gaeilge. Social support is key to youth engagement (Dolan et al., 2012).

Across the classroom, similar developments were taking place. Volunteers understood Lá-Gaeilge as a reciprocal gesture for what they had already taught to the pupils. As Cormacnalámha found:

_They were concerned with helping us revive our long-lost Irish. It showed that by teaching them some of my skills, they showed appreciation for what I was teaching them._

Afterwards, on reflection, the boys generally found that competence in their Irish reading offered an opportunity to reciprocate what was done for them. As Leamhóir-Séamus, a fourth-class boy, puts it:

_It was good to teach them Irish ‘cos then you felt…it was a pay-back for when C [Cormacnalámha] taught us about wood and trees._

However, not all boys felt the responsibility to learn their Irish so as to ‘pay-back’ or help another, until after the event, at least, as Leamhóir-Gimín, another fourth-class boy discovered (field-notes):

_We were supposed to know our Irish reading. I didn’t…so…I couldn’t help Cormacnalámha and he really wanted to read…but…how did I know he’d care? I just sat there watching him learning Irish [reading]…If I knew it I’d have helped him surely…He thanked the boys at our table…even me. Now I know it from being pure embarrassed._

Children who had prepared reported gaining confidence from the experience as Leamhóir-Séan, a third-class boy, found (field-notes):

_Our table helped T’ [TomásÁine]. He’s a bit deaf. We had to say it into his ear with [flash]-cards. Then he read a whole page with his finger under it…said ‘so now’. We knew he could read then. We clapped…he_
said we were powerful... ’cos we taught him good. Gaeilge showed me how to care about them.

All told, this cohort found that through practice they developed competence from which they derived confidence by successfully delivering a reading lesson as Gaeilge to another. There is evidence of character development in that students identified other’s learning needs and devised ways to teach him/her. They connected to them through the written and spoken word. Unconsciously, they have reported the ‘5C’s’ of positive youth development (Lerner et al., 2003) as variously logged by the boys.

While some were less motivated before Lá-Gaeilge, they showed more interest afterwards. For instance, Leamhóir-Sámót, a fourth-class boy and Slovakian by birth, wrote that it motivated him to learn Irish by teaching the older volunteers. His reflections:

*It helped to develop my brains...It helps me teach other people who did not understand the Irish words...I was happy for teaching them...If she can learn [Gaeilge] at 89...I can learn at 9 and I am now.*

Sámót is motivated to learn Irish/Gaeilge from copying the positive behaviour of Álúsrú who can still learn ‘at 89’. It demonstrates the value of providing opportunities to practice socially responsible behaviours that can help promote identity development in Sámót, and reinforce his self-efficacy in the civic domain as Wray-Lake and Syvertsen, (2011) would understand it. Furthermore, Sámót seems to have derived a feeling of belonging to something bigger than himself (Sherrod et al., 2002) from helping another less fortunate than him.

Generally, the pupils saw the eagerness in the older people to learn and thence they worked all the harder to help them. Lá-Gaeilge set out to teach the oldest of the volunteers how to read Irish in the Cló Rómhánach. However, its effects were more far-reaching, as evidenced by Nísio, a third-class boy, not long afterwards when his grandmother suffered a stroke and
he was able to advise his family ‘that she will forget things and we have to make her remember’ (Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2: A pupil learns how to give social support

Nísio is better equipped to extend care to his grandmother because he has received from, and learned how to offer, social support to another. In essence, he has experienced responsive acts of assistance between human beings (Tracy and Whittaker, 1994).

Nísio’s mother, a key informant, confirms that ‘educational influence’ (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) has reached their home. Her evaluation shows that not alone has her son learned how to offer assistance to another but also that ‘he has established his own relationship with them [volunteers] and he has learned from them’ (Figure 6.3).
Consistent with living theory (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006), an insider and inter-relational state of being is conveyed in the parent’s evaluation. There is the suggestion that values for practice, connectedness and dialogue have been transmitted as educational influence in the child’s own learning, his family’s learning, his classmates’ learning and the volunteers’ learning.

Perhaps the students would have learned Concern for Others in alternative environments, but in this study they learned it through reaching people’s abilities to read *An Cló Rómhánach. Lá-Gaeilge* was the learning tool through which children reported behaviours consistent with Chi *et al.* (2006): kindness to others; help for people in need; awareness of other people’s problems and a willingness to help in solving them; and consideration of how their decision (to teach Irish) might affect others. This theme could also have been used as a main theme example of Personal Responsibility or Leadership or, indeed, a subtheme for Value of Group Work, as discussed next.
6.2.2 Value of Group Work

Following Chi et al. (2006), Value of Group Work infers: learning the value of working with others; and learning new skills from working with others that one might not learn alone. This subtheme was addressed through a weaving workshop. Volunteers taught children how to weave different types of Saint Brigid’s Cross to honour different county traditions, starting with the simplest (Roscommon) under-over weave and progressing to the more difficult (Sligo) 90-degree weave. Both designs have a common theme: twenty-eight straws, one for every day in February; and four limbs, one for every week in February. Then practice began (Figure 6.4).

Figure 6.4: Practice: young and old learning to weave

Weaving was chosen as an intervention to promote cooperative learning. TomášÁine, a volunteer, took responsibility for showing young and old how to weave. When asked to explain the secret of his teaching success, TomášÁine replied:

*Simplicity gave them the confidence. Once they had the confidence, they were able to do the harder one. There is nothing that they won’t conquer if they have the confidence. Just like ourselves...and then of course we were chipping in.*
TomásÁine is unconsciously suggesting the value of practice based on social constructivist learning (Vygotsky, 1978) whereby children learned from more capable others. In ‘chipping in’, the cúairteóíri ‘scaffolded’ (Bruner, 1996) children’s learning, such that all took home a cross after the intervention as well as helping another to make one (Figure 6.5).

Figure 6.5: Practice: Weaving

In Pilot School-A, children proceeded to teach weaving to fifth and sixth class. The result of such ‘collective scaffolding’ (Donato, 1994) was that the younger children appeared to grow in confidence and self-esteem for being able to teach the older children something that they could not otherwise do. As reported by Grás, a third-class girl:

_We showed them how to do it and...We put them with whoever could do the different ones [from Third/Fourth]...We copied how ye showed us and we just asked again if we weren’t sure. It was cool to show them what we knew...because we felt important._

Not alone did third/fourth class learn and teach the skill of weaving, but the volunteers did too. Such action suggests that the value of practice was conveyed as educational influence (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) in each other’s learning. Moreover, each child, who taught another, took responsibility for knowing how to do it or they ‘just asked again’ (Grás). Such an attitude suggests that the children developed the ability to engage in collaborative learning which required pursuing a common goal. The common goal (learning to weave) enabled key skills of: ‘doing (skills), showing (skills), telling (knowledge) and explaining (understanding)’,
Feedback from pupils in the other centres suggested that their individual successes depended on the success of the group at the work-bench, as Brídín, a third-class girl in School-B, reported for herself and her friends:

*I liked working with my group 'cos then we all got them done together. We had to remember for when we got home…and me and my friends…did them in our house on Sunday to see could we [weave].*

This child showed, consistent with Johnson and Johnson (1989), that through cooperative learning she was better able to contribute to the group goal and share group successes being more interdependent than when working alone. Generally, children learned the value of group work through cooperation in social learning.

However, not all children valued group work, as Tírnan-óg, a fourth-class boy in Pilot School-A, proclaimed: ‘You don’t need to teach me anything. I know everything. I work better on my own’. He preferred such solitude, explaining that he could concentrate better alone. Later, when making a cross he preferred to design his own. But he still needed help. In the words of Micheál-na-Croise, a volunteer:

*He asked me how he would do that, so I told him to get pencil and paper, create in his head what he wanted to do, then put it down…He did a triangle, with a centre piece to support the Cross member. I added that [centre piece] to it and he thought that was an excellent idea…said he would do his own Galway Cross.*

Micheál-na-Croise saw that the boy needed support to design his own different cross. He supported him by designing with him what was different, thereby facilitating Tírnan-óg’s creativity. While Tírnan-óg still preferred to work alone, he did accept that older people might have something to teach him:
I prefer doing it myself but I liked that M taught me how to do a different one to all the others...I was surprised how much they know for old people really.

Tírnan-óg’s experience of group work led him to reconsider, at least in part, his stereotypical assumptions about old age. There is no other adverse commentary across the dataset which challenges the value of group work.

Overall, consistent with Chi and colleagues’ (2006), children learned the value of working with others and of learning new skills that they might not have learned alone. Educational values of practice, connectedness and dialogue are evident in how young and old practiced weaving; connected through shared traditions around LáFhéileBhríde; and learned collaboratively through action-based dialogue. Care for Community is analysed next.

6.2.3 Care for Community

Chi et al. (2006) understand that Care for Community generally infers: spending time and helping on projects with others in community; believing that one can make a difference; and changing things that are unfair in community/society. The third- and fourth-class girls wanted to learn knitting and sewing. In collaboration with teachers and the research-practitioner, knitting was taught by volunteers to fourth-class girls and embroidery to third-class girls. These interventions are cited as specific examples of Care for Community, but other interventions could also illustrate the concept.

The knitting workshops were inspired by Máiréad-na-dTéidí, a volunteer, who had earlier given a presentation on knitting artefacts, including her grandmother’s darning mushroom from 100 years ago. She also showed samples of Trauma Teddies which she knits for the Irish Ambulance Service to comfort sick children going to hospital. On seeing her work, fourth-class girls were eager to learn knitting so as to participate in the Trauma Teddies project. As knitting leader, Máiréad-na-dTéidí organised young and old into knitting cooperatives, setting out structured guidelines that encouraged group collaborations and programme completion. Supported by the
cúairteóirí, every child learned to knit and produced some artefact, e.g., hairband, scarf and/or Trauma Teddy depending on their proficiency. Children were taken from basic stitching through to project completion and were enabled to connect to sick children through a knitting project. A value for connectedness to sick children guided this intervention (Figure 6.6).

Children generally reported outcomes for: meeting deadlines; building social connections and bonds of trust with the older people; and believing that they could make a difference.

The children reported learning to take the task through to completion, and meet deadlines: fundamental features of effective engagement (Finlay et al., 2010), as testified in Figure 6.7.

Pupils further reported that being able to perform the task allowed them to show care for another. Cniotóir-Márta, a fourth-class girl, summed up the general sentiment:

Knitting the teddies makes you think about sick children in hospital and appreciate your health and not be selfish and...you can always do something for sick children when you can knit.

Such feedback echoes Sherrod et al. (2009) who recognise that through civic actions, people become concerned for others less fortunate than
themselves. A value for connectedness was evident in how the Trauma Teddy can knit a community of young and old together through caring for sick children.

Volunteers reported building bonds of trust and reciprocity which showed how easily the children adapted, as observed by Máiráine:

*Amazing how the children told us what they knew or didn’t... when they trusted us. They fell in with us...no difference...just age. It’s great for us to be able to give something back...they can give something too.*

Volunteers, by volunteering, prompted trusting, caring relationships with children. Children were comfortable sharing the limitations of their knowledge with volunteers once trust was established. In short, seeds of social capital (Putnam, 2000, 1993) were sown because there is evidence of networks of relationships, reciprocity, norms, trust and participation. Overall, the feeling amongst the pupils was that, as well as learning to knit, they generally felt that they were getting a chance to know the older people of their community. As a result, they were embedding a deeper sense of belonging to their neighbourhood because they had opportunities to care about the people of that community, including sick children, and they discovered that the people who live there genuinely care about them and want to teach them. According to Portney and Berry (2001), this feeling describes social capital (see also Chapter Seven). Feelings of belonging are encapsulated in the reflections of Cnóitóir-Saoirbhín, a fourth-class girl:

*Knitting gets you chatting. I like getting to know the cuairteoirí. It makes me like my home town more...We can speak to them now...They like getting to know us too...saying ‘I know your granny...or whoever’. You can tell them things that worry you...like if someone is sick...and they listen to you...and...care about you...and that’s nice...and still keep knitting.*

Indeed, volunteers and children seemed to bond through the conversations that went with the knitting as much as through the knitting itself as captured
in the volunteers’ dialogue concerning how children took them into their confidence:

Máiráine: Afterwards one child said to me ‘my grandmother…ahmm… she’s dead’ and another little one then said ‘my granny died of cancer’. They were delighted they could talk to us. You were almost one of them.

Maedbhíseach: Yes…one even told me about her sister dying when she was 14…They were eager to tell all.

As time progressed, the children made the cúairteóirí feel welcomed as Cealla, a volunteer, noticed:

*What struck me...was how lovely and relaxed the whole classroom scene was and how welcomed we were by the children, which when we were children and an adult came in to the class…[you weren’t allowed] to speak or even look at them...The welcome they had for us was lovely.*

Feedback from children and volunteers alike suggests that they are making new connections and finding that they care about each other. Through their reflections they describe the idea of social capital arising from: mutual trust, norms of reciprocity and social networks (Putnam, 2000, 1993). Like Putnam, they see that in a continuous reciprocal relationship there is a mutual expectation of a benefit bestowed. As Máiréad-na-d'Téidí, put it:

*The conversation was going around and the knitting needles were clicking...I got an awful lot out of it. And they got a lot out of it too, because some of them were able to do part and some of them were just about able to knit...and they all learned to finish it for the sick children.*

Additionally, children enjoyed being consulted as to what type of design they would put on their own individualised teddy. As Cnítóir-Rós, a fourth-class girl, said:
You get to decide what you like to make... You get to put whatever face you like on it so long as it’s a happy face because it has to make sick children happy...you get to do it in your own favourite colours... and that’s good.

Quizzed as to why it was ‘good’, fourth-class girls were unable to develop the point any further, as evidenced by Cníotóir-Seoga:

It’s good to get to decide your own teddy. [Why?]: Well...like...it’s just good.

However, Cníotóir-Cloetín, a fifth-class girl, better explained why it was ‘good’:

Because someone would ask you why you put this face and that colour on and you’d give your own opinion... and make your own decision... So, you’d feel more responsible and be more grown up.

Admittedly, Cníotóir-Cloetín is more mature than fourth class being a class older, and indeed is not part of the research community, except that she is in the classroom and shows what another year can contribute in terms of maturity. She can convey that her participation is ‘child-initiated and directed’ (Treseder, 1997; Hart, 1992).

Simultaneously, next door, third-class girls were learning embroidery with volunteers, having seen Máiráine’s ‘samplar’ [Exemplar] on Artefacts Day. Máiráine, a volunteer, explained that it was an instructional tool used for teaching embroidery stitches long ago. On seeing the sampler, the girls asked to be taught embroidery so as to decorate a Santa Stocking fitting for Santa’s many presents expected for Christmas. First, they had to provide fabric, draw out plans, anticipate problems and devise solutions. Then, they cut and embroidered the fabric with volunteer assistance. Every third-class girl (n=22) succeeded in making a Santa Stocking for Christmas 2011 and later presented it at the school’s pre-Christmas fashion show. Adults were paired with pupils, oftentimes in the ratio of 1:1, optimising their opportunities to practice and complete their Santa Stocking in time (Figure 6.8).
While some motivations might be questionable, third-class girls learned that they were able to undertake a basic embroidery task and complete it on time. Here are some honest reflections captured in the children’s dialogue with the volunteers:

Fuáileóir-Milseainín: *I just want to make the biggest Santa Stocking ever so that it fits all the toys Santa will bring me for Christmas…I want [it] to hide my sweets from my brother…I can put all them decorations on it…like on the thingy [Sampler] and…he’ll never find them.*

Fuáileóir-Áine: *I loved working with M…and she was so helpful…and then I helped others who were slower than me…the cuairteoirí made sure everyone got finished for Santa.*
The general motivation was to finish for Santa. This way they learned to follow a task through to completion. They found that the adults cared about them in their wanting them to get finished. They learned to support other children so that everybody got finished for Santa.

Teachers were delighted with the work done, agreeing that they could not have undertaken the project alone. As one third-class teacher reported:

*It would have been impossible...just wouldn’t have happened. Now we have a database that we can call on in future for projects like this...The children trust them and love to see them coming in. They’d never miss Tuesdays.*

Teachers saw, like Balatti and Falk (2002), how trust, reciprocity and social networks might benefit children through collective action in future. ‘Tuesday’ is cited again as the metaphor for improved school attendance as already reported (see 6.1.2).

The knitting and embroidery projects were cited as examples of Care for Community. However, any intervention, with either third- or fourth-class boys or girls which was seen to build social capital (Putnam, 2000, 1993) likewise reflected Care for Community. For example, the teacher of third- and fourth-class boys, in his year-end evaluation, wrote (Appendix 21):

*All age groups, both young and not so young, benefitted from the weekly interactions which help[ed] all progress and develop in different ways...This project has brought much joy to all who invested their time and hard work in giving so much to the pupils.*

The social interaction, articulated by the teacher, resulting from time-investments, can also be interpreted as caring for community. All told, outcomes consistent with the Chi et al. (2006) definition of Care for Community were reported by participants and key informants alike, namely: spending time and helping on projects with others and believing that they can make a difference in another’s life, whether it is that of a sick child, a child trying to embroider for Santa, or an older person learning a skill.
Pupils showed that they could meet deadlines and build social connections and bonds of trust with the volunteers through generating social capital.

The subtheme Appreciating Diversity is analysed next.

6.2.4 Appreciating Diversity

Appreciating Diversity, according to Chi et al. (2006), infers appreciating having friends with different backgrounds to oneself; and being open to learning from people with backgrounds and experiences different to oneself. The concept was mediated through European languages (French, German and Spanish). The idea was that in learning European languages in collaboration with older people, children would learn to appreciate different ways of speaking and different peoples and their cultures. Thence, they were taught to show respect for another through learning the courtesies and vocabulary necessary to conduct mannerly conversation. They were also taught about expected behaviours in different countries/cultures; given a flavour of different sounds so that they would be able to make more informed decisions about language choice later; and the cúairteóiri were facilitated to learn a European language that they might otherwise not have learned.

Language tutoring was delivered by retired language teachers. Typically, lessons consisted of greetings and courtesies, counting numbers, days, months, family members, pronouncing names and cities (e.g., Jacque/Jack; Jerez/Herreeth), and food/drink menus. School-A/B learned French; School-C learned Italian, French and German; and School-D learned all four. While the research-practitioner taught Italian in School-C/D, data arising from these workshops are not reported here.

Children nowadays can learn language from television. Therefore, it was important to establish prior knowledge so as to extend it. Prior knowledge was ascertained using the KWLH technique (Ogle, 1986): What I Know; What I Want to know; What I have Learned; How I can learn more.

Generally a language lesson would entail words and phrases being introduced by a volunteer language teacher, and repeated by young and old
who would then dialogue in role-play in the language being taught. Learning ‘props’ would typically include that country’s national flag, use of the electronic whiteboard to display words and phrases, slides and aspects of that country’s architecture, and music and song (Figure 6.9).

Figure 6.9: Dialogue: Learning to speak a European language

The effect of these interventions was that pupils generally felt that they could now speak to a person from France, Spain or Germany; they would be able to greet them, show them respect and make them feel included in their community. Jacques, a third-class boy, wrote in his log:

‘We can talk to a French person so that they wouldn’t feel left out’ (Figure 6.10).

Figure 6.10: Dialogue: inclusion of another through French language

Perhaps, through dialogue in French, Jacques has gained, consistent with Selman (1980), ability to step outside of himself to take a self-reflective
look at his interactions with others and to realise that they may do likewise. Learning French, albeit basic, has given him and his cohort the opportunity to put themselves in another’s shoes, as Selman would say.

In similar vein, German language was facilitated. Children reported that because they could speak a few words, they were better able to show respect to/for another. As Jakob, a third-class boy logged:

‘When you go to Germany you can treat them with respect...You can speak to people from all over the world and in their countries’.

In learning another language, Jakob has discovered that travel has become a possibility for which he is better equipped to interact and integrate.

Spanish followed the structure for French and German. Again, the notion of respectful interaction was foremost with the children. They found that by learning Spanish, they would be able to use the language to interact respectfully. As Juan, a third-class boy in School-D, wrote:

‘We can speak to a Spanish person on the street or in Spain and speak it on holidays and make new friends’.

The desire to interact in Spanish suggests that Juan is open to friendship with people different from himself.

At year-end evaluation, when children were asked how they saw the value of learning European languages, foremost again was the notion of respectful dialogue, as reiterated by Michillín, a fourth-class boy:

‘If someone came over from a different country we could greet them in their own language and make them feel at home and welcome’.

Taken together, children appeared to fulfil the Chi et al. (2006) criteria for Appreciation of Diversity, because, through learning different languages, they became aware of the possibility of having friends with different backgrounds to themselves. They also showed willingness to express respect for others through learning with people from backgrounds and experiences different to theirs. Furthermore, pupils wanted to learn the
languages so that they could show respect and inclusion of another. In short, they were expressing a value for dialogue akin to the subject-to-subject ‘I-Thou’ relationship theorised by Buber (1958): reverential, inclusive and equal.

The volunteers who delivered the language workshops reported the benefits that derived from the social interaction. For example, Máiróchóng, the volunteer who taught French saw that the learning ripples outwards from the child at the centre to his/her family, community, and eventually to the wider world as a result of sharing interactions in French, German, or Spanish. In her words:

*I see this project...like a stone dropped in a pond...You have the pupil, at the centre...learning a skill/task from the older generation [which]...ripples out to the home...and the children can help them now...In turn, those adults are talking to other people...thinking of their involvement in French...bringing the ripple further out because they are learning about other cultures...other languages...appropriate behaviour and how other...cultures manage their systems...and they have new awareness of that. So, from one little classroom...I see that the interaction extends...into the community, and then further into the world.*

In Máireóchóng’s submission there is the suggestion of *exosystemic* levels of child development as theorised by Bronfenbrenner (1979), whereby a child’s internal developmental capacities are bi-directionally connected to the proximal contexts including community and the wider world. Such connections, as perceived by the French teacher, further create linkages and channels of communication between and among the actions and interests of social fields in line with interactionist theory (Wilkinson, 1991; Bridger and Alter, 2008; Bridger *et al.*, 2009).

Perhaps children might have learned to appreciate diversity in other ways throughout an academic year, but they learned it through educational influence in a value for dialogue in this study using European languages as the learning tool. Environmental Stewardship is analysed next.
6.2.5 Environmental Stewardship

Environmental Stewardship, according to Chi et al. (2006), infers: recycling awareness; keeping community clean; and doing one’s part for the environment. Lá-na-Luíbheolaiochtá2013 (Botany Day 2013) was the intervention organised to promote environmental stewardship through learning about the eco-system. Lá-na-Luíbheolaiochtá2013 was divided into two parts: children presenting potted wild flowers correctly labelled; and volunteers presenting on curative plants plus a ‘talk’ by a botanist on wild orchids and the pollination process. If children were unable to identify and categorise the plants, Mičeál-na-Liubeoláiocta, the botanist, helped them to do so. He then gave a presentation on the 30 different species of wild orchid growing in Ireland of which about 20 bloom in County Roscommon. He explained the pollination process necessary for the survival of the different species; and the soil types conducive to their survival. Lá-na-Luíbheolaiochtá2013 concerned learning about the connectedness of everyone and everything in the eco-system. Thus, a value for connectedness guides the learning about the eco-system (Figure 6.11).

Figure 6.11: Connectedness: pollination and the orchid

Mičeál-na-Liubeoláiocta explained the value of the long grasses on roadsides as an environment conducive for insect habitation and pollination:

Roadside verges should not have to look like putting greens [and]...wild grasses should be left until the pollination and re-seeding
season is over...I hope you will never see an insect on a leaf again and not wonder what he’s doing there.

The greatest outcome of Lá-na-Luíheolaiochta2013 for third- and fourth-class boys was in learning about how the pollination process and the ecosystem work. Consequently, they felt obligated to initiate action on behalf of the orchid after learning that it takes 12 years to reach bloom. Under their teacher’s guidance they wrote a protest letter for homework, from which one was selected, signed by the class and delivered by hand to the local government representative. They protested that, on account of how local authorities trim grass verges on roadsides prematurely, pollination and re-seeding cannot be completed. Lá-na-Luíheolaiochta2013 instigated a civic action in the polis or public sphere (Arendt, 1958) which showed that students had developed capacity for civic action through having gained a deeper awareness of their environment as stated in the letter written by Buachaillín-na-Luíheolaiochta, a fourth-class boy (Figure 6.12):
To Mr. Frank Feighan, T.D.
Boyle, Co. Roscommon

Dear Mr. Feighan,

I am a participant in an intergenerational learning programme which is ongoing at our school since September 2012.

One of our learning workshops was about caring for the environment. We were taught to respect all flora and fauna because everything is there for a reason.

As a result of this learning, my class and I think that it is not right that the local authorities should cut the grass verges along road sides before seeding has taken place.

Also my class and I now think that if hedges are not cut while birds are breeding and nesting, then grasses should not be cut because insects (bees, butterflies...) are also pollinating, breeding and working for the eco-system.

We hope you take our concerns seriously, and we look forward to hearing from you before the term gets holidays.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Signed by:

[Signature]

[Signature]

32 Signatures

Figure 6.12: Civic action on behalf of the orchid
A key point in the letter that showed developing notions of justice was that if hedges are preserved to accommodate birds, then grasses should be preserved to accommodate bees so as to sustain the eco-system. The letter was duly responded to and the local government representative confirmed that he had raised the issue with the local authorities as a result of the pupils’ letter of protest.

In his reflections at year-end, Buachaillín-na-Luibheoláfochta reports what he learned: he had to streamline his thoughts to write up his log/reflections; he was propelled to initiate civic action after learning about eco-processes; and he was awarded a prize for his handwriting by consequence of having to write so many reflections (Figure 6.13).

Figure 6.13: Reflections of a fourth-class boy on initiating civic action
At year-end, parents/guardians were invited to submit their evaluation of the programme. The parent of Buachaillín-na-Luibheolaíochta acknowledged the value of intergenerational collaborations in her son’s education, particularly the botany lecture which enlightened him greatly on local flora. She testified to his civic action on behalf of the orchid, reasoning that his character grew as a result of this intervention, because in being ‘informed by the senior citizen he became an active and informed citizen’ (Figure 6.14).
I really enjoyed the intergenerational programme and enjoyed what he did at home with great enthusiasm. Through the programme he did many activities which he would not have done such as conversational Italian, German and French. He enjoyed crafts such as weaving and sewing. He was especially excited about reading and learning the history of our locality and world history such as World War II. He became most excited when he went to Woodbridge and gave a talk on Botany. He realised how important the environment is to us and the past he, his class and his generation must play a part in protecting it. On learning that orchids take twelve years to flower, that we have a wide variety in our locality but are destroyed by people and the local authority cutting roadside verges he was spurred into action.

He decided it would be a good idea to write a letter to our local T.D., M. Frank Feighan outlining the destruction caused by cutting roadside verges, when grasses/plants are seeding.

Taking Mr. Feighan’s words “you are the future and your job is to look after the environment” he wrote a letter to our local T.D. signed by his class. His talk to the local T.D.’s office was a new experience and I believe he felt he had some access to our government which can be a mystery to one so young.

I believe his character grew as a result of his contact with Mr. M. Frank Feighan. He organised himself and his class in being proactive on an issue that he felt strongly about and the belief that they should could do something about it. Informed by the senior citizen he became an active and informed citizen.

Figure 6.14: Parent’s testimony to her son’s civic action
The parent is suggesting that because her son gained a deeper awareness of the environment, he was spurred to defend the orchid. Perhaps he saw that an injustice had been perpetrated against the orchid, and, in its destruction, indirectly against the people. There is a mild suggestion of social justice youth development in the class response which takes into account a social change objective resulting from critical understanding about the root causes of social and community problems (Brady et al., 2012; Ginwright and Cammarota, 2002). Heretofore, children may have learned environmental stewardship from their textbook. However, learning it in collaboration with the volunteers prompted them to initiate civic action, something a textbook might not instigate. Overall, children appeared to develop a deeper sense of environmental stewardship, consistent with Chi and colleagues’ (2006) understanding of doing one’s part for the environment through learning about it. They did this through developing a value for connectedness of everyone and everything in the universe.

A summary for the main theme of Civic Responsibility now follows.

6.2.6 Overview: Civic Responsibility

The interventions were intended to develop Civic Responsibility which generally inferred care for others and community. In Chapter Five, significant statistical improvement was evidenced by the Intervention Group for all subthemes of Civic Responsibility whereas the Control Group did not achieve significance. A possible explanation may lie in the qualitative findings. Firstly, Concern for Others was realised when students saw that volunteers, aged 70 and over, succeeded in reading as Gaeilge as a result of their intervention. Secondly, Value of Group Work was realised when students, through group collaboration, showed they could weave and teach the skill to others. Thirdly, Care for Community was evidenced when children learned to knit and then participated in a Trauma Teddies project whereby they knitted teddies for sick children; and through embroidering Santa Stockings and then, helping each other to get finished for Christmas. Fourthly, Appreciating Diversity was evidenced when children showed willingness to engage in European language dialogue whereby they believed
themselves better able, as a result of the language learning, to express respect for another different from themselves. Lastly, Environmental Stewardship was learned through exposure to modelling pro-social behaviour, hearing value messages, and getting opportunities for practice.

Generally, developing civic responsibility required a focus on children’s emotional, cognitive, and identity development plus providing environments which cultivate such responsibility whereby a citizenship process rooted in care and driven by obligations to contribute to society was activated as also shown in their study by Wray-Lake and Syvertsen (2011). Overall, children showed skills and dispositions of Civic Responsibility consistent with Chi et al. (2006). Additionally, values of practice, connectedness and dialogue were conveyed to/by the participants, young and old, such that each had educational influence in the other’s learning, in their families, and in their school. Such explanation may account for why the Intervention Group achieved significantly improved scores for skills and dispositions of Civic Responsibility over a school year.

Leadership is discussed next as the third theme of civic literacy.

6.3 Theme Three: Leadership

Following Chi et al. (2006), and to fulfil the criteria for leadership, ‘the student takes initiative and acts as role model to help group, class or school to make a positive difference’ (p.11). This process requires skills incorporating: ‘leadership efficacy; civic thinking; and civic participation’ (p.16). Discrete workshops were organised to address some of these subthemes; others emerged through existing workshops, as discussed next.

6.3.1 Leadership Efficacy

Leadership efficacy was defined by Chi et al. (2006) as ‘demonstrating the attitudes and actions of taking leadership positions’ (p.16). Thence, evidence is sought for young children’s ability to: (a) plan and deliver a task including organising a team to perform the task and making others believe they are important members of the team; and (b) stand up for what is right and try to change what they perceive to be wrong. Leadership Efficacy
emerged from the interventions and was not addressed through any specific workshops. Examples of planning and delivering a task are taken from third- and fourth-class girls in School-B; standing up for what is right cites the reflections of third- and fourth-class boys in School-D.

(a) Planning/delivering a task

Planning and delivering a task emerged through Word-Club and *Focal-Eile*. These were interventions aimed at raising literacy levels through developing vocabulary in English and Irish/Gaeilge. Young and old read a favourite extract from a preferred source. The KWLH technique (Ogle, 1986) (What I *Know*; What I *W*ant to know; What I have *L*earned; How I can learn more) applied in order to determine prior knowledge. As each participant read, others noted new words on flash-cards. They then worked collaboratively on the new words, constructing sentences that gave meaning to the words. Children practiced writing the words while also discussing them, putting them into sentences and connecting to each other through them (Figure 6.15).

![Image](image.png)

Figure 6.15: Working through word-meanings

The result of the team collaboration was that children made word-presentation sentences to the assemblage (class, teachers, and volunteers). Each child, as she presented, took questions from the assemblage, consulted with her team, and gave sentence-examples as responses. Volunteers helped children to get their presentations ready and accompanied them in
presenting if necessary. When the team had finished their word-presentations, they placed their words on the blackboard and returned to their tables to learn from other teams. The process was repeated until all children had articulated their word-meanings/sentences to the assemblage. They did this in English and Irish.

In class discussion afterwards, the third- and fourth-class girls reported that when they realised they would be presenting, they cooperated to ensure that they knew all the words for their team. They reported that volunteers helped them to do what they would not have been able to do alone, namely: to correctly pronounce and articulate words; plan and organise the table/team to present word-meanings; and believe themselves able to lead their table in making a presentation. Eibhear, a third-class girl, captured the general feeling of support coming from volunteers:

You picked the word…and P helped you say it and understand it…She just wouldn’t let you go up there until you could make loads of different sentences of your word…we learned the meanings from reading and thinking…and chatting about them with P.

Eibhear is describing how the volunteer supported her contribution. She is brought to believe that she can communicate her ideas to others through good oral and written competencies. Moreover, she can overcome the challenges of presenting/speaking in public, gain confidence in her opinion and consequently make a worthwhile contribution. This was also found by Redmond et al. (2013) when researching leadership outcomes for adolescents. Like Hanafin (2014), the volunteer taught to, for and through the children’s different intelligences so as to help them understand their word-meanings. The volunteer was their ‘scaffold’ (Bruner, 1996) to perform leadership functions without whose support they would not have had the confidence to present as Muinín, a third-class girl confirms:

B [volunteer] helped me to go first…I was afraid I’d go wrong…with everyone looking at me…Then our team just copied me and they weren’t a bit afraid…It’s easier now ‘cos people just say ‘You’re good at doing that’.
Muinín knows that she has undertaken a difficult leadership role. Consistent with the literature (Coyle, 2009; Hannah et al., 2008; Hoyt et al., 2003; Murphy, 2002), her leadership has impacted positively on follower outcomes, thus creating an expectation for Muinín and her team that they can lead in future.

As well as developing their personal confidence, the volunteers instilled a sense of team-efficacy in the students using word-meanings as the teaching/learning tool, as Nóinín, a fourth-class girl explains:

*M came up with you when she knew you were afraid...but now I think I could do it again ’cos once you did it, you knew you could...I can do it again...we all can... ’cos...we all got a go.*

Nóinín showed that, with adult support, she was able to plan and deliver a task that she and her team could not have done alone. There are resonances of socio-cultural learning (Vygotsky, 1978) which implies that pupils reached a level of potential development whereby they seemed to increase the distance between their actual and potential level of leadership through being helped by M and, therefore, what they did with her assistance more accurately reflected their ability to lead than what they might do alone. For example, Nóinín’s use of the three personal pronouns, ‘you’, ‘I’ and ‘we’, conveys a sense of the team’s transition from self-doubt to self-belief. ‘You’ could be any team-member working through self-doubt. Perhaps the ‘you’ is afraid of the presentation-leap, whereas the ‘I’ connects the leap to Nóinín. She reverts to ‘you’ while still negotiating between self-doubt and self-belief. Then she asserts that ‘I can do it again’. From the ‘I’, she arrives at the ‘we’ of the self-efficacious team/class whom she believes can all make the leap since everyone ‘got a go’. The interplay between these pronouns - ‘you’, ‘I’ and ‘we’- has created a narrative space in which their belief in themselves was interpreted as evidence of socio-cultural learning. This example shows the ease with which the volunteers brought the child, the team, and ultimately the class from self-doubt to self-belief so as to convey attitudes and actions of taking leadership positions.
Additional to the children’s reflections, the fourth-class teacher evaluated *Focal-Eile* as a word-building exercise:

*I would think that what was done today...reading an úrscéal [novel]...you come across words that you won’t have in an ordinary Irish class...like they might have had sicín [chicken] but they wouldn’t have had clúidín [clutch]. I hope it will give them a love for reading in Irish...as in English.*

Generally, while Word-Club and *Focal-Eile*, were effective as vocabulary-building interventions aimed at raising literacy levels, they were effective leaning tools used by the volunteers to help the pupils plan and deliver a task as a team exercise so as to demonstrate attitudes and actions of taking leadership positions in line with Chi and colleagues’ (2006) understanding of Leadership Efficacy.

(b) **Standing for what is right**

‘Standing for what is right’ was another element of Leadership Efficacy according to Chi and colleagues (2006). This was not a discrete intervention. Rather, examples of leading by positive influence emerged from the data exemplifying educational influence. Evaluating the programme at year-end, third- and fourth-class boys in School-D were asked: *In what ways did working with the older people help you...?* The boys generally responded that, through working with the older people, they learned to have the courage to stand up for what they believed to be right and speak out against what they perceived as wrong. They generally wrote in their logs that they would show respect for others, for community and the environment and they would encourage their friends to do likewise. A sample of reflections from the boys’ logs included:

Seosamh: *I would make sure that none of my friends would ever laugh at old people again. I’d say ‘That’s not rite [right]’.*

Eoinín: *I can tell my family about things they mightn’t have known about. I can tell them and then they will know. I would make sure...*
that...people would not pull up an orchid. I’d put good thoughts into other people’s heads (Figure 6.16):

![Figure 6.16: Reflections to convey educative influence to another](Image)

There is evidence of ‘educational influence’ (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) emanating from the boys’ attitudes and actions of standing up for what they believed to be right and showing the courage to change what they think is wrong, like abusing people, or environmental destruction. They learned these things through the interventions from which these reflections emerged. Putting ‘good thoughts into other people’s heads’ is a metaphor for respect which has been transmitted to Eoinín, and his classmates, through values of practice, connectedness and dialogue. Pupils showed willingness to adopt the I-Thou not I-It attitude (Buber, 1958) of subject-to-subject relationships with the older people based on principles of respect, inclusion and equality to which volunteers also attest throughout. For example, they showed willingness to learn French, Spanish and/or German in order to greet people with manners so that ‘they wouldn’t feel left out’ (Figure 6.10).

Overall, the above examples provide evidence of students showing attitudes and actions of taking responsible leadership positions consistent with the subtheme of Leadership Efficacy as defined by Chi et al. (2006). The children may have learned Leadership Efficacy in their day-to-day schooling. However, in this study, they learned it through intergenerational collaboration by learning how to plan, organise and deliver a task and make others believe they could do it too; and stand up for what is right and try to change what they see wrong. Civic Thinking is analysed next.
6.3.2 Civic Thinking

Desired outcomes for Civic or Critical Thinking include developing ability to (Chi et al., 2006, pp.13-14): (a) compare life long ago with life today; (b) demonstrate problem-solving/analytical skills; (c) gather, generalise and transfer information; and (d) conduct research skills. These topics are now analysed sequentially.

(a) Life long ago

The artefacts from life long ago were used as learning tools to develop pupils’ predictive abilities and connect them to the past. Pupils worked in groups with the cuairteoirí while another cuairteoir presented an artefact with questions-of-the-kind: ‘What’s this for?’ A value for dialogue guided this intervention. Examples of the artefacts are outlined in Chapter Four (see 4.3.2). A volunteer, questioned the use of the hot-water jar (Figure 6.17).

Children offered suggestions as to its possible uses, supported by the cuaiorteoirí who answered their questions and asked further questions. Gradually they improved on their suggested uses for each artefact, as they
awaited verification by the presenter. As Seoilín, a fourth-class girl confessed:

\[\text{C [volunteer] told us nothing...He gave us loads of clues when we asked questions...sometimes we guessed right...but it took ages. It only warmed beds...like electric blankets. It was boring...but it made us guess.}\]

However, not all pupils found the exercise ‘boring’, as Bróigín, a third-class girl confirms:

\[\text{The shoe last was very interesting...After loads of wrong guesses M put his shoe up on it...to see would it fit...and then we got it...The people fixed their own shoes on it.}\]

The above data illustrate a value for dialogue which had the effect of enhancing pupils’ predictive ability through investigation and observation, as confirmed by the Principal who observed the activity:

\[\text{They [children] had no clue what the objects were and the actual people that were doing it were very skilled...saying 'What do ye think this would be used for? Any idea?' Adults were...giving the children the freedom to...observe and predict. Then as a result of more investigation, the children were able to test the accuracy of their predictions. Unbeknownst to [them], they were developing...scientific skills.}\]

By learning with the volunteers, pupils were facilitated to release their imaginations, as theorised by Greene (1995), through informed perception, appreciation and relationship with the people around them. In sum, they were enabled to question, reason and predict while comparing life long ago with life today, a key criterion of critical thinking (Chi et al., 2006).

**(b) Problem-solving and analytical skills**

This dimension infers identifying issues and needs, studying to build knowledge, and proposing possible solutions to identified problems (Chi et al., 2006). This was best illustrated on Interview Day when fourth-class
girls in School-B sought explanations for why there were financial problems in the banks in recent times. A volunteer and former bank manager, Seán-na-B, worked the pupils through basic mathematical skills whereby they had to: compute interest on a principal sum of €300,000 at 2.5 per cent interest per annum; apportion annual repayments on the principal over 30 years; and determine monthly, then weekly, mortgage repayments for a household (Figure 6.18).

![Mathematical calculations]

Figure 6.18: An interview excerpt: problem-solving and analytical skills

The repayment of €1458 per month, or €365 per week, was accurately calculated by the interviewees who could now answer their own question as to why there was a financial collapse. Cúntóir-Máire, a fourth-class girl on Team-A, deduced:

‘Cos people lost their jobs in shops and on buildings and they could not pay €365 every week?...They had to buy food...and all the money was gone and then the banks got in trouble.
The pupils arrived at this answer after doing calculations with volunteer support. The intervention demonstrates application of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984). Seán-na-B facilitated concrete experience by enabling pupils to work out the mathematics of their own question. He invited their reflective observation through allowing them to make sense of their calculations. He got them to relate the learning experience to the problem so as to explain it or find solutions to it in abstract conceptualisation. In short, he engaged the students in cycles of active experimentation (Kolb, 1984) to facilitate learning. Following Wurdinger and Carlson (2010), he ensured a child-centred approach, explaining the desired outcomes so that pupils knew what and why they were calculating. Then, he helped them to identify their own reasons for the banking collapse. The learning was corroborated by their Principal who observed the interview:

*He* [Seán-na-B] *explained that when he was a bank manager if a person came in looking for a €100,000 loan, they’d have to have a tenth or 10% of that in the bank and he asked them then ‘what’s a tenth of it’? He was actually asking them a maths question as a way for interaction…They got a greater understanding…of the whole recessionary process and why it evolved…I was very impressed with the fact that the children were able to answer the questions and he [Seán-na-B] was able to ask such pertinent questions.*

To propose possible solutions to the banking problems identified, Seán-na-B asked the fourth-class girls on Team-B how they would propose to solve the financial problem (Figure 6.19):

Figure 6.19: An interview excerpt: example of critical thinking
The team suggested that the banks should ask the borrowers to save up a substantial deposit ‘or else buy cheaper houses’. They also recognised that banks should lend responsibly: ‘They should not have given the full money unless they [borrowers] had really good jobs…’.

The students learned that through an exercise in real-life mathematics, they came to find the answers within themselves, as Cúntóir-Eilis, a fourth-class girl on Team-C, reported:

*It was the hardest one [interview] because we had to do all the sums. He told you nothing…only kept asking you questions…till you got the right answer yourself…and then…when you had the sums done…he asked you what the banks and the people buying houses should do anymore.*

Seán-na-B showed that he could provide ‘scaffolding’ assistance (Bruner, 1996) to the children to help them work out problems so that they could answer their own questions. He supported students to derive their own answers, consistent with Polanyi’s notion of ‘personal knowledge’ (1958), namely that people generally know more than they say. The banking interview was a learning tool to enhance numeracy: pupils practiced numeracy skills having first identified a financial problem, built knowledge about that problem, and proposed possible solutions to the problem. Such outcomes are consistent with key criteria for problem-solving and analytical skills according to Chi et al. (2006).

(c) **Gather, generalise and transfer information**

The forestry interview addressed being able to gather information and begin to generalize and transfer understanding to other experiences. This interview occurred between fourth-class girls in School-B and Micheál-na-Learóige, a retired forester and volunteer. Their general line of questioning encompassed: how to recognise different species of trees; and forestry as a career. Values for connectedness and dialogue guided the forester’s interview with the students. He wanted them to connect better to nature
through teaching them how to recognise trees through their foliage (Figure 6.20).

Figure 6.20: Connectedness: recognising trees

Micheál-na-Learóige generally revised the natural rules of vegetation and took questions from the students:

_They mostly remembered the vegetation from the talk last year but we revised it again—canopy, shrub, ground and underground—and the different foliage and what the trees are used for. I did the two [types]: broad and conifers. Mainly, they wanted information on the career...points...jobs...outdoor life...A few little lassies said they were going to be foresters as a result of...this entire interview._

Micheál-na-Learóige facilitated a heightened awareness of the beauty of the different trees, as Dairín, a fourth-class girl on Team-C, observed:

_We learned that there’s tons of different types of trees and...he [Micheál-na-Learóige] told us that they [leaves/branches] were all from around the school so it’s nice that we have such a vary of trees around the school...Now we know the different trees and we know to plant trees and help out the environment._

As well as heightening awareness of the environment, children were made more aware of nature’s beauty, as confirmed by the Principal who evaluated the intervention:
The children inevitably will...look for those [trees] when they go out...will be more appreciative of being closer to nature and seeing the difference between...trees. There are so many children if you asked them how many trees are outside at the front of the school, they mightn’t know...and they could be watching them...for four/five/six years but the very fact that M mentioned those points I think it would inevitably heighten their awareness.

Some children felt confident to look up further information later:

*Coilltín-6th Class: I think I might become a forester when I’m older...I could look it up in books or something...because I think it’s very interesting.*

The idea that she might ‘look it up’ suggests that she has discovered the need to source information, a key component of critical thinking (Chi *et al.*, 2006).

Thus, the fires of emotion, perception and appreciation may have been set alight in these children through the forestry interview because, as Dewey (1934) noted, they have started to look beneath the surface realities of the world and have released their imaginations through imaging new possibilities (e.g., forestry careers). The volunteer seemed to have brought the children to a deeper awareness of their environment as Blathún, a fourth-class girl, noted:

*We learned...to care for our trees...because without trees we’d be breathing bad oxygen...and we also should say every day that we are really grateful for the fresh air that we breathe because in some countries they have to wear masks.*

Overall, the heightened awareness, gained through interviewing a retired forester and reflected in the children’s data, shows that they can gather information and begin to generalise and transfer understanding to other experiences in accordance with Chi and colleagues’ (2006) understanding of critical/civic thinking.
(d) Research Skills

This last dimension of Civic/Critical Thinking requires evidence of finding multiple sources for information, analysing validity of information, drawing conclusions and presenting the findings (Chi et al., 2006). Interview Day was the chosen intervention for developing research skills. Prior to the event, pupils were inducted in research skills and ethics. They had to prepare interview schedules by first sourcing information so as to inform pertinent questions. An outcome for Interview Day was that pupils having heard, for example, the World War Two stories undertook a project by compiling a portfolio of data derived from the interviewees/storytellers, as testified by the Principal afterwards:

_They went on subsequently to do projects on the Second World War...I’d say they will be motivated to do more research at a later date because of the actual subjects that were broached that day._

The act of compiling a project on World War Two required that they be able to: source information; analyse the information; draw conclusions and present the findings. They would not have learned this skill only that they needed to interview the cuairteoirí during that school year. Such ability to conduct research is consistent with the Chi et al. (2006) understanding of critical thinking.

No one example from the interventions demonstrated above would be adequate to satisfy the Chi et al. (2006) definition of critical thinking for any one pupil. However, when the interventions are aggregated, it is plausible that as a result of intergenerational collaborations, pupils became better able to: compare community life long ago to life today; demonstrate problem-solving and analytical skills; take the perspective of others to understand how they feel and what they intend by what they do; and gather information and begin to transfer understanding to other domains of learning. Civic Participation is discussed next.
6.3.3 Civic Participation

Desired outcomes for the Civic Participation subtheme include developing ability for perspective taking, communication, group membership and conflict resolution (Chi et al., 2006). Conflict resolution was not a research concern of this study because schools nowadays have a discrete Anti-Bullying Policy which deals with conflict. The remaining criteria were mediated through interventions pertaining to: (a) perspective-taking (b) community issues; (c) social networks; (d) communication; (e) group membership; and (f) cooperation. Outcomes for these dimensions are analysed sequentially.

(a) Perspective-taking

Following Chi and colleagues (2006), perspective-taking infers taking the perspective of others to understand how they feel and what they intend by what they do. Storytelling was the tool used to develop perspective-taking in the pupils through real-life and fictional narration.

Real-life storytelling

Fourth-class pupils at School-D wanted to hear stories about World War Two so as to connect their textbook to volunteers’ real-life experiences of war. One volunteer, AnnG recounted her story of evacuation during World War Two. Briefly, on 1 September 1939, when she was 11 years old and living in England, her school summoned their students with the directive that they were to pack bare essentials. They were then taken by train to the safety of the Worcestershire countryside where they remained for the duration of the war. AnnG read from her memoirs over several workshops with the intention of connecting the pupils to her experience of being an evacuee. The children interviewed her as a primary data source for their history project. A value for connectedness guided the intervention. It is AnnG’s wish that her story would pass down from generation to generation through her telling of it and writing about it:
I feel strongly that the memories of ‘World War Two’ should be kept alive for future generations to learn about and by taking part...these children will always remember [my] story.

Indeed, the children became fully engaged with her story, as observed by the Principal:

When [AnnG] was reading about her experience as an evacuee during WW2, because she had experienced it...it struck a real chord with the children. You could hear a pin drop. That was the actual evidence that they were all totally engaged because she has such a beautiful speaking voice and she spoke at the right pace and the children all absorbed and analysed that particular information (Figure 6.21).

Figure 6.21: Connectedness: An evacuee recounts the horrors of war

In similar vein, Áine-na-h-Áirde was evacuated as a baby to relatives on the Ards peninsula (County Down, Northern Ireland) to escape the Belfast bombings. She stayed near Millisle Farm, made famous in *Faraway Home* (Taylor, 1999). She recounted stories about the Belfast bombings and read from Taylor’s book about the evacuation of Jewish children from Vienna to Millisle to escape the Holocaust. She also read from *Good Night Mister Tom*
(Magorian, 1981) to remind the students of what life was like for children like them, evacuated from London during World War Two.

The evacuation stories had the effect on pupils that they were able to demonstrate empathetic understanding. When asked afterwards what impressed them most about the wartime stories, Máir-Ó-Febas, a fourth-class girl, revealed:

_We all felt so sorry for those ladies when we heard their stories about the siren for air-raids...and Á’s mother [Áine-na-h-Áirde] used to put her under the stairs till the silence...and you didn’t know whose house was going to be there when you peeped out or if anyone was there...so scary...my worries are tiny besides that...and it all started because Hitler was greedy...wanted to rule the world...and that’s what S [Sean-na-B] told us about the banks too. People got greedy to make money._

Máir-Ó-Febas is demonstrating ability for perspective taking (Selman, 1980) resulting from storytelling experience. Generally, wartime stories created opportunities for students to ask critical questions about the causes of war. While unable to articulate it, pupils also showed signs of being able to connect the content of one interview to that of another. For instance, Máir-Fheabhas can see the power imbalances that cause war, political or financial, explaining it as ‘greed’. The students learned about how conflict arises and how to avoid it, as reported by Seoisín, a fourth-class girl:

_It makes you think about what can happen when there is war between countries. Makes you appreciate peace. We learned about how people managed on rations and getting evacuated and split from their families. AnnG said it’s important to play our part...obey rules and control drinking and not be bad-tempered...’cos that causes rows in the home and...that spreads._

Further, the pupils showed ability to transfer understanding to other situations by taking the volunteer’s advice on board and applying it in their own lives, as Cló, another fourth-class girl, reports:
Ann told us to always put your interest into something and if you are doing it, do it properly and set a good example to other people by doing your best. She said ‘anything that’s worth doing is worth doing well’. She helped me do my best anymore and give good example at home.

Here there is evidence of AnnG offering ‘advice assistance’, which can be readily generated through any civic opportunities with youth (Dolan and Brady, 2012).

Asking Ann afterwards what it meant to her to be able to tell her story to the next generation, she reported being delighted with the reaction:

*I felt that they were learning something...they are always going to remember. When they are reading other fictional stories...they know that mine is a true story and I think that they are always going to remember it...and I think this is a memory they are going to take with them for the rest of their lives and tell their grandchildren about it.*

AnnG’s reflections suggest that she has connected to the next generation through facilitating the pupils to fulfil the Chi et al. (2006) criteria on perspective-taking, namely to take the perspective of others so as to understand how people feel and what they intend by what they do. Selman (1980) identifies such a stage as the sequential perspective-taking stage, whereby children between ages seven-through-twelve, become able to see themselves in another person’s shoes (see Section 2.1.5).

**Fictional narration**

Fictional story also had the effect of developing perspective-taking. Volunteers narrated, for example, *Labhraigh Loinsigh*, an old Irish legend, and *The Freedom Bird* (Hartley, 1996). Both stories have freedom of speech as their central theme. Manacha, a volunteer, narrated the story of *Labhraigh Loinsigh* to the boys of third and fourth class in School-D. Briefly, the story goes that, having horse’s ears, the King of Leinster had a haircut only once a year. His barber was sworn on the pain of death never to divulge the secret. Unfortunately, the secret got out, and death followed for
all the King’s barbers until the last barber alive in Leinster devised a scheme to unburden himself of the secret without telling a soul. He whispered the secret to the salley tree whose wood was used to make the Celtic harp. In turn, the unaccompanied harp played to the strains of The King has Horse’s Ears, a taunting melody which caused the King to summon his barber to court for the inevitable punishment. When the King heard that the barber merely told the secret to the salley tree, his life was spared and he was the last barber in Ireland to die for revealing his thoughts.

Initially, children interpreted the story quite literally as Barbóir-Séamus, a third-class boy, showed: ‘The message passed down from person to person to thing to thing’. However, through more intense group discussion with volunteers, the children came to attach deeper meaning to the story, as logged by Barbóir-Eamon, a third-class boy: ‘You can kill a person but not their thought. How can you stop someone from thinking?’ (Figure 6.22).

![Figure 6.22: Freedom of thought](image)

Some weeks later, Micheál-na- Báersaíocúta, another volunteer, narrated The Freedom Bird (Hartley, 1996). In similar vein, the central message from The Freedom Bird is that nobody can suppress another’s freedom of expression. Unassisted this time, the boys quickly discerned the story’s message because they associated it with Labhraigh □ Loinsigh, as was evident in their written submissions which generally amounted to: you can kill a bird (the messenger) but you can never kill the spirit of freedom, or freedom of expression, because like the bird, it is free. Fictional storytelling gave pupils the opportunity, while supported by volunteers, to abstract deeper meaning from stories and relate them to other experiences, thereby supporting Donaldson’s (1978) thesis that young children are capable of critical
thought if trained into it. They showed, consistent with Chi et al. (2006), that they had learned to take the perspective of the metaphorical barber, or bird, to understand their feelings or thoughts and what they intend by what they do.

(b) Community Issues

This requires ability to analyse community issues and needs and work on proposed solutions; engage in dialogue about important personal, school, and/or community issues; and apply knowledge to propose and implement civic action (Chi et al., 2006).

To fulfil these criteria, pupils attending Pilot School-C taught volunteers how to use iPad, having discovered that while they possessed basic skills in regular computer, they needed to learn iPad/iPhone so as to participate more fully using modern technology. Interventions were conducted over three workshops and involved up to five children at a time. In their teacher’s words:

*The children discovered in conversation with the cuairteoirí that some knew the basics [computers]...and had iPad gifts that they couldn’t use. They offered to teach them what they knew. We have iPads here. We could take five [volunteers].*

Children prepared lessons supported by the research-practitioner and their teacher. They did this as part of their SPHE school/homework and their teacher checked it out before letting the children give the instructions. A value for dialogue guided the intervention. The body language observed in this workshop conveys the children’s endeavours to connect the older people to iPad (Figure 6.23).
The children showed that they could analyse the volunteers’ learning needs and, consequently, plan and deliver instructions such that effective learning took place. Cuairteoir_Daire, a volunteer, echoed the sentiment of the i-learners when he spoke to the child-teachers at the close:

*I had already decided that PC was enough for me, but you kids brought me right into the 21st century. I’m so happy I can fit in again. I’m writing to Santa for one. A phone…camera…diary…skype…bank all in one. I’m chuffed at what I learned…thought I was past it. Nothing was ever as easy as learning from you whizz-kids.*

The above commentary shows that child-instructors, with adequate preparation, could facilitate the volunteers’ participation in the world, not just socially but technologically too, through the participation tool of iPad. This is an example of positive youth development being applied through an assets-based approach (Dolan and Brady, 2007). In short, instead of focusing on problems, this approach seeks to identify the children’s ‘developmental assets’ which they demonstrate through their ability to teach another. Such competencies and resources within young people’s lives can enhance their chances of positive youth development (Brady, 2010).

Children grew in confidence from being able to teach another as reported by Moghilechliste, a fourth-class boy, who taught iPad to Séamus-na-Locha, a volunteer:
He said I was a good teacher...I wrote out the instructions for him in case he’d forget...just wanted to really. I liked that I did something good for him. He asked me about my family [in Slovakia] and we...googled them and...lakes and rivers around here...We talked about different fish and gear...he said always wear a life-jacket.

In how the boy taught iPad to Séamus-na-Locha, he showed ‘capacity to engage in thoughtful civil dialogue about important personal… issues’ (Chi et al., 2006, p.14) namely, teaching another so that he could better participate using technological tools. He prepared a lesson so as to be competent on the day. He showed consideration in writing out the instructions for someone who might ‘forget’. He experienced the volunteer’s appreciation and care towards him shown through the metaphorical ‘life-jacket’ and he connected to the learner through the shared ‘lakes and rivers’. Essentially, the experience offered the boy and his other peers an opportunity to develop the ‘5 Cs’ of positive youth development (Lerner et al., 2003).

Children developed participatory skills through teaching iPad because they showed capacity to analyse a community need and they worked to communicate their skills to another. This opportunity would not have arisen for these participants in any other environment, other than through intergenerational engagement, at that time.

(c) Developing social networks

Developing social networks entails initiating contact, and demonstrating the ability to build a relationship with a community member (Chi et al., 2006).

Fourth-class girls at School-B showed capacity for networking when they were able to conduct an interview and subsequently build a relationship with An-Fíceallaë, an interviewee and volunteer, whom they chose to interview in his capacity as a former company director and stone cutter. They needed to learn about different types of stone and how to recognise them. There is a value for connectedness in this intervention: connectedness of young to old through knowledge of stone (Figure 6.24).
Answering their probes, An-Fíċeallaċ showed them different types of stone, its consistency, what each type is suitable for and where it is to be found. Using his tools, he showed them aspects of carving and lettering which led them to probe: ‘How did you find school?’ In his words:

_I didn’t do well at school because I could not work out what was on the page...But I found my confidence through my hands...working with stone...and as my confidence grew I went back to the page and it revealed its meaning to me...I tell ye this in case any of ye feel like I did...We can all learn...only figure out how...dyslexia opened an alternative creative way of thinking in me._

He explained to the pupils that from his carving tools he etched out a confidence that sent him back to learn to read. The Principal, an observer on the day, noted that there would be children there who currently have reading difficulties and for whom building such a relationship was so beneficial:

_Certain people in the group that...had difficulty learning...would have got great ’sólás’ from the fact that they were not going to be permanently in that particular situation. So that would have opened up a whole vista and world for them._
As well as initiating the contact, pupils showed ability to extend the relationship beyond the confines of the interview schedule as evidenced by Éagáin, a fourth-class girl:

I was so glad I was able to talk to him...and be able to ask him these things...and he didn’t mind telling us either...I’m dyslexic too...I’m not as worried now because I’m good at art like he’s good at stone.

The Principal confirmed the children’s experiences of being able to establish a relationship with the interviewee such that he gave them hope for their own similar situations:

He made very strong points to the children about how he felt he was stupid in school but that it was only later in life when he realised that he had a great talent in his ability with stone that he said his self-confidence just went through the roof and I think that had an effect on some of the children because sometimes they would feel stupid in that situation.

This intervention shows how the interviewee gave social support to pupils who suffer dyslexic conditions. By the act of participating in the interview process, the pupils’ social supports and resilience were strengthened, because pupils were facilitated to discover supportive relationships. It is the hope that, as theorised by Dolan (2010), such civic activities might buffer these children from adversity thereby helping them to develop resilience and enhance well-being. The interview with An-Fiċeallaċ provided pupils with access to social support in the form of positive adult leadership. This is a key function of positive youth development because such access enables youth to withstand stress and develop coping skills which help the transition to adulthood (Dolan and Brady, 2012; Dolan, 2010; Shaw et al., 2012; Cutrona, 2000).

All told, pupils showed capacity to initiate contact, hold a conversation with and demonstrate the ability to build a relationship. These criteria are consistent with the Chi et al. (2006) definition of a participatory skill.
(d) Communication skills

Communication skills are demonstrated by listening carefully to others and using appropriate language to accurately express one’s ideas and opinions (Chi et al., 2006). Communicative ability was conveyed by the boys of third and fourth class at School-D when they wrote prose and poetry in response to the volunteers’ creative writing for them. At year-end evaluation, when asked what was the greatest thing they learned from the cuairteoirí, the boys generally responded that, for them, creative writing was the best. They felt that because the cuairteoirí were able to compose prose and verse for them, they could too. One third-class boy recorded in his log: ‘If M could write a poem I could write a poem’. The boys enjoyed discovering that they had a new talent that they would otherwise not have discovered at that time of life. For example, Raftaire-Féin, another third-class boy, wrote: ‘I think poetry was the greatest thing we learned. I discovered I am a [poet]. It is my new hobby’.

The effect of hearing the older people reading or writing their own work infused in the boys a belief that they could do likewise, consistent with Bandura’s (1977) social learning theory of imitative behaviour. With the support of more competent adults (Bruner, 1996; Vygotsky, 1978), they were enabled to read their compositions to the assemblage. By listening carefully to the cuairteoirí, they were better able to demonstrate their own ideas and opinions through prose and verse, as two fourth-class boys revealed during class dialogue afterwards:

I usen’t like writing...but now if you just close your eyes...like A [volunteer] said...and imagine you’re a bird...you write down ‘wing’...then all the words that end with ‘ing’...like fling, king, sing. Put them at the end of each line...and that gives you four lines of poem and then just fill in the start of every line and that’s how I got to be a poet...I could write songs next (Cumadóir-Eala).

You could write how you felt...not be worrying about was it right...just say it like...or if you had problems...you could pretend you
were someone else and then you could write loads of ways to help them (Cumadóir-Éanna).

The above reflections resonate well with Eisner’s (2002) notion that it is judgment more than rules that is paramount in the arts and that problems can have multiple solutions because learning through the arts requires a willingness to surrender to unanticipated possibilities in emergent work. It also resonates with Rogoff’s (1990) notion of ‘guided participation’ whereby children are guided by the volunteers as they learn to communicate with them.

Supporting the pupils’ reflections, the class teacher found the creative writing workshops beneficial because ‘children were easily motivated to write and edit their work’ and used the stories of the older people as inspiration for their own compositions (see Figure 6.25).

Figure 6.25: A teacher reflects on the creative writing intervention

In sum, the creative writing workshop facilitated listening carefully to others and using appropriate language to accurately express one’s ideas and opinions in keeping with the Chi et al. (2006) definition of communicative ability.
(e) Group Membership

Group membership requires that one be able to demonstrate ability to share, take turns, be considerate of others, listen to different ideas in a group setting and collaborate to formulate suggestions that work for the group (Chi et al., 2006). The intervention, Interview Day, demonstrated how students cooperated in group situations, taking turns, and showing consideration for others. They rotated roles for the different interviews so that every child had responsibility for some aspect of team membership (Chapter Four: 4.3.2).

As the Principal observed on the day:

*They had difficulty maybe in hearing some of the adults and, even by their body language, they just went over the desks and they put their heads closer to the centre...the children were very much engaged...and motivated to listen carefully.*

The body language described by the Principal, reflects a value for dialogue (Figure 6.26).

![Figure 6.26: Dialogue: Interview Day](image)

Pupils showed evidence of turn-taking when able to rotate assigned roles. As the Principal reported:

*They had practical hands-on experience of taking turns, it allowed them to give a practical demonstration of their roles...and when*
assigned to different roles...showed amazing tolerance and patience in taking their turns and in listening.

It must be highlighted that improved group membership skills may not be totally attributable to intergenerational engagement. Nowadays, teachers assign different roles to pupils who may have difficulty working with each other so as to increase their awareness of collaboration and listening to others’ opinions. Hence, they would learn to take turns and engage in group work. Also, children were thoroughly prepared by their class teachers, in collaboration with the research-practitioner, for their roles on Interview Day. This may explain their exemplary group membership behaviour. However, there would not have been an opportunity to practise as group members if the cuairteoirí had not consented to be interviewed. Thence, through intergenerational engagement, children were facilitated to practise group membership skills like sharing, turn-taking, being considerate of others, listening to different ideas in a group setting and working with others to interview the older people. Such skills are consistent with the Chi et al. (2006) criteria for Civic Participation.

(f) Cooperation

Cooperation entailed learning how to cooperate with peers and help others avoid and settle conflicts (Chi et al., 2006). Teaching Irish proverb was seen as a way to enhance cooperative learning. Teaching *Ni neart go cur le chéile* (no strength until joined together), Manacha, a volunteer, conveyed the idea to third- and fourth-class boys that interdependence is essential for cooperation. Manacha sketched a shoal of fish, sought the children’s cooperation as active miming participants, and used bi-lingual approaches (Irish and English) as the collaborative learning tools. A value for dialogue *as Gaeilge* guided the intervention (Figure 6.27).
Manacha needed to teach the idea that ‘united we stand; divided we fall’. A shoal of tiny fish is in danger of annihilation if the big fish sailing into the harbour attacks them. They must work together to ward off the attack. Therefore, pupils must cooperate in the mission of salvation. They do this by learning the Irish words for the fish’s body parts so that when it is time to defend they will know what parts to attack as Gaeilge. Pupils learned the vocabulary as Gaeilge and were ready to participate as Manacha narrated the story (Figure 6.28):
Children’s learning through seanfhocal conveyed that they generally understood the meaning of the proverb and the importance of participation as logged by Cuanín, a fourth-class boy:

\[
\text{No strength until we come together; together we can do anything.}
\]

Volunteers appreciated being shown how to teach the concept of cooperation through proverb. They would now be better equipped to transmit educational influence to others. For example, Peigín-an-tSuibneač, in an email to the research-practitioner, relayed her joy at being able to transmit this learning to a class of seven-year-olds in San Francisco in September, 2013:

\[
\text{I don’t think I would have had the confidence...that day if I had not got the experience with your project...I explained it [the proverb] like she [Manacha] did with her illustration of the fish (Figure 6.29).}
\]
Peigín-an-tSuibneáċ has spread educational influence from a classroom in Ireland to San Francisco through a value for dialogue. She has conveyed to the pupils that cooperation entails learning how to collaborate so as to survive together. Her lesson has been clearly learned because the San Francisco cohort could give her examples of how they could accomplish things if all were to work together.

**Summary for Civic Participation**

Unlike the Control Group, the Intervention Group showed significantly improved scores for Civic Participation (see Chapter Five: 5.3.3). There are plausible explanations. Firstly, in teaching a skill to the *cuairteoirí*, children showed ability to analyse another’s need to learn. They devised solutions which facilitated that need and the participants testified that they indeed learned. Secondly, through the interview process, pupils showed they were able to initiate contact, hold a conversation with and demonstrate the ability to build a relationship with an interviewee. Thirdly, they showed communication skills by listening carefully to the creative writings of another and by ‘writing back’ for them. Fourthly, they displayed group
membership skills under interview conditions which democratically expressed each other’s turn-taking right. Lastly, they learned the meaning of cooperation through learning an Irish proverb and supporting Irish vocabulary.

When criteria of civic participation are integrated, a common theme emerges, namely a sense of belonging to community derived through interaction. Insofar as one of the greatest benefits of civic engagement is an accompanying sense of belonging and enhanced community membership (Flanagan and Faison 2001), the data presented here show that interventions aimed at facilitating children’s participation can activate their civic engagement. They may have learned such participation skills elsewhere at another time, but they learned them from older people during this study. An overview of the Leadership theme follows next.

6.3.4 Overview: Leadership

Three areas of Leadership were analysed above: Leadership Efficacy, Civic/Critical Thinking and Civic Participation. Firstly, the data suggest that pupils learned Leadership Efficacy by developing the confidence to make a presentation to an assemblage with support from volunteers. The confidence spread to their peers because the experience impacted positively on follower outcomes. They also revealed capability for community action in how they brought each other from self-doubt to self-belief, thus conveying attitudes and actions of taking leadership positions. Additionally, pupils learned, from being involved in intergenerational collaborations, to stand for what is right and have educative influence in another who might otherwise tend towards negative behaviours. Secondly, pupils showed capacity for Civic/Critical thinking once they received ‘scaffolding’ (Bruner, 1996) assistance from volunteers. During the banking interview they showed themselves capable of analysing, generalising and applying the mathematical knowledge which they derived from within themselves with volunteer support. Children learned to think critically from engaging in real-life experiences which came from their own investigative processes reflected in their logs and verbal submissions. Thirdly, regarding Civic
Participation they developed an awareness of community needs, such that they learned that they must help another if they have the skill or ability as with, for instance, information technology which might help another to participate more fully in the world. Learning the concept behind the Irish proverb taught the pupils that, like the shoal of fish, we depend on each other for our survival. Communication Skills were enhanced through storytelling and creative writing which gave children opportunities to extract deeper meaning from stories with the result that they went on to write their own prose and verse, inspired by that of the volunteers.

Overall, the three subthemes of Leadership were developed in this project through intergenerational collaboration without which this cohort would not have been exposed to these experiences during the timeframe of this study. Evidence for the development of Leadership explains their significantly improved Leadership scores over the school year. Such intergenerational collaborations as account for perceived improvements also benefitted the volunteers as discussed next.

6.4 Benefits of intergenerational collaborations for older people

The greatest benefits accruing to the volunteers from intergenerational learning included a sense of intergenerational solidarity: connectedness to younger people through shared learning; inclusion and belonging by being involved in young children’s education; and equality and reciprocity from being able to teach and learn from the children. At project-end the cuairteoirí gave their reflections in answer to the question: ‘What did you enjoy most? Their reflections explain notions of connectedness and generativity.

Connectedness

The volunteers spoke frequently about the connections they forged with the children through the bonds that they established with them. Ahead of their arrival in the schools, the research-practitioner would generally investigate if/whether the pupils’ grandparents might be known to the cuairteoirí or not. Hence, on arrival to the classrooms, the research-practitioner introduced the
cuairteoirí one-by-one to the classes and then asked the children to introduce themselves one-by-one. The format was that each child would stand up, give his/her name, the name of his/her parents/guardians and grandparents. The volunteers would most usually respond with comments like: ‘Oh yes! I know who you are…I know your granny/grand-dad…[or whoever]’. The idea was that the volunteers might get to know who the children were more quickly so that connections could be forged more easily.

It’s not surprising then that Peigín-an-tSuińoac reported, in reading it again from her log at year-end, that on the first day of learning to sew a Santa stocking, a child at her table put her arm around her neck in the middle of the sewing lesson and said:

*You’re just like my granny…I tell her my secrets…she just loves me…I love helping her and getting praise…She thinks I could do nothing bad…she says I’m the best and she only expects the best from me…you’re just like her saying all that stuff…’*

A wave of similar sentiment erupted at her table and the children generally poured forth that she reminded them of their grannies with whom they had positive relationships, if they had. The other cuairteoirí reported similar sentiment such that whenever they returned, the children would beckon their ‘granny’/’grandad’ to their table, with:

*My granny knows you. She’s in the walkers…bridge…golf…meals-on-wheels…with you’. [And] My grand-dad knows you…he’s in the credit union…chamber…farming…IFA…GAA…with you.*

Obviously, the pupils had discussed the cuairteoirí at home and their families facilitated deeper connection still by telling them how they knew the cuairteoirí who were now equivalent to grandparents: their Irish social grandparents. The consequence of such familiarity was that connections were swiftly forged each with another, young with old in a small community where each would not have been able to greet the other on the street heretofore because there was no bridge across which to connect. Now there was an ‘excuse’, a rationale: there were intergenerational learning
collaborations aimed at developing young children’s civic engagement through the civic literacy concept.

Overall, the cuairteoirí noticed that the children generally viewed them as people who loved them as if they were their own grandchildren. Indeed, this is how one male cuairteor, An Daire, corroborates this sentiment:

They’re all grandchildren to me...These kids speak to you outside...Before this I was invisible...it’s nice to be recognised and to be able to pass on a bit of what life taught you...to someone else’s grandchild’.

Generally, volunteers’ dialogue conveys the sense of equality found in such connectedness:

Cealla: ‘Twas the connection...between the two groups...the acceptance. Us being there as part of them. There was a bond there between the two generations...I could see the difference in them and...the good it had done to them in giving them more independence and a little bit more confidence maybe.

Cormacnalámha: And! it was how we were all the one...learning together as equals...no difference only the age...and we learned as much from them as we taught them.

Máiráine: After teaching them my skills, I was so proud to be able to speak the few words [French] with them that I would never have learned only for the little lads...and we were all at the same level. It gave me the courage to go to the library and get out the Teach-Yourself and then head off [to France].

Maybe it was that old and young were rejuvenated together. TomásÁine, a volunteer, put it this way:

The kids say they look forward to us coming in. Maybe they’re getting off homework or something. But aren’t we the same ourselves? It gets you off something else. Sure I wouldn’t miss Tuesdays either...meeting people...the party...chat...and it makes you feel young again in there.
The accounts furnished by the volunteers in this study reflect results from research conducted elsewhere around civic/social participation (e.g., Ellis, 2004 [UK]; Wilson et al., 2006 [USA]). For example, in the United States it was reported that older people seek meaningful roles and offer services that provide for personal development and lifelong learning and opportunities that give them new and purposeful social networks (Wilson et al., 2006). All told, volunteers in this study reinforce what research on volunteering corroborates (Snyder and Omoto, 2009; Snyder and Clary, 2004; Clary et al., 1998), namely, that people volunteer to express their personal values; show concern for community by helping others and themselves; gain personal development and increased social networks; and gain approval and/or fulfil esteem needs.

**Generativity**

Through being connected, the notion of generativity is made visible in how the older people wanted to pass on their knowledge and skills, consistent with Erikson’s (1963) thesis. Their reflections were captured during group dialogue:

**MairéadQ:** Well! I have two choices when I get up in the morning: be useful or be useless and I prefer to be useful to somebody and it makes me feel good…to be doing something worthwhile for a child and…be out there...with the people...And I thought ‘Isn’t it lovely to be liked’.

**Seosa:** Me too! It gave me an awful boost...I felt young with them...looking forward to going back again...At home...you’d just end up thinking about yourself...looking at the four walls. You could go down town looking to meet people...get a cuppa something...and you might still come back and meet no one...and your money gone. Here, you’re sure to meet nice helpful people...and you can help a child...be useful...forget your age.

**Álúsrú:** Oh! The kick of going out. Talking to people...having fun...knowing the little fellas. I could...lie in bed...do nothing or get
up, get a shower...dress up...be useful to someone...or be stupid...brooding here.

Unwittingly, the volunteers are resonating the ‘Generativity versus Stagnation’ (Erikson, 1963) theme. They wanted to contribute to the world, belong there, be accepted there and be valued for their contributions because the alternative was isolation and stagnation.

Overall, a sense of intergenerational solidarity, as advocated in the Madrid International Action Plan on Ageing (UN, 2002), was established between the two generations: reciprocity was expressed through shared teaching and learning; equality was evident in how young and old reported there being no difference only age, that both parties had equal opportunities to learn new skills; and inclusion was evident in how the cuairteoirí were made to feel included through passing on their knowledge and skills to a younger generation.

6.5 Quantitative vs. qualitative: convergence or divergence?

The second question of this chapter—How do the qualitative findings explain convergence with or divergence from the quantitative results?—can now be answered. Convergence was found between quantitative results and qualitative findings for the civic literacy concept. A possible explanation is that programme content was informed by the questions posed on the student questionnaire and teacher’s observational checklist. For instance, under ‘Care for Community’, student questions included: I believe that I can make a difference in my community (Item-42). Informed by such questioning, the research-practitioner tailored interventions so that children would learn how to make a difference in their community through, for example, knitting Trauma Teddies for sick children going to hospital. Similarly, other questions informed other interventions. Consequently, when children’s quantitative ratings improved over the year, their qualitative evidence would have explained the improvement in civic skills and behaviours for pupils in the Intervention Group. This explains why convergence was found between quantitative results and qualitative findings, and therefore, convergence/divergence is no longer a research concern of this study.
6.6 Chapter summary

The qualitative findings explain why there were significantly improved scores for the Intervention Group in this study, unlike the Control Group who did not show significantly improved scores over the academic year for skills and dispositions of civic literacy. A possible contributory factor to the significant results for the Intervention group was that, even though they represented a ‘captive’ audience, they had their ‘say’ in what was to be taught to and learned from another. They were guided by ‘child-initiated, shared decisions with adults’ and/or ‘consulted and informed’ models of participation (Treseder, 1997; Hart, 1992). Besides, participants overwhelmingly reported making a worthwhile contribution to each other’s learning and felt that they were appreciated, respected, and recognised for it by each other, by the teachers and by the research-practitioner alike. Parents/guardians, as key informants, reported that their children were learning skills from the older people that they might otherwise have missed. In the period that has followed the intergenerational programme, principals/teachers continue to call on the volunteers for different knowledge and skills throughout the year. They are invited guests at ‘Graduation Day’ in one school, in acknowledgement of the work they are doing for the children’s education. Principals/teachers are satisfied that pupils are developing desired outcomes for the civic literacy concept through intergenerational collaborations that support curricular content.

Acknowledging that no one workshop singularly would have developed civic literacy in any one child, however, each workshop would have contributed to developing some desired outcomes for civic literacy. Overall, they gained a deeper understanding of personally and socially responsible behaviour, and gained leadership attributes to make a positive difference in the world. They offered their own explanations for their learning. Their explanations were supported by volunteers, key informants, the research-practitioner and by photographic evidence from the workshops. The research-practitioner’s values of practice, connectedness and dialogue were evidenced across collaborations. Practice was evident insofar as the civic literacy concept was mediated through hands-on/active learning workshops,
whereby children got opportunities to practice the civic literacy concept. Connectedness was evident insofar as participants reached a ‘common understanding’ (Dewey 1916) by communicating and participating together to understand the civic literacy concept. Dialogue was evidenced through subject-subject (‘I-Thou’, Buber, 1958) interaction and action as deeds and speech (Arendt, 1958).

Chapter Seven which follows discusses, in light of the literature, how desired outcomes for civic literacy might be conceptualised as young children’s civic engagement; and how intergenerational learning collaborations might contribute to activating such engagement.
CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION

7.0 Introduction

This chapter seeks to explain, in light of the literature, how desired outcomes for the civic literacy concept might be conceptualised as young children’s civic engagement. Inherent in this explanation is a need to discuss:

a. whether desired outcomes for civic literacy can be understood as young children’s civic engagement; and,

b. how intergenerational learning collaborations might have contributed to activating young children’s civic engagement.

Accordingly, this chapter divides into two sections: civic engagement and intergenerational engagement.

SECTION ONE: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Quantitative results from Chapter Five, supported by qualitative findings from Chapter Six, confirm that students who participated in civic-literacy-themed intergenerational learning collaborations showed significant improvement in desired outcomes for the civic literacy concept over an academic year. The evidence submitted, by direct participants (children and volunteers), key informants (principals, teachers, parents/guardians) and the research-practitioner, shows that intergenerational learning collaborations can derive desired outcomes for civic literacy themes as constructed by Chi et al. (2006): Personal Responsibility, Civic Responsibility, and Leadership (see Figure 2.2).

The discussion, as to whether desired outcomes for civic literacy can lead to the activation of young children’s civic engagement, incorporates three key criteria necessary for activating young children’s civic engagement: youth
development (7.1); youth leadership (7.2); and youth civic engagement (7.3) as mapped in Figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1: The civic engagement continuum (adapted: FYCO, 2003)

7.1 Youth development

Theoretical approaches to youth development can help to explain whether desired outcomes for civic literacy could be understood as young children’s civic engagement. Positive youth development (PYD) is one approach (7.1.1) and developmental assets is the other (7.1.2).
7.1.1 Positive youth development

Through coaching/teaching another, pupils showed evidence of developing the ‘5Cs’ of positive youth development (Lerner et al., 2005), namely: competence, confidence, character, caring and connectedness.

Lá-Gaeilge (see 6.2.1) is an example of how pupils developed through the five stages. They showed evidence of competence in how they prepared and delivered the Irish language lesson. In gaining respect and recognition from volunteers, teachers, principals and the research-practitioner alike for successfully delivering the lesson, their competence was rewarded and their confidence was boosted as they themselves numerousy reported whenever they taught a skill to another. The research-practitioner found, as did Lansdown (2005), that when young children’s evolving capacities are recognised, and when they are allowed to participate as contributing members of society, active recognition of and support for their engagement enhances their developmental capacities. Character-building opportunities were facilitated through reflective cycles which increased their awareness of another’s learning needs. To develop caring, they had to find ways to reach volunteers’ abilities. For example, in the previous chapter (6.1.2), they describe how hard they worked to enable Irish reading for Álúsrú, TomásÁine and Cormacnaláimhe. A younger supporting volunteer observed how they had started to change their attitudes as a result of becoming more aware of Álúsru’s learning needs: ‘they were less about showing themselves off…more about showing off what they could do for Álúsru’. This new awareness may have come from the supportive relationship experienced between children and volunteers who guided them on how to offer assistance to another in what Tracy and Whittaker (1994) understand as responsive acts of assistance between human beings.

Once they experienced the ‘5Cs’, they were able to make a worthwhile contribution (the sixth ‘C’) wherever they could teach another any skill. Such findings corroborate the research literature (Lerner et al., 2005; Sherrod et al., 2010), namely that ‘contribution’ was induced through attaining the other 5 ‘Cs’. Taken together, the six ‘Cs’ are associated with
pro-social involvement by youth (Busseri et al., 2006), a core function of youth civic engagement (Shaw et al., 2012).

The key difference between this and the cited studies is, however, that this study specifically researched young children, modal age nine years whereas the cited literature researched adolescents and youth. Notwithstanding, it shows that young children can also demonstrate concern for another when given the opportunity. Thus, working to help another can activate their civic engagement because such support is seen as both a contributing factor to, and an outcome of, positive youth development, as claimed by Sherrod (2007).

7.1.2 An assets-based approach to youth development

In teaching skills to the volunteers, pupils showed self-regulation by being able to develop action plans, set goals, and plan alternative/contingency solutions. For example, with information technology (computer/iPad/iPhone), they demonstrated ability to engage with and motivate another to learn because they adjusted to volunteers’ pace when coaching them. They tailored lessons, making them relevant while setting appropriately challenging and achievable tasks, as suggested by Cohen (2010) when adults teach children. Thus, they showed evidence of self-regulation in line with Ley and Young (2001) when they became aware of their own thought processes, emotions and behavioural responses so as to understand learning outcomes when teaching another. This approach supported cognitive processes like memory enhancement and sharing cognitive load, as recommended by LaJoie (1993) when using computers to enhance learning. Young and old were shown to be engaged in mutually out-of-reach cognitive activities, like online shopping (volunteers), or learning responsible consumer behaviour (pupils).

After workshops, students became engaged in ‘awareness-action-evaluation’ (Forróige, 2010) cycles to improve the quality of the lesson for when the volunteers would return. They discovered that they needed to prepare written instructions for partner-learners so as to accommodate memory recall and ensure task completion. Task completion was further enhanced
through critical reflection consistent with the research literature (Brendtro, 2009; Kouzes and Posner, 2007) which by turn helped students to develop the self-discipline and mastery needed for task completion itself. Both task completion and critical reflection constitute components of civic engagement (Finlay et al., 2010).

Overall, wherever pupils taught another a skill, they demonstrated how opportunities for youth development were optimised through an assets-based approach (Dolan, 2010; Dolan and Brady, 2007) which sought to identify and use their competencies and resources. As corroborated by Shaw et al. (2012), the more developmental assets (internal and external) they developed, the more likely their positive development became. In effect, their internal assets would have been boosted by a new self-belief in their ability to teach another as would their external assets be boosted through recognition of their efforts. Insofar as Rappaport (1984) allows for multiple definitions of empowerment, pupils were empowered to improve their local community by creating opportunities for older people’s participation. Such outcomes are akin to the ‘strong’ (Shaw et al., 2012) and ‘weak’ ties (Granovetter, 1973) that are often cited as shaping community action and civic engagement (Chaskin, 2008; Gittell and Vidal, 1998; Wilkinson, 1991).

As noted above, the civic engagement continuum incorporates three incremental building blocks (see Figure 7.1): youth development, youth leadership, and youth civic engagement (FCYO, 2003). Youth leadership is discussed next.

7.2 Youth leadership

This section discusses how the pupils’ sense of civic engagement was activated by their experiences of leadership activities. This dimension is discussed under key criteria necessary to cultivate leadership skills: pro-social skills (7.2.1); leadership opportunities (7.2.2); and action (7.2.3).
7.2.1 Pro-social skills

Understandings of pro-social skills, as discussed in Chapter Two (2.3.2) include perspective-taking, communication, collaboration, problem-solving and knowledge acquisition.

Perspective-taking was addressed through story: hidden messages and/or real-life narratives and experiences. Pupils were enabled through group discussion, to work out the hidden meaning in story thus corroborating Donaldson’s (1978) findings that young children (under 11 years) have capacity for abstract thought if opportunities are facilitated. Perspective-taking was also enhanced through real-life experiences, like wartime stories which created opportunities for students to ask critical questions about the causes of war. For example, on hearing evacuation stories, students gained deeper understandings of the tragic events that can happen in life. It helped them to understand how different choices of action might have different consequences. Consequently, they were better able to express empathy for the evacuees thereby illustrating how the imagination can be activated through real-life story. The older people were more easily imagined, then understood, as spacious, deep and different from themselves because storytelling cultivated deeper understanding of difference and, as the children grasped understandings of others through story, real or imaginary, they developed a greater sense of compassion, which forced them to imagine a sense of their own vulnerability. For instance, the student, reflecting during class discussion that ‘you didn’t know whose house would be there when you peeped out’ [after air-raids], shows potential for imaginative and emotional receptivity, openness and responsiveness, aligned to Nussbaum’s (1997) notion of ‘sympathetic imagination’ (p.98).

Indeed, when children reflected that their own worries were tiny compared to the worries of the evacuees, they had gained respite from focussing on their own troubles, a key attribute of civic engagement (Dolan, 2010).

Communicative ability, group collaboration, problem-solving and knowledge acquisition were best illustrated when pupils wrote prose and verse in response to the volunteers’ shared creative writing. Generally,
pupils reported that they could write how they felt and that their problems could be overcome by pretending to be someone else in prose or verse. They found, as Eisner (2002) maintains, that neither words nor numbers exhausted what they knew and limits of language could not define their limits of cognition; and that problems can have multiple solutions because learning through writing required a willingness to surrender to unanticipated possibilities in emergent work. Thus, they looked beneath the surface realities of their world to release the imagination, as Dewey (1934) sees it. One boy, describing his newfound lyrical ability (see 6.3.3) would: close his eyes; imagine himself a bird; insert rhyming words at the end of every line; put starting words to every line; and thus become a poet/song-writer. Once he and his classmates had begun to release the imagination, Greene’s (1995) ‘wide-awareness to imaginative action and to renewed consciousness of possibility’ (p.43) became evident. Their creative writing was facilitated by the volunteers through ‘guided participation’ (Rogoff, 1990; Rogoff, 1995; Rogoff et al., 1993). They helped pupils to acquire the skills necessary for writing creatively by supporting them to develop mental tools that enabled them to focus, think, solve problems, interact better and recall their learning, as advised by Bodrova and Leong (2007). Then, students were more able succeed at creative writing, having been guided to develop their pro-social skills.

Group collaboration is evidenced in the weaving workshops but any other intervention, like sewing/knitting, reading/writing, could have illustrated the concept. Vygotsky’s (1978) idea of learning from more capable others ‘in the zone of proximal development’ comes to mind when whole classes were enabled to weave differentiated Saint Brigid’s Crosses with the support of the volunteers and, subsequently, in collaboration with each other. Essentially, as Vygotsky (1978) predicted, they increased the distance between their actual and potential level of development through being helped by volunteers to weave. Thus, children showed that what they actually succeeded in doing, in being ‘scaffolded’ (Bruner, 1996) by the volunteers, was more indicative of their mental development than what they could do alone, as Vygotsky (1978) theorised. Moreover, this study found
that any learning relationships wherein learners collaborate on shared tasks can result in ‘collective scaffolding’ (Donato, 1994) which had the effect that reciprocal zones of proximal development were created between each other.

Cooperation was evidenced when a volunteer taught Irish proverb (‘Ni neart to cur le chéile’) as Gaeilge using the fish shoal as a miming ‘prop’ so that pupils would acquire additional Irish vocabulary (see 6.3.3) and simultaneously learn to solve a problem. Pupils showed, like Hanafin (2014) found, that moments of assessment became moments of learning when they used Irish vocabulary as a mode of participation and communication. Metaphorically, the pupils were the shoal, learning through cooperation, because they demonstrated Slavin’s (1996) three criteria for cooperative action: positive interdependence; promotive interaction; and accountability. Cooperation was most evident when they realised that their personal goals and duties were positively dependent upon the team’s learning. They showed capacity for promotive interaction when seen to motivate each other and they showed accountability for knowing the topic when they participated in the mime. There was no evidence of negative interdependence which would have existed if the efforts of group members were not connected or were detrimental to individual learning (Johnson *et al.*, 2009). Indeed, the learning was further buttressed in another culture some time later when a volunteer reported by e-mail to the research-practitioner that, upon visiting her grandchildren at school in Berkeley, USA, she was able to teach the concept of cooperation to an entire class through Irish proverb. It showed, as Shaw *et al.* (2012) would see it, the pro-social outcome for young people of being buttressed by collaborative actions which help to create community connectedness through identifying common issues and bringing solutions to them, even if separated by the Atlantic Ocean.

Knowledge acquisition, as evidenced in the study, can be explained through the idea of the ‘master’ and ‘apprentice’ (Lave and Wenger, 1992). In any learning situation, where old taught young, across the study, the learning of the ‘newcomer’ (youth/apprentice) was connected to the production of ‘old-
timers’ (older people/volunteers or masters). Through a gradual process of ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ (Lave and Wenger, 1992), they learned new skills through understanding the activity and through practice. They were enabled, as Lave and Wenger (1992) see it, to enjoy full participation in the socio-cultural practices of an intergenerational community. Thus, in transmitting skills to another, those originally called ‘newcomers’ (third- and fourth-class boys and girls, including pilot schools), extended the learning to others, thereby introducing further newcomers (other students, family and friends) to an enlarged community of learners. In discovering that their contribution was worthwhile, they were thriving during middle childhood in the same way as Lerner and colleagues’ (2005) participants were ‘thriving during adolescence’. Such outcomes further reinforce the ‘six Cs’ framework for PYD (Lerner et al., 2005) which promotes youth civic engagement (Shaw et al., 2012).

Overall, pro-social skills (perspective-taking, communication, collaboration, problem-solving and knowledge acquisition) were enhanced in the pupils in this study, as evidenced in the data. Such skills can lead to increased youth civic engagement (Redmond et al., 2013; Shaw et al., 2012; Dolan, 2010; Best and Dustan, 2008).

### 7.2.2 Leadership opportunities

Vocabulary-building was the participatory tool used to facilitate leadership opportunities (see 6.3.1). Pupils generally reported that they learned vocabulary from reading and pronouncing words in collaboration with the volunteers who contributed through focussing pupils’ attention on meanings of unfamiliar words. Such work corroborates studies carried out by Allen (1999) and Robbins and Ehri (1994) who reported for developing vocabulary with children through reading to/with them. Interactive discussion improved their vocabulary because, like Daniels and Zemelman (2004) see it, their participation depended on their working with the words (as in reading, hearing, articulating, and writing them on cards), thinking about them, discussing them, putting them into sentences, seeing them as
meaningful, owning them and then presenting them in front of their class, teachers and volunteers.

In presenting word-meanings before an assemblage, the word-leader needed to be able to develop a convincing argument around word-meanings. This act required others on her team to share her word-presentation. Insofar as leaders need to have a clear vision and know how to communicate their ideas to others through good oral and written competencies (Rickets and Rudd, 2002; Kouzes and Posner, 2007), pupils showed that they were learning to overcome the challenges of presenting or speaking in public through volunteer support. Consequently, they gained confidence in their opinions and learned to make a valued contribution consistent with research on efficacious leadership with adolescents conducted by Redmond et al. (2013). Throughout, word-presentations activated a belief that the pupils could lead others through developing knowledge and skills, as was also found by Hannah et al. (2008) when theorising efficacious leadership.

Similarly, the interview process, albeit a different type of intervention, showed students how to cooperate in group situations, take turns, and show consideration for others. They rotated roles for the different interviews so that every member had responsibility for some aspect of team leadership. The school principal observed how they gave a practical demonstration of team-work, showing patience in taking turns, when assigned to different roles. Effectively, they were exposed to hands-on leadership opportunities which optimised their capacity for practice as advocated in the literature on leadership (Galdwell, 2008; Shriberg et al., 2005; van Linden and Fertman, 1998). Additionally, through transmitting values of dialogue, connectedness and practice, it could be said that an ethical model of leadership was initiated. Value transmission is a core component of good leadership (Zauderer, 1992) which is a subset of youth civic engagement (FYCO, 2003).

Generally, it was shown, as posited by van Linden and Fertman (1998), that leaders could be made but certain qualities were essential for their making. Firstly, as found by Brendtro (2009), the collaborations induced a sense of
community, self-efficacy and leadership efficacy which, by turn, induced altruism and therefore, responsibility towards others. Secondly, real leadership opportunities were provided which, as proposed (Kahn et al., 2009; MacNeil, 2006), accommodated opportunities for meeting experiential learning needs, posing challenges, offering support and reflection. Indeed, experiential learning developed abilities for decision-making, goal-setting, and group collaboration as also found by Boyd (2001). Thirdly, consistent with Roberts (2009), leadership competencies were developed including: social/self-awareness and pro-social skills; emotional resilience to cope with adversity; creative initiatives for problem-solving and teamwork; and self-discipline through group membership. Furthermore, as found by Wang and Wang (2009), leadership activities induced components of self-confidence, critical thinking and interpersonal skills. Insofar as youth leadership is a function of youth civic engagement, the leadership activities conducted in this study can be understood as criteria for youth civic engagement.

7.2.3 Action

The pupils with volunteer support, became increasingly more self-efficacious, through action, over time. Comparing themselves against their peers, they experienced: skill mastery; better social interaction with the older people and with each other; and a level of self-reflection that showed their increased capacity for thought and action. Such manifestations accord with Bandura’s (1999) criteria for developing self-efficacy which in turn helped them to undertake leadership roles that had the effect of creating positive follower outcomes, as substantiated widely (Galdwell, 2008; Hannah et al., 2008; Hoyt et al., 2003; Murphy, 2002). For example, when children got the chance to present before the assemblage, they learned that others thenceforward expected them to engage in leadership actions more readily. The fourth-class girl, Múinín, for example, in reporting that her team and classmates copied her behaviour in presenting to a class (see 6.3.1), was elucidating Eden’s (1993) self-fulfilling prophecy theory, namely that there are higher expectations of her now because of increased attention/practice, access to volunteer support/resources, and/or self-
efficacy. Likewise, Nóinín (see 6.3.1) conveyed a sense of group empowerment through her use of the personal pronouns ‘you’, ‘I’ and ‘we’ when, after making a word-presentation, she realised that ‘now I think I could do it again ’cos once you did it, you knew you could... we all can...’cos...we all got a go’. Essentially, the pupils, with volunteer support, transitioned from self-doubt to self-belief in being able to give a presentation to an assemblage and, thus, they experienced increased leadership efficacy.

Student self-belief can be interpreted as evidence of the action aspect of leadership. It infers taking action, through motivation and mastery. They showed ability to motivate each other into action from understanding each other’s needs and encouraging a shared vision (Shriberg et al., 2005; Kouzes and Posner, 2007) of making word-presentations. Consistent with Coyle’s (2009) findings, they became motivated through seeing and hearing what others could do which sparked interest and induced commitment. The students attested that the enterprise was worthwhile because it developed their communication skills as supported in the literature (Kouzes and Posner, 2007). Their followers were better motivated to give time, energy and commitment to shared goals, as corroborated by Zeldin and Camino (1999). They showed determination to overcome challenges, a key attribute of mastery (Roberts, 2009). Self-discipline to stick with something, despite its difficulty, was needed for mastery and task completion which are fundamental components of civic engagement (Finlay et al., 2010). There is evidence of educational influence in each other’s learning too, as theorised by Whitehead and McNiff (2006), because the ontological ‘I’ became connected to the ‘I’ of other class members so that the ‘I’ became ‘We’ and together the class instituted greater social transformation through greater leadership activity.

7.3 Youth civic engagement

So far, desired outcomes for civic literacy have been understood in terms of youth development and youth leadership: the infrastructure for civic engagement. Now, the remaining key discourses which activate youth civic
engagement will be discussed in light of the research literature and qualitative findings to determine if and how desired outcomes for civic literacy constitute: democratic youth participation; belonging and connectedness; social support and resilience; and social justice youth development.

7.3.1 Democratic youth participation

In recognition of Article 12 (UNCRC, 1989), the participation-focussed model chosen throughout the study was ‘child-initiated, shared decisions with adults’ and/or ‘consulted and informed’ (Treseder, 1997; Hart, 1992). Within the study, all programmes were designed collaboratively between young and old, teachers and the research-practitioner. Desired outcomes for civic literacy were communicated to pupils from the outset so that their voice could be consulted and considered. ‘Voice’ constituted the act of reasoning out how to acquire civic literacy skills and dispositions and was influenced by values of dialogue, connectedness and practice. They were facilitated to develop their own ideas, seek advice and support, and then initiate projects within their reach as advised in the research literature (Lister, 2007; Theis, 2010; Bartlett, 2005). Teaching a skill to another gave students what Neale (2004) sees as ‘recognition, respect and participation’ (2004, p.90), warranting her claim that young children are competent yet vulnerable but capable of influencing their own childhoods. In being given opportunities for real participation, pupils responded by showing that they were responsible, capable, competent, and trustworthy when given opportunities to conduct a task. Such findings are widely corroborated in the literature (Morrow, 1994, 2008; Becker et al., 1998; Haugen, 2007; Lister, 2007, 2008) and show that young children are capable of civic activity today which tends to contradict views that position them as ‘pre-sociological’ (James et al., 1998) ‘becomings’ (Qvortrup, 1994).

Lister (2007) claims that ‘participation can promote responsibility’ (p.708). However, this study shows that by giving children responsibility, their participation is promoted. In short, promoting their personal responsibility has potential to activate their civic engagement. Lister (2007) argues that
any initiative which enables children’s participation strengthens their sense of belonging to their community as well as equipping them with the skills and capacities required for lived citizenship. The pupils in this study contributed to their school community by initiating activities whereby they could teach another a skill. They were living their citizenship, as Lister (2007) understands it, insofar as they were finding opportunities to demonstrate their capacities to participate as political and social actors in society ‘as de facto, even if not complete de jure, citizens’ (pp.717-718). Lawy and Biesta (2006) would describe their engagement in terms of citizenship-as-practice because they were enabled to experience democratic practices through their participation in the interventions. They did not move through any specified trajectory to their citizenship statuses, nor were strategies to prepare them for transitions to good citizenship deliberately found for them. Rather, the civic literacy concept was explained to them from the outset, and they were co-opted to devise ways to deliver desired outcomes to and for themselves. They took ownership of the activities as recommended by Edelman (2004) for any leadership enterprise. They learned to participate in group processes, foster teamwork and communicate effectively to achieve group goals, as already theorised (Lewis-Charp et al., 2003; Wehmeyer et al., 1998). Indeed, as Lawy and Biesta (2006) would see it, their participation was better expressed through their relational experiences with the volunteers because they experienced inclusion and equality from consultation and the delegation of responsibility when they actually practiced these skills, as corroborated by Bartlett (2005) for the civic engagement of youth.

7.3.2 Belonging and connectedness

Students came to believe that they could make a difference to their school community. Across the study, young and old numerously reported a deeper sense of belonging and connectedness and discovered that they cared for each other in ways they would never have known had they not been connected through the workshops. This finding resonates with social capital theory (Putnam, 1993, 2000), insofar as they developed a sense of belonging to their community, learned to care about the people who live there, and
came to believe that the people who live there care about them. Oftentimes, pupils reported the joy of meeting the older people in town and being able to speak to them and call them by their names. Likewise, the volunteers expressed their delight at having been recognised and spoken to. Indeed, as one parent put it: ‘the real bonus for me is he often acknowledges older people in the street…that I don’t recognise. He knows them, he feels a bond with them…’(Figure 6.3’).

Belonging and connectedness were experienced throughout the workshops because pupils generally reported building social connections and bonds of trust with the older volunteers. Thence, the development of reciprocal social relationships enabled conditions for pupils to show that their actions had positive outcomes for others. As students learned to participate more in collaborative learning, the pool of potential role models widened to include their peers, and/or teachers and/or any other adults who contributed. Effectively, they increased social capital (Putnam, 2000, 1993) in their school by making use of social/community resources and consequently were better equipped to avail of opportunities emanating from their new social networks and connections. Thus, belonging and connectedness became an asset derived through group participation. It was made visible, as found by Putnam (1993), through trust, norms, and networks that improved the efficiency of their school community by facilitating coordinated actions. For example, pupils first learned to knit/embroider and then, became equipped to contribute to the Trauma Teddies project. Such contributions showed the wider benefits of learning which included developing skills, building networks and a deeper sense of belonging, as Schuller et al. (2002) found when investigating adult continuity education. Their participation enabled them to function effectively at basic skills, which are necessary preconditions for engagement at any level (Schuller et al., 2002).

The social capital derived from experiences of belonging and connectedness developed into an individual and community asset. Thence, teachers could now draw on volunteers, as a database of resources, to enhance learning opportunities for future classes. Generally, the participants and key informants perceived, as did Bridger and Luloff (2001), that in building a
sustainable intergenerational community, trust was necessary to increase the likelihood of cooperation. Cooperation was necessary to reinforce the likelihood of further trust which was initially based on ‘weak ties’ (Granovetter, 1973). Through ‘weak ties’, children became aware of and got opportunities to be involved in community action like knitting for the Trauma Teddies project, or helping each other to embroider their Santa Stockings. In consequence, they were exposed to a wide range of people, experiences, skills, and educational opportunities. Reciprocity emerged through ‘weak ties’ and deeper engagement came from the success of previous workshops, as substantiated by Bridger and Luloff (2001) and Wilkinson (1991) in researching successful community enterprise. As time progressed, a common sentiment emerged across the study: a feeling of belonging and enhanced community membership derived through interacting with another regardless of the chosen intervention. Insofar as one of the greatest benefits of civic engagement is an accompanying sense of belonging and enhanced community membership (Flanagan and Nakesha, 2001), the data presented here suggest that interventions aimed at facilitating children’s participation in intergenerational learning collaborations can activate their civic engagement regardless of the type of intervention.

Positive influences of eco-systems, as theorised by Bronfenbrenner (1979), help to explain why a sense of belonging and enhanced community membership was derived through interacting with another. Pupils developed better ability to interact not in isolation but through additional structures (intergenerational learning) outside of their regular family, school, and/or immediate community environs. Accordingly, their internal developmental capacities were bi-directionally connected to extra contexts, at, what Bronfenbrenner (1979) calls, the *exosystemic* level of extended family and neighbourhood. The desired outcomes for civic literacy illuminate the fact that, consistent with Bronfenbrenner (1979), success in, for example, sewing and/or knitting resulted from practice which reflected and addressed the dynamic relationship that the children enjoyed with the older people, as well as with the wider context of their lives. This finding is supported by the
Berg et al. (2009) study which similarly found that when young people get support to negotiate with one another and engage with community partners in decision-making and action-taking, the process reinforces group cohesion and community connectedness and results in positive individual-level developmental outcomes. Thence, as found by Wray-Lake and Syvertsen (2011), a focus on children’s individual-level development plus conducive environments did contribute to cultivating civic responsibility in the pupils and, therefore, led to the activation of their civic engagement. It is plausible that creating intergenerational networks and sharing in intergenerational learning collaborations were contributory factors in building social capital because the interventions were seen to develop a sense of belonging and connectedness.

Interactionist theory places a different focus on community building. Unlike the building of social capital from an existing community, interactionist theory suggests that community is built through social interaction (Wilkinson, 1991; Bridger and Alter, 2008; Bridger et al., 2009). The interactional perspective emphasises the central roles played by local interaction and capacity in the emergence of community among people who share a common territory (McGrath and Brennan, 2011). In this study, by incorporating diverse age-groups, both genders and a common interest in learning a new language, community emerged from within the practice through setting a teaching/learning process in motion capable of connecting participants into a cohesive whole.

Facilitating opportunities to learn European languages, for example, offered the pupils the possibility of building community through social interaction with people different from themselves. European language learning (see 6.2.4) is a metaphor for social interaction theory through the teaching and practising of common courtesies. Community was not ‘a given’; young and old had to cultivate it through language learning. The common territory, or ‘special interest field’ as McGrath and Brennan (2011) call it, was the willingness of young and old to learn French, Spanish and/or German collaboratively. The languages also initiated learning about expected behaviours in different countries/cultures while giving a flavour of diverse
sounds so as to inform language preferences later on. Additionally, the *cúairteóiri* had an opportunity to learn a new language.

Community was created by developing ability to interact in French, Spanish and/or German, albeit at a basic level. Volunteers who delivered the language workshops saw the learning rippling outwards, like ‘a stone dropped in a pond’ as one volunteer observed (refer 6.2.4). As well as describing the various levels of child development as theorised by Bronfenbrenner (1979), the volunteer is also unconsciously defining a community field which creates linkages and channels of communication between and among the actions and interests of social fields in line with interactionist notions of community (Wilkinson, 1991; Bridger and Alter, 2008; Bridger *et al*., 2009). The community field evolved from the interaction of young and old in shared language learning. Over time and interaction, fields became integrated into the generalised whole called community. Indeed, it evolved, across the study, through creating and maintaining linkages through any workshops whereby people learned from each other through social interaction, a primary function of intergenerational learning (Kuehne, 1999; Newman *et al*., 1997). Therefore, community’s emergence resulted from bringing people together to identify and understand common needs. Thus, when young and old interacted in learning new languages, capacity for action emerged such that pupils, through their participation, developed what Shaw *et al*. (2012) see as ‘more purposive and focused actions culminating in collective capacity and the emergence of ‘community’’ (p.3.9). Generally, pupils learned to better appreciate diversity through social interaction between people from diverse fields of interest, thereby inducing a sense of belonging to something wider than themselves, namely a wider European community.

Overall, an arts-based perspective facilitated social interaction. For example, ‘life long ago’ was an interventions aimed at learning about old ways and tools so as to develop students’ powers of critical thinking. It was also a metaphor for community agency, as theorised by Brennan *et al*. (2007). This study found, as did McGrath and Brennan (2011) when exploring the potential of the arts for community development in Appalachia, that when
volunteers presented, for example, artefacts, a connection was made to a necessary way of life in the past. Consequently, new channels of interaction were opened amongst diverse groups which might otherwise be directed toward their more individual interests. The artefacts therefore had the effect of increasing the adaptive capacity of young and old. They inspired further interventions. Thence, individuals, interacting through the artefacts, established a deeper sense of community agency, as understood by Brennan and Luloff (2007) because young and old were enabled to show capacity to manage, utilise, and enhance their teaching/learning resources so as to address their reciprocal needs. The application of agency is integral to civic engagement at all levels (Brady et al., 2012).

7.3.3 Social support and resilience

Social support and resilience was evident wherever reciprocally supportive relationships were evidenced. For example, on Interview Day, pupils showed capacity for developing social networks when they were able to interview the stonecutter about his dyslexic schooldays, his emergent stonecutting skills, and his subsequent creative writing ability (see 6.3.3c). They remembered his ‘advice assistance’ (Dolan, 2012). One child reported being less worried about dyslexia after learning that it can motivate alternative learning styles. This student is learning how to overcome difficulty in the face of dyslexic adversity through getting support from external resources (i.e., the stonecutter), as Rutter et al. (1998) see it, using the interview process as the mediating tool. The stonecutter, in allowing himself to be interviewed, has become a contributor to their developing sense of resiliency, by showing them that there are ways around dyslexia, but that they must find the solutions themselves. In mustering the stonecutter’s support to help them understand dyslexia, it could be interpreted that they, unintentionally, enabled protective factors to outweigh the impact of risk factors in their lives as Gilligan (2008) understands it. The stonecutter contributed by allowing students to gain insights into his own life so that they could learn, as the literature suggests (Shaw et al., 2012; Ungar, 2012; Dolan, 2011, 2010), from how other people face adversity. Some students felt more accepting of dyslexic adversity as a result of this
interview. Indeed, social support was demonstrated wherever pupils taught a skill to another because, as Shaw et al. (2012) see it, pupils were activating their own civic engagement ‘by acting as a supporter to others’ (p.3.8). Brady et al. (2012) theorise that such capacity for resiliency-building can be expressed through civic engagement at all levels.

7.3.4 Social justice youth development

Social justice youth development was evident in two interventions: environmental stewardship and the interview process. Regarding environmental stewardship, a whole class participated in making a protest to protect the environment in their locality after hearing a botanist’s presentation on water pollution, pollination, wild orchids and wildflowers of County Roscommon. Students needed to register their protest for how local authorities trim roadside verges prematurely before pollination and seeding cycles are completed. As homework, they wrote protest letters to the local parliamentary representative (T.D.) from which one was selected by their teacher, signed by the class and delivered by representative boys to the T.D.’s office. Their general point was that ‘if hedges are not cut while birds are breeding and nesting then grasses should not be cut because insects (bees, butterflies…) are also pollinating, breeding and working for the ecosystem’ (Figure 6.12). The intervention instigated a civic action, namely a registered protest highlighting that grasses on roadside verges are being cut unnecessarily; and consequently orchids which take 12 years to bloom were being destroyed because the reseeding process is interrupted prematurely. This letter provides evidence of a civic action, theorised by Arendt (1958) (Section 3.3) and understood as speech, identity and agency.

Speech, identity and agency were simultaneously activated when pupils wrote individual letters of protest as homework, each bearing the stamp of its creator by some identifiable feature (e.g., individuals’ reasons for protest; name, address and signature). While one letter was chosen as representative of the group, each signature identified the student as the agent for action such that action and speech could be ascribed to him as countersigner. Now, to be accorded agency, participants needed to engage in meaningful actions
with others in the polis, or public sphere (Arendt, 1958) (see 3.3.2). In other words, they engaged by acting and speaking together as a class in undertaking a civic action to defend the orchid. They showed themselves capable of action as new initiations, interactions and relationships which is what humans do when communicating with each other and is judged for its ability to manifest human capacity for freedom and plurality (Arendt, 1958). Pupils exercised freedom and plurality when they undertook to defend the orchid, because they showed they had undertaken something uniquely new. Insofar as plurality can only be performed in company with others who, from their multiple perspectives, can judge the quality of the performance (Arendt, 1958), interaction was necessary for action to be meaningful. Accordingly, the web of human relationships was sustained, through defending the orchid, and indeed, throughout the study, whenever communicative action was initiated, i.e., through civic action in the polis (p.198). Accordingly, they became civically engaged whenever they demonstrated that they were capable of action as new initiations, interactions and relationships (Arendt, 1958).

Another example concerns the intervention known as Interview Day. Problem-solving and analytical skills were demonstrated when students interviewed the volunteers on Interview Day. Students needed to research their topics in advance so as to ask pertinent questions. One such topic was banking. A pertinent question concerned the reasons for the financial collapse which was put to the retired bank manager (see 6.3.2) who helped the pupils compute the mathematics in answer to their own questions. They were then able to submit that the financial crisis happened because of unemployment and reckless lending on behalf of banks. They learned from it that if they were ever to be in management positions, they would ask the borrowers to save sizeable deposits in advance, and/or buy cheaper houses, and/or instigate responsible lending policy. The depth of their reasoning shows that the volunteer was able to bring them to an understanding of the root cause of the financial collapse using mathematics as the learning tool of critical thinking.
Both environmental stewardship and the banking interview, could be interpreted as social justice youth development, as theorised by Ginwright and Cammarota (2002). They incorporate elements of youth development frameworks, namely socio-political/economic elements based on critical understanding about the root cause of socio-political/economic problems. Essentially, youth were bolstered as active agents of change through writing protest letters spurred by injustices perpetrated upon the environment or through problem-solving and critical thinking around the banking collapse. Thence, they became more critically aware when encouraged to consider environmental or financial issues in their own communities. Such findings also resonate with Flanagan and Levine (2010) and Stoneman (2002) who found that young people best develop the skills and mind-sets for civic engagement once they engage in projects benefitting their communities as happened when pupils sought to understand the root cause of perceived injustices as an entire class grouping.

Across the project, pupils learned to make connections between one socio-political/economic problem and another. Admittedly, real opportunities for such actions needed to be presented so as to incorporate the social change objective (Finlay et al., 2010). Besides, the children might need to have been older. Nonetheless, virtual opportunities were presented whenever students were facilitated to seek out the root causes of socio-political/economic problems. Unwittingly, topics like war, famine, evacuees, volunteering, or banking allowed them to draw inferences. They learned, for example, that greed was the common denominator between World War Two and the banking crisis. Unbeknownst, their responsiveness was greatly prompted by social support from the volunteers who facilitated critical understanding about the root causes of social, political and/or economic ruin. Also, such understanding was transmitted through values of dialogue, connectedness and practice as espoused and transmitted by the research-practitioner. Generally, the interventions had the effect that, through intergenerational learning collaborations, pupils were educated as future change agents based on understandings of injustice in their own community. Such social awareness as prompted enquiry, analysis and
problem-solving skills of critical thinking are components of social justice youth development, a key function of youth civic engagement (Brady *et al.*, 2012).

### 7.4 Summary: Civic engagement

The civic literacy concept was the chosen teaching tool of civic engagement. If you like, it was ‘the play within the play’. Accordingly, as social actors in this ‘play’, students learned how to initiate actions, either individually or collectively, so as to participate in improving the well-being of an intergenerational community. To do this, they were provided with many opportunities for reflection in awareness-action-evaluation cycles (Foróige, 2010). Then, through reflection on emergent learning in the workshops, they were able to initiate many civic actions, separately and together, which were seen to improve the life of their immediate community (e.g., teaching ICT, music and dance to older people; knitting Trauma Teddies for hospitalised children, defending the orchid).

In essence, this study showed how the betterment of an intergenerational community might be understood as youth civic engagement. The many learning collaborations had the effect of promoting positive youth development through helping another to acquire a skill. Youth leadership was built on the blocks of positive youth development and was enhanced through real leadership opportunities like the exercise of sharing word-meanings and making a ‘public’ presentation on them. The idea came from a volunteer involved in Toastmasters. Because the students had a voice in the project, and were involved at every level of planning, designing, delivery and evaluation, their levels of democratic participation were enhanced because they were consulted and had a ‘voice’. Students experienced a sense of belonging and connectedness whenever they were able to share learning with the people living in their community like when they taught each other how to weave or share local history or archaeology. A sense of belonging and connectedness facilitated social interaction which was visible across the project but was specifically identified through learning a new language whereby each had to speak to the other in that
language and both were raw beginners. Social support and resilience were enhanced through hearing the life narratives of the older people and through the subsequent sharing of life’s troubles and woes. The children learned from the older people, first hand, how they acquired their own resilience to surmount difficulties. Social justice youth development, albeit at a very elementary level, but nevertheless age-appropriate, was developed through learning about the eco-system such that the children were spurred to take action on behalf of the environment. The idea came from a local botanist who is passionately committed to the environment. It was his special contribution. Thus, the evidence presented in this chapter makes a strong case for showing that desired outcomes for the civic literacy concept, can be sourced in the older retired members of the local community and can lead to activation of young children’s civic engagement.

The next section explains how intergenerational learning collaborations were perceived to activate such engagement.
SECTION TWO: INTERGENERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

This section discusses key intergenerational criteria that might explain how young children’s civic engagement was activated.

7.5 The intergenerational programming toolkit: the 5 ‘R’s

Bressler et al. (2005) theorised the 5 ‘R’s’ as key pillars of intergenerational engagement ‘that are most effective at achieving their goals and most fulfilling to participants’ (p.20): roles, relationships, reciprocity, recognition and responsiveness. The section that follows discusses the study in context of this infrastructure.

Participants had assigned roles that were meaningful to them. Volunteers were enabled to act as mentors, tutors, carers, coaches, visitors, friends and storytellers to the pupils, according to their own interests. This meant that they could contribute to teaching/learning strategies as described by Gardner et al. (1996). For example, learning became possible when some volunteers used story to convey a concept (narrational); or when imagination was used to prompt creative writing (aesthetic); or when a topic was approached through reasoning (logical-quantitative); or when groups collaborated to achieve a task or solve a problem (social-cooperative). Taken together, the civic literacy concept was embedded through the total experiential process. Likewise, pupils acted as carers, coaches and friends. They were enabled to perform assigned tasks as tutors to the volunteers. Like the Conecta Joven programme (Newman and Sánchez, 2007), they showed they could competently tutor older persons in ICT skills or Irish language or dance.

Relationships were developed through processes of cooperation and interaction, and because relationships developed through workshops they became an end in themselves. As Hohmann and Weikart (1995) theorise, such caring relationships revealed how children learned best: they learned to trust, be independent learners, take initiative, develop self-confidence, and learn empathy. Trust emerged when volunteers provided the encouragement that enabled pupils to engage in independent learning. For instance, once taught how to knit or sew, children continued this work cooperatively so
that they would finish a task on time. Participants came to enjoy ‘the experience of being with others, and feeling connected to others’ as Sánchez et al. (2010, p.136) put it. Frequently, the volunteers reported how they felt equal to, and included by, the pupils. As one lady remarked: ‘You were almost one of them’ or as another volunteer said (Appendix 22C): ‘Inside there today, you belong. Nobody was any different…’. The parent’s way of saying (Figure 6.3): ‘he has established his own relationship with them and he has learned from them’ explains why the pupils wrote ‘I love Tuesdays’ and/or their teacher said ‘they’d never miss Tuesdays’. ‘Tuesdays’ is metaphorical language for these caring relationships which illuminate the pupils’ need to reciprocate the learning.

Reciprocity became evident when the pupils realised what the volunteers were doing for them. They experienced a sense of ‘giving to’ and ‘receiving from’ people who were not of their age group (Bressler et al. 2005). In teaching skills to another, the pupils came to realise that reciprocity should exist across the life course when they wrote that they wanted to ‘pay back for what they [volunteers] taught us’. Such reciprocity is ‘fundamental to quality intergenerational practice’ (Butts, 2007, p.100) because it showed to the pupils themselves that, despite their tender years, they could contribute to another’s learning and, consequently, to civic life in their community.

Recognition was demonstrated in the deep appreciation of learning shown by principals, teachers, parents/guardians and research-practitioner alike. The volunteers reported becoming re-integrated in family and community life, felt needed, and got opportunities to critically examine their own lives through being able to communicate their life narratives. Additionally, by being able to offer assistance and social support to the pupils, they were enabled to build children’s social support and resilience. Alligned to Pinazo and Kaplan’s (2007) thinking, workshops validated participants’ knowledge and contribution and gave them motivation to continue with teaching and learning.

Responsiveness was reflected in how interventions were focussed on satisfying real needs and interests which were matched to available
resources. In responding to each other’s learning needs they developed what Henkin (2007) sees as values befitting to ‘a community for all ages’: interdependence, respect for diversity, equality and inclusion. The cuairteoirí came to regard themselves like grandparents to the pupils. As one volunteer used to say: ‘They’re all grandchildren to me’ or as the children used to say: ‘You’re like my granny’. In short, the children experienced the love of their social grandparents who connected with them and their families in a small town in the west of Ireland.

To the 5 R’s already enlisted by Bressler et al. (2005), this study can now add a sixth, namely réasúnaíocht.

7.6 The sixth R: Réasúnaíocht

Réasúnaíocht is an Irish term meaning ‘the act of reasoning’ (An Roinn Oideachais, 1981, p.601). It shares its root with réasún, meaning reason. Being an act, réasúnaíocht could be regarded as another example of activity-based learning in and of itself. While the 5 ‘R’s might infer the presence of reasoning, what differentiates réasúnaíocht from the other 5 R’s in this study is that it is values-driven in the context of the living theory approach to action research as informed by Whitehead and McNiff (2006). Declared values of dialogue, connectedness and practice were intended to have ‘educative influence’ (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) in the participants’ learning. Dialogue was not simply ‘a given’. Dialogue was negotiated through driving desired outcomes for the civic literacy concept i.e., through becoming aware of another’s learning needs, taking appropriate action to answer those needs and evaluating those actions in light of awareness and action. Connectedness was understood as participation in a common understanding of the civic literacy concept. As Dewey (1916) would see it, students learned to share ‘aims, beliefs, aspirations, knowledge’ (p.8) such that they connected through securing similar emotional and intellectual dispositions. Practice enabled hands-on learning of the civic literacy concept whereby students could make sense of what they had learned and take increasing ownership of and responsibility for their own learning as advocated by the SPHE curriculum (GOI/SPHE,
Thus, réasúnaíocht was the values-based tool of critical thought. It was not enough that pupils would learn to knit or sew, or that older people would learn to sing or dance. Young and old needed to collaboratively design, deliver and evaluate interventions that might make a difference to the civic life of their community and thus, develop the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivations to make that difference, i.e., to become civically engaged (Ehrlich, 2000, p.vi).

Lá-Gaeilge (see 6.2.1) comes to mind as a good example of making a difference to the life of one’s community. The pupils learned to work out how best to help Álúsrú to regain her speech which had been previously affected by a ‘stroke’. As the younger assisting volunteer (refer 6.2.1) observed: ‘That day they changed…they were less about showing themselves off; more about showing what they could do for Álúsrú’. The notion of ‘what they could do for’ another showed how the réasúnaíocht process was a contributory factor in combining the knowledge, skills, values and motivations necessary to help another to regain her speech. Incorporating Bressler et al. (2005), the following diagram illustrates the six ‘R’s of intergenerational learning which the research-practitioner considers key criteria for activating young children’s civic engagement (see Figure 7.2):

Figure 7.2: The 6‘Rs’ of meaningful intergenerational engagement

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7.7 Summary: Intergenerational engagement

Taken together, the 6Rs underpinned by values of dialogue, connectedness and practice, contributed to solving the second problem identified in this study, namely the widening social distance between young and old. It was the source of positive intergenerational relationships because it united young and old through collaboratively reasoning out and practicing the civic literacy concept. That’s why ‘I love Tuesdays’ was reiterated by young and old alike; that’s why their teacher attested that ‘they’d never miss Tuesdays’; that’s why their attendance at school was almost 100% on Tuesdays/Wednesdays; that’s why it did not matter about the outputs or the outcomes, they would happen anyway under educational influences transmitted through values of dialogue, connectedness and practice; that’s why na cuairteoirí dressed up for Tuesdays/Wednesdays, they felt valued, appreciated and needed; that’s why the children were on their very best behaviour when their social grandparents sat on low chairs beside them expecting only the best; and that also is, from the research-practitioner’s perspective, why intergenerational learning collaborations contributed to activating young children’s civic engagement while simultaneously connecting young and old.

Young children’s civic engagement was awakened in this study through practical application of the civic literacy tool: through hands-on, experiential learning in the company of the older retired community members, who acted as social support to the students. In Vygotskian terms, the students reached a level of civic development, in collaboration with the more experienced elders, and determined through problem-solving, critical thinking and reflection, that they might not have achieved alone.

7.8 Key Learning: what is now known

This study was inspired by the dual-problem of: weakness in the delivery of citizenship education at Irish Primary School; and the widening social disconnectedness of young and old in Irish society. This dual-problem informed the research aims and objectives and thence, the research literature and central research question: To what extent and in what ways can
participation in intergenerational learning collaborations activate young children’s civic engagement?

The Inspectorate for SPHE (GOI/DES, 2009) reported that weaknesses in the delivery of citizenship education were attributable to: aspects of citizenship not being addressed at all; didactic rather than active collaborative learning approaches with limited linkage of lesson content to pupils’ direct experiences; inadequate in-depth discussion among pupils; difficulties in managing pupils’ contributions effectively during lessons; and pupils in some cases not being afforded adequate opportunities to acquire values, attitudes and skills of citizenship.

This study has part-addressed, in collaboration with third- and fourth-class pupils in Irish Primary School, weaknesses in the delivery of citizenship education, or, what this study interpreted as, civic literacy. The civic literacy concept was used as the teaching tool, to activate pupil’s civic engagement, through intergenerational learning collaborations whereby pupils were facilitated with activities-based learning experiences. Thus, by being actively engaged in the learning process, they showed themselves able to apply what they learned from a variety of workshops and were better able over the academic year to make sense of the learning and take increased ownership of and responsibility for their own learning as advocated in the curriculum (GOI/SPHE, 1999b). Accordingly, personal responsibility was promoted through learning about pet-care and/or through pupils teaching another a skill like music or dance; concern for others was nurtured when the older-old were taught to read modern Irish; valuing group work was learned through crafts/weaving; caring for community was communicated through crafts/knitting for sick children; appreciating diversity and respecting difference in others was derived from learning European languages; environmental stewardship was expressed through protesting on behalf of the orchid following a botanist’s lecture; leadership efficacy was enhanced through vocabulary-building and presenting word-meanings to an assemblage; critical thinking was developed through training the pupils to design, plan and evaluate interventions, through reflection, through the interview process, and through facilitating them to conduct their own
research; *civic participation* was fostered through interpretation of story, and/or through teaching skills to another, and/or through relationship-building using reciprocal creative writing, and/or through general activities which honed their skills of group membership.

Any one of the above intergenerational workshops might have delivered some, but not all, of the desired outcomes for the civic literacy concept because all interventions facilitated the practice of citizenship. For example, teaching Irish reading/*Lá-Gaeilge* (see 6.2.1) to the volunteers contributed broadly to developing personal responsibility, civic responsibility and positive leadership in the pupils that made them believe that they could make a difference in their community, even if, as Lister (2007) put it, they are ‘*de facto*, even if not complete *de jure*, citizens’ (pp.717-718).

The research for this study could have stopped here because a solution to the problem identified by the Inspectorate (GOI/SPHE, 2009) was found. Aspects of citizenship were now part-addressed and desired outcomes for civic literacy were delivered; active collaborative learning approaches replaced didactic ones and there was linkage of workshops to pupils’ direct experiences including their own contributions to the learning of others. Moreover, they were afforded adequate opportunities through the various interventions to acquire values, attitudes and skills of citizenship. In fact, values of dialogue, connectedness and practice became epistemological standards of judgement for claims to educational knowledge informed by the living theory approach to action research (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006). Thence, participants, including the students, were held accountable, by explaining how they exerted educational influence in each other’s learning of the civic literacy concept. This way, in-depth discussion among participants, key informants and the research-practitioner was assured thereby eliminating any difficulties of effectively managing pupils’ contributions as reported by the Inspectorate.

Stopping the research at this point would have overlooked key findings in the participants’ qualitative data which were later conceptualised, in light of the research literature, as young children’s civic engagement.
The key challenges to be overcome so as to achieve this success concerned both young and old. Firstly, the children had to be instructed in what civic literacy entailed, namely components of personal and civic responsibility and positive leadership. These themes were further broken down into subthemes, and collaboratively in the company of the older people, pupils discussed how best they might deliver desired outcomes unto themselves. Of course, they were prompted by the teachers, older people and this research-practitioner, but ultimately they felt that the ideas came from themselves and in this way they were better able to take ownership of, and be responsible for, their own learning. After all, they constituted a purposive sample and for this reason, it was important that they felt a sense of agency for their own work. Secondly, the older people had to be informed, in a non-formal way, about the civic literacy concept. The challenge for them then was to contribute to interventions that would provide learning opportunities: in the context of a positive school climate; through discrete time on the timetable; and through an integrated approach across a range of subject areas. These challenges were duly overcome until all subthemes of civic literacy were addressed in workshops.

We now know, as a result of this study, that intergenerational learning collaborations can lead to the activation of young children’s civic engagement in ways we did not know heretofore, namely through interventions addressing the civic literacy concept. We also now know that the widening social distance between young and old can be narrowed through any intergenerational learning collaboration seen to develop skills and dispositions of civic literacy in young third- and fourth-class children in Irish Primary School.

Taken together, the dual problem outlined at the start of this study was resolved through bringing young and old together for intergenerational learning collaborations. That way, each contributed solutions to the other’s problem.

Chapter Eight concludes the thesis.
CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

8.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the issues arising from the research that are worthy of further consideration. It opens with an overview of the study, including what was learned from it (8.1). It restates the research problem in light of the research and makes recommendations for further research (8.2). The chapter ends with a review of the study’s limitations (8.3), challenges faced (8.4), and key learnings (8.5).

8.1 Study overview

This study set out to answer the central research question:

To what extent and in what ways can participation in intergenerational learning collaborations activate young children’s civic engagement?

The investigation was prompted by a two-dimensional problem: weaknesses in the delivery of citizenship education at Primary School in Ireland; and the perceived widening social distance between young and old in Irish society. It was found that if young and old were to be brought together for learning collaborations, both problems could be solved simultaneously by transforming each ‘problem’ into each solution. Essentially, the delivery of citizenship education was enhanced and the two generations connected through strengthening pupils’ understanding of the civic literacy concept, namely through strengthening their understanding of personal and civic responsibility and positive leadership actions. Learning collaborations were mediated through curricular content. The civic literacy concept was the teaching tool of young children’s civic engagement.

The study adapted an embedded mixed-methods design. The hypothesis for the quantitative component of the study was that young children who participated in intergenerational learning collaborations would score more
positively on measures of the civic literacy concept than children who were not involved in such collaborations. In this respect, a statistically significant improvement ($p \leq 0.01$) was found for self-reported student civic literacy scores after participating in civic literacy-themed intergenerational collaborations when compared to a control group who were not involved in such collaborations. Teacher checklists corroborated student self-reports, showing significant improvement for the corresponding set of grade-level observational checklists. Improvement in civic literacy scores occurred regardless of pupils’ gender, year group or academic ability.

Qualitative findings corroborated quantitative results, namely that the children achieved desired outcomes for the civic literacy concept because of intergenerational learning collaborations. There were no divergent data between the quantitative and qualitative streams. This can be explained by the fact that: interventions were informed by the civic literacy concept; decisions for action were based on consultation with children and older volunteers; participants’ interests were matched on a resources-needs basis; reflections continuously informed practice; and children gained hands-on experience of the civic literacy concept. Participants (young children and older volunteers), key informants (principals, class teachers and parents/guardians) and the research-practitioner provided evidence and offered explanations for how the students achieved desired outcomes for the civic literacy concept.

Desired outcomes for civic literacy were interrogated in light of existing research on youth civic engagement. Across workshops, wherever pupils were seen to help another, key discourses of civic engagement emerged overwhelmingly as explanatory factors. Thus, desired outcomes for civic literacy seem to fit well with the key discourses that invoke youth civic engagement/action as desirable activity, namely: democratic youth participation; positive youth development; belonging and community connectedness; care, social support and resilience; and social justice youth development. In sum, the study showed that desired outcomes for the civic literacy concept can be understood as young children’s civic engagement.
Learning from the research approaches and methodologies

The embedded mixed-methods design proved well-suited to the study’s research questions because the qualitative data-set provided a supplemental role to the quantitative stream insofar as the interventions represented a major aspect of the study. Both streams were needed so as to develop the practice and to reflect on the process.

The living theory approach to action research (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) worked well because it involved the research-practitioner interrogating her own practice and pupils interrogating their own learning, with the support of volunteers and key informants. Self-reflection was induced through educational values of dialogue, connectedness and practice. Educational values were both a contributing factor to, and an outcome of intergenerational learning collaborations. Living theory methodology allowed for integration of the major qualitative approaches because it allowed insights to be drawn from each of them without choosing between them. The living theory approach (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) allowed theory to emerge from practice, namely that intergenerational learning collaborations have the potential to activate young children’s civic engagement in Irish Primary School.

Living theory facilitated evidence-informed research which later developed into evidence-based research as understood by Veerman and van Yperen (2007). According to their model (see 4.5.3.1), level-1 provided a clear description of each intervention (Chapter Six). These descriptions formed the basis for level-2 research which considered theoretical evidence as a means to explain how and why an intervention might lead to desired outcomes. The evidence corroborated academic theories, e.g., socio-constructivist learning. Pre-/post-intervention tests revealed indicative evidence at level-3 which showed significantly improved scores in children’s civic literacy skills and dispositions from year-beginning to year-end compared to a non-intervention/control group who did not show significantly improved scores over the same timeframe. Observed results
were scrutinised more closely at level-4 (Veerman and van Yperen, 2007). Students were observed before, during and after interventions. Qualitative findings (Chapter Six) consistently showed change in the same direction in all four schools following workshops. Accordingly, there was strong evidence to suggest that civic literacy-themed interventions were instrumental in activating young children’s civic engagement. Interventions were designed, as advocated by Veerman and van Yperen (2007), by participants and research-practitioner, in the absence of better researched alternatives.

Key pillars of successful programme planning included the six ‘R’s, of intergenerational engagement, namely: roles, relationships, reciprocity, responsiveness, recognition and réasúnaíocht (the act of reasoning). Réasúnaíocht was underpinned by values of dialogue, connectedness and practice.

All told, the study showed that a school community, through intergenerational learning collaborations, has potential to activate young children’s civic engagement by designing novel interventions to match their individual learning needs. Such learning may have transferability elsewhere in education.

8.2 Research problem revisited and research recommendations

The thesis presented a two-dimensional problem: weaknesses in provision of citizenship education in Irish Primary School; and the perceived growing distance between young and old in Irish society.

Concerning the first dimension, the Inspectorate (GOI, 2009) found weaknesses in the provision of citizenship education in Irish Primary School. This study found that it was not only feasible to teach the civic literacy concept to primary school students using intergenerational learning collaborations, but it was also possible to measure the outcomes associated with such collaborations.

However, the greatest teaching difficulty encountered was the extent of training needed by older volunteers before they felt confident to stand
before a class. Of thirty-four volunteers recruited to this study, nine were retired teachers of whom four were primary teachers. Those four had the knowledge and expertise to educate the participants, including the research-practitioner (formerly a secondary school teacher). Their advice and feedback was invaluable. Older people’s organisations might well consider running training modules, whereby they could draw on retired primary school teachers, to educate people interested in intergenerational collaborations at primary level. More research is needed on teaching civic skills and dispositions through intergenerational learning, and also on how to assess intergenerational learning itself. This study would have benefited from a richer literature on both the teaching and assessment aspects.

Regarding the assessment aspects, there was the difficulty of sourcing and applying measurement tools that would be compatible with the SPHE curriculum in terms of young children’s civic education. Appropriate tools to measure desired outcomes for civic literacy are in scant supply. The Chi et al. (2006) tools offered greatest compatibility with the SPHE syllabus, but were not totally compatible. Furthermore, as acknowledged by Chi et al. (2006), there is incompatibility between the student self-reported questionnaire and the student observational checklist.

Thus, the following four recommendations may build upon and expand this study:

- **Recommendation 1:** The quantitative tools should be refined to make the language more culturally compatible with the Irish SPHE curriculum. This includes adding items that link the survey to the SPHE syllabus. The Likert scale of responses might be widened to 7- or 10-point scales so as to derive more data.

- **Recommendation 2:** Additional data collection and analytical tools are required to improve evidence for the validity of the student observational checklist maintained by teachers. This includes expanding, piloting and revising the tool for use to collect evidence for criterion validity so that it can be synchronised against the student self-reported questionnaire. A simple way to do this would
be to correlate variables on the student questionnaire against the teacher checklist, while informed by the SPHE syllabus (GOI/SPHE, 1999a, 1999b), to achieve compatibility.

- Recommendation 3: Collect further evidence to improve the reliability of the instruments. This would include testing and retesting the survey and recruiting a larger, more representative national sample, especially students from schools not extensively engaged in civic literacy and larger samples of students from various sources, for example: special needs education; schools in socio-economically privileged/deprived areas; and/or, ethnic minorities.

- Recommendation 4: Intergenerational learning programmes might be developed at primary level to facilitate all classes, not just third and fourth class. Such programmes would draw on the SPHE syllabus for age-appropriate themes/subthemes of civic literacy.

Having taught at second level and having seen the difficulty incurred in ‘borrowing’ classes for extra-curricular activities, primary level may be best positioned for creating a strong and meaningful foundation for the development of skills and dispositions of civic literacy needed to prepare pupils for their civic engagement. This can be done through a robust, comprehensive developmental framework that can begin in primary school and address citizenship through experiential learning.

In sum, there is need for greater attention to age-appropriate instrument identification and development for primary school children to document their civic development by measuring what they can do rather than what they know. Addressing this need will assist primary schools to redress the findings in the Inspectorate’s report (GOI, 2009). It will help teachers interested in addressing aspects of citizenship by offering ideas for active rather than didactic approaches through using intergenerational collaborations.

Concerning the second research problem, i.e., the perceived widening social distance between young and old, evidence from this study suggests that intergenerational learning collaborations are popular with young children, parents/guardians and school staff, and represent an attractive form of
socialisation for older people interested in helping children to further their civic education. Such collaborations are practicable to implement. How this programme was operated might come to be viewed as an example of best practice due to its rigorous practices, clarity of procedures, evidence-base and commitment to evaluation using qualitative and quantitative tools.

The older people connected to the pupils through reaching a common understanding of the civic literacy concept but also through: teaching them and learning from them; through being made to feel welcome and included in young children’s education; and through feeling equal to the children. In short, they conveyed criteria for intergenerational solidarity, namely inclusiveness, equality and reciprocity, which are core concepts in the Madrid International Action Plan on Ageing (UN, 2002) which recognises that persons, as they age, should enjoy active participation in the economic, social, cultural and political life of their societies (UN, 2002). Thus, in light of the 2009 Treaty of Lisbon which invites EU member states to ‘strengthen intergenerational solidarity as one of the most important aspects to enhance social cohesion and the development of a participatory culture where women and men of all ages take part’ (Council of the European Union, 2010), this study makes a worthwhile contribution. All in all, this project illuminates the potential of intergenerational learning collaborations to promote the participation of retired community members and primary school children while simultaneously improving the delivery of citizenship education at primary level.

While accepting that this study measured desired outcomes for young children’s civic literacy, it did not measure the full import of the intergenerational process itself. The study claimed that outcomes for young children’s civic engagement were attributable to intergenerational collaborations. However, further research is needed to explain how intergenerational programmes operate differently from, and/or more or less effectively than, other social learning vehicles.

- Recommendation 5: Longitudinal and/or comparative studies should be undertaken to determine if factors including family life, and/or
socio-economic or socio-political background, and/or other forms of community initiative are activators of young children’s civic engagement.

8.3 Study limitations

As with all empirical projects, a number of limitations should be considered when interpreting the study’s findings. In this study, three such limitations can be identified: student sample size, selection bias and reflective processes.

**Student sampling and selection bias:** The sample size, while small (n=103), met criteria for quantitative analysis according to Agresti and Finlay (2009). However, the quantitative results cannot be generalised because of non-probability sampling which is a limitation for the pre-/post-test result in the research schools and control school. The use of control groups with random assignments might have allowed for significantly different self-reported ratings of civic literacy. However, considering ethical issues, schools by their nature are not places which allow for random assignment of surveys to random respondents. It would have to be a whole-class initiative or nothing, whether in control, pilots or research schools.

A further limitation of this study is the snowball sampling of the adult participants from volunteering backgrounds. Bynner (2001) maintains that those with fewer qualifications are less likely to volunteer, arguing that it is the exclusion of those without the resources to engage that challenges the idea of active citizenship most. Notwithstanding, volunteers were recruited from networks of voluntary organisations in which the research-practitioner networked, e.g., choral and music societies, sporting organisations, hospice movement and retirees’ organisations. Without such networks there might not have been access to so many volunteers. Perhaps different results might have ensued had volunteers been recruited from more diverse backgrounds. However, schools are unlikely to accept classroom visits by people who are unknown within the local community, primarily because of child protection policies.
**Reflective processes:** Holding reflective processes after workshops rather than before does not allow for baseline assessment of student perceptions of their civic development. Some researchers are opposed to the use of qualitative data, such as pre-project discussion groups to support outcome research. Others, like Patton (2002), indicate the usefulness of such data for determining outcomes. Such an accommodation would eat into already designated timetabled slots. After all, teachers provided the slots for intervention work to assist their SPHE course based on draft proposals submitted by the research-practitioner. Reflection became a necessary add-on later.

### 8.4 Study challenges

The literature on youth civic engagement (Section 2.1.3) highlighted that while there is a strong rationale for young people’s participation, there are many challenges in translating this rationale into practice. Civic engagement programmes require extended time for reflection, which can be hard to timetable outside of allotted workshop time. As Stoneman (2002) cautioned, organised efforts are essential to promote young children’s civic engagement. Acknowledging that child-adult partnerships are best for ensuring that reciprocal learning occurs and that young people are facilitated with authentic opportunities to lead (Bynner, 2001; Brooks, 2007), still it is difficult to conduct such consulted partnerships in practice without eating into timetabled facilities generously granted by principals/teachers and boards of management.

Also, while volunteers engaged in collaborations on a resource-led or learning needs basis, children were a ‘captive’ audience. Therefore, their optimal participation was paramount. Not every pupil is interested in learning to knit or sew or speak/read Irish. However, they may be interested in some element of it, like sewing a button on their own shirt, or knitting a headband in the local GAA colours, or singing a favourite song. Such choices were offered to them to motivate their optimal participation as otherwise they became quickly ‘bored.’
Key factors contributing to the success of the study could be interpreted as limitations insofar as it might not have been a success if these factors were not present. Such factors are, however, also challenges and relate to investments in time, recruitment and training, and to hospitality and funding.

Time was heavily invested in preparing the participants in this project, particularly the older people. General training from the outset required inducting the volunteers in child protection guidelines and legislation; and informal instruction on the civic literacy concept including its application to the volunteers. Specific one-to-one training involved individually preparing volunteers for tasks in which they would be involved, like presenting artefacts, singing, revising a language or learning a new one, reading and vocabulary-building. For example, if the children were to teach the volunteers the dance routine to accompany a song, the song would be taught by the research-practitioner ahead of the intervention. That way, volunteers only participated in those interventions in which they felt most secure, and feeling secure involved preparation and training. Training volunteers involved running two pilot schools: each back-to-back with a research school over the two years of the project. In consequence, volunteers would be kept in practice, and interventions could be tried, tested, evaluated and improved upon before bringing them to the next centre. Once volunteers overcame their apprehension through additional practice and interaction with the children and with each other, they taught and learned many skills, so much so that, at the time of writing, the intergenerational project has become self-sustaining.

Hospitality provision and self-funding were considerable factors in the success of this project. Most volunteers provided transport at their own expense, and shared runs if/when possible. However, car-pooling was not always possible because volunteers came from different directions. One of the schools necessitated a 16 km round trip from the town centre. Some volunteers did not drive and therefore required transport organised by the research-practitioner. Insofar as volunteers regarded the school outings as social get-togethers, it was important to make each outing a celebration.
which necessitated providing food/refreshments. The volunteers had given freely of their time which amounted to three hours on-site, including the group discussion afterwards and travel time which commonly incurred an additional hour/half-hour. They had to forfeit their lunch hour whether for morning or afternoon sessions. Additionally, this project was self-funded by the research-practitioner and because it happened at a time in life when there were least financial commitments, the financial wherewithal was available to fund the additional costs associated with it. These aspects may have contributed to its success.

The above considerations needed mentioning as challenges encountered in this project so that others would get partial insight into the commitment involved.

8.5 Conclusion: key learnings

Notwithstanding the various limitations and challenges associated with conducting this study, the following key learnings need to be mentioned:

1. Intergenerational learning collaborations can lead to the activation of young children’s civic engagement through interventions addressing the civic literacy concept.

2. The widening social distance between young and old can be narrowed through any intergenerational learning collaboration seen to develop skills and dispositions of civic literacy in young children.

3. Young children and retired people represent untapped resources which when ‘tapped’ may offer solutions to societal problems by being facilitated to initiate civic actions.

4. Intergenerational collaboration can enhance young children’s civic development, learning and social interaction and older people’s continued participation in the life of their communities.

5. Intergenerational collaboration enables young children to gain greater social support to conduct civic actions that they might not be able to do alone.

6. Young children should be recognised and respected for their participation right now, not as future investments.
7. Contextualised programmes for intergenerational activities need to be developed which are practitioner-friendly and needs-resources matched so that young children can learn to contribute to the social good.

8. In order that children can give voice, programmers need to ensure that programmes are child-led or at least that children are consulted and decisions shared.

9. Training programmes need to be introduced at institutional level whereby older people could get accredited training in intergenerational leadership initiatives and be enabled to participate for the social good.

10. Opportunities need to be created on the primary school timetable, as part of the SPHE programme, so that older people could continue to share citizenship education with the young.

11. Nuances of cultural contexts need to be considered in the transferability of programmes to/from other contexts.

12. Young children’s civic engagement through intergenerational collaborations is not just worthy of consideration, it is essential to intergenerational solidarity.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Letter to Boards of Management

14 October 2011

Re: Intergenerational learning: doctoral research

Dear Secretary,

I wish to apply to the Board of Management for permission to conduct doctoral research at your school which requires your students’ participation in an intergenerational learning programme which I am conducting under the supervision of Dr Thomas Scharf, Professor of Social Gerontology, Irish Centre for Social Gerontology, NUI Galway. This doctoral research project is fully approved by the Research Ethics Committee at NUI Galway.

I am a retired secondary teacher having formerly taught in this area from 1970 to 2010. The study aims to develop young children’s civic literacy skills through intergenerational learning. Civic literacy infers components of personal and civic responsibility and leadership.

The study will comprise 10 to 12 interventions/workshops spread over the school year. Measurement tools are enclosed and include:

1. Pre-intervention post-intervention student questionnaire;
2. Student observational checklist/s issued to the class teacher;
3. Reflection sessions conducted during/after workshops by researcher for the purpose of obtaining qualitative data.

In the write-up of the project, participants will not be identified. Data will be codified and aggregated. Volunteers will be retired members of the local community. I invite the Principal and Staff to participate in their selection. If you have any questions regarding the proposed project, please contact me. I am enclosing an email copy of my Ethics approval from NUI Galway.

Thanking you,

Marie Hanmore-Cawley (PhD student).

Mobile phone: [redacted]; email: [redacted]
APPENDIX 2: Information sheet for Boards of Management

This study has been sanctioned as doctoral research by the National University of Ireland, Galway and will be conducted by me under the supervision of Dr Thomas Scharf, Professor of Social Gerontology, Irish Centre for Social Gerontology, NUI Galway. This study is approved by the Research Ethics Committee at NUI Galway.

The programme involves pupils and retired adults, aged 60 years and above learning collaboratively about civic literacy. Civic literacy infers components of personal and civic responsibility and leadership. The learning collaborations will address curricular subjects including: arts and crafts, music and dance, real-life mathematics and information technology to be spread over the school year.

Measurement tools for this study comprise:

1. Pre-intervention post-intervention pupil questionnaire.
2. Observational checklist/s issued to class teachers.

In the write-up of the project, no school, teacher, parent/guardian or student will be identified and all data will be codified and aggregated. I am enclosing: the proposed programme; copies of proposed communications to pupils, parent-guardians and teachers; and approval notification from the Research Ethics Committee, NUIG.

If you still have questions after reading this document, please contact me:
Marie Hanmore-Cawley (PhD student, NUI Galway)
Mobile: Email:

Note:
If you are worried about this study and wish to contact someone in confidence, please contact:
The Chairperson of the NUI Galway Research Ethics Committee,
c/o Office of the Vice President for Research,
NUI Galway.
E-mail: ethics@nuigalway.ie
APPENDIX 3: Information sheet for Third/Fourth Class

This information may help you to decide if you want to join with older people in learning exchanges about good citizenship.

The aim of this project is to bring young and old together for learning exchanges and help you to become a more responsible, caring person and a better leader in your school.

How will this project be organised? Your teacher and I will organise the learning exchanges. Subjects might include: Local History, English, Irish, Maths, Music and Dance, Arts and Crafts, and computers. The adults will visit your classroom to exchange learning with you. In return you get to teach them new skills like modern dance and computers. You will have a say in the skills you would like to learn and to teach to the adults and you will be encouraged and helped to fully take part.

What will you have to do if you take part? You will have to complete a questionnaire (a list of written questions). There will be class discussion after visits so that you can express your opinion about how you think you are learning in this project and how you could learn better.

Do you have to take part? No! If you decide to take part but later change your mind, you will be able to leave the project at any time without having to give a reason and you will not lose any other support you are getting at school.

Will your privacy be protected in this study? Yes. I will never mention your real name but I will use a made-up name for you that does not sound like a real person’s name. Therefore, what you say can never be traced back to you. I will not be talking to anybody about your part in this study outside of the school group.

What do you have to do now? If you agree to take part, please sign your name along with your parent’s or guardian’s signature on the consent form which is addressed to you called Consent Form: Third/Fourth Class

I look forward to working with you,

Thank you,

Marie Hanmore-Cawley [Facilitator].

Note:
If you are worried about this study and wish to contact someone in confidence, please contact:
The Chairperson of the NUI Galway Research Ethics Committee,
c/o Office of the Vice President for Research,
NUI Galway.
E-mail: ethics@nuigalway.ie
APPENDIX 4: Consent form: Third/Fourth Class

CONSENT TO RESEARCH WITH THIRD/FOURTH CLASS

I have read the information regarding Marie Hanmore-Cawley’s study about practicing citizenship skills between young and old.

   By signing this form, I agree that:

1. I have read and understood the information sheet and have had the chance to ask questions about this study
2. I have read this form and understand how I will be taking part
3. I am taking part of my own free will. Nobody is making me do this.
4. I can leave this project at any time and my rights will not be affected.
5. My name and address will not be made known to anybody outside of this study.

Student’s Name Printed: ________________________________
Student’s Signature: ________________________________
Date: ________________________________

Parent’s /Guardian’s Name Printed: ________________________________
Parent/Guardian Signature: ________________________________
Date: ________________________________

Researcher Name: MARIE HANMORE-CAWLEY
Researcher Signature: ________________________________
Date: ________________________________
APPENDIX 5: Information sheet for parents/guardians

This sheet is to inform you about a proposed intergenerational learning programme. This study has been authorised as doctoral research by the National University of Ireland, Galway and will be conducted by me under the supervision of Dr Thomas Scharf, Professor of Social Gerontology, Irish Centre for Social Gerontology, NUI Galway. This research project is approved by the Research Ethics Committee at NUI Galway. The programme involves pupils and retired adults learning collaboratively about civic literacy. Civic literacy infers components of personal and civic responsibility and leadership. The study aims to develop young children’s civic literacy skills through intergenerational learning.

Structure: The programme will address curricular subjects, and additionally, conversational European languages. Your child will also complete a questionnaire before and after the project, to see if he/she has improved in civic literacy skills as a result of the project.

Participation: Taking part is entirely voluntary. Your child can withdraw from the study at any time without having to give a reason or loose privilege. Alternative teaching arrangements will be in place.

Confidentiality: Your child’s name will be anonymised in the write-up. I will not discussing his/her participation outside of the study itself.

Supervised access: Workshops will be carried out under the teacher’s supervision in compliance with Board of Management’s protocols.

Procedure: If you agree to let your child take part, please sign your name on the consent form addressed to you, and return it to the school. I am enclosing: Child’s Consent Form and Consent Form for Parents/Guardians.

Thanking you for your cooperation,

Marie Hanmore-Cawley [PhD student, NUI Galway].

Note 1: If you still have questions after reading this document, please do not hesitate to contact with me: Phone: [redacted]

Note 2: If you are worried about this study and wish to contact someone in confidence, please contact:
The Chairperson of the NUI Galway Research Ethics Committee, c/o Office of the Vice President for Research, NUI Galway.
E-mail: ethics@nuigalway.ie
APPENDIX 6: Consent form for parents/guardians

CHILD’S CONSENT FORM

I have read the information regarding Marie Hanmore-Cawley’s study of intergenerational learning about civic literacy and I consent to my child’s participation.

By signing this form, I agree that:

1. I have read this form and understand how my child will be participating
2. I have read and understood the information sheet on the research and I will have the opportunity to ask questions about this study
3. My child’s participation in this study is completely voluntary
4. My child may withdraw his/her participation at any stage during the research without her legal rights being affected
5. My name and address, and that of my child, will be kept confidential

Parent’s/Guardian’s Name: ________________________________
Parent’s/Guardian’s Signature: ________________________________
Date: ________________________________
Researcher Name: MARIE HANMORE-CAWLEY
Researcher Signature: ________________________________
Date: ________________________________
My child’s Name: ________________________________
My child’s Signature: ________________________________
Date: ________________________________
APPENDIX 7: Information sheet for class teachers

This information sheet is to inform you about a proposed intergenerational study which has been sanctioned as doctoral research by the National University of Ireland, Galway and will be conducted by me under the supervision of Dr Thomas Scharf, Professor of Social Gerontology, Irish Centre for Social Gerontology, NUI Galway. The study is approved by the Research Ethics Committee at NUI Galway. It will involve pupils and retired adults working collaboratively for the purpose of enhancing children’s civic literacy skills. Civic literacy infers personal and civic responsibility, and positive leadership actions.

Structure: There will be 10/12 interventions spread over the school year. The measurement tools for this study will comprise:
1. Pre-intervention post-intervention student questionnaire;
2. Students’ Observational Checklist/s issued to the class teacher;
3. Reflection sessions with pupils during/after workshops for the purpose of acquiring qualitative data.

Participation: Your voluntary participation will involve facilitating students to complete the questionnaire including clarification of questions. You will also be required to complete the Students’ Observational Checklists. If you would prefer not to take part you do not have to give a reason.

Confidentiality: In the write-up of the project, all names will be anonymised and data will be codified and aggregated. Your participation will not be discussed outside of the study.

Procedure: If you agree to participate, please sign your name on the consent form which is addressed to you. I am enclosing: Student Civic Literacy Questionnaire; Student Observational Checklist; and Teacher Consent Form.

Thanking you for your cooperation,

Marie Hanmore-Cawley [PhD student, NUI Galway].

Mobile: [redacted]; Email: [redacted]

Note:
If you are worried about this study and wish to contact someone in confidence, please contact:
The Chairperson of the NUI Galway Research Ethics Committee,
c/o Office of the Vice President for Research,
NUI Galway.
E-mail: ethics@nuigalway.ie
CONSENT FORM FOR CLASS TEACHERS

I have read the information regarding Marie Hanmore-Cawley’s study on intergenerational learning and I wish to participate. By signing this form, I agree that:

1. I have read and understood the information sheet on the research and have had the opportunity to ask questions about this study
2. I have read this form and understand how I will be participating
3. My participation in this study is completely voluntary
4. I may withdraw my participation at any stage during the research without my legal rights being affected
5. My name and address will be kept confidential

Class teacher’s Name: ____________________________
Class teacher’s Signature: ____________________________
Date: __________________________________________________________________

Researcher Name: MARIE HANMORE-CAWLEY
Researcher Signature: __________________________________________________________________
Date: ____________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX 9: Information sheet for volunteers

This information sheet is intended to help you decide if you would like to participate in a learning exchange programme between retired adults and primary school children in the [blank] catchment area.

This is a doctoral study conducted by me in co-operation with the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG). The thesis involves intergenerational learning to develop young children’s civic literacy. Civic literacy involves components of personal and civic responsibility and leadership. The learning exchanges will involve curricular subjects including: arts and crafts, music and dance, numeracy and literacy skills.

**Recruitment:** As well as being recruited from local voluntary organisations, you are selected on the basis that school management and I know you in this community.

**Structure:** There will be an induction evening during which I will explain what is involved, including the guidelines on child protection, so that you feel comfortable to participate. You will be visiting the schools over 10/12 sessions during the school year. The class teacher and I will organise the learning exchanges based on feedback from you and the pupils. We cannot know in advance what exact learning exchanges are involved. There will be group discussion. Over refreshments, this may take an hour.

**Confidentiality:** All information that might be used to identify you will be stored securely. In the write-up of the project, no volunteer will be identified and all data will be coded and aggregated. I can only use recorded information when you provide your written consent.

**Garda Vetting:** I organise the Garda Vetting Application Form. You fill it in, sign and return to me.

**Directives when interacting with children:** Directives have been summarised on the enclosed sheet and are taken from: *Children First Guidelines 1999 and Children First Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011*

**Participation:** Your participation is voluntary. You can withdraw at any time without having to give a reason and without losing entitlements. If you agree to participate, please sign your name on the enclosed consent form. I am enclosing the Volunteers’ Consent Form.

If you still have questions after reading this document, please contact me using the contact details below.

Thank you for your co-operation,

Marie Hanmore-Cawley.

Mobile: [blank]. Email address: [blank]

**Note**

If you are worried about this study and wish to contact someone in confidence, please contact:

The Chairperson of the NUI Galway Research Ethics Committee,
c/o Office of the Vice President for Research,
NUI Galway.

E-mail: ethics@nuigalway.ie
APPENDIX 10: Consent Form for volunteers

CONSENT FORM FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

By signing this form, I agree that:

1. I have read and understood the information sheet on the research and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about this study
2. I have read this form and understand how I will be participating
3. My participation in this study is completely voluntary
4. I may withdraw my participation at any stage during the research without my legal rights being affected
5. My name and address will be kept confidential

Participant Name: _________________________________
Participant Signature: _________________________________
Date: _________________________________

Researcher Name: MARIE HANMORE-CAWLEY

Researcher Signature: _________________________________
Date: _________________________________
APPENDIX 11: Sample work scheme

Research-practitioner: Marie Hanmore-Cawley

School Name: St. Joseph’s BNS, Boyle, Co. Roscommon

Subject: Learning to sew a button on to fabric

Class Group: 3rd & 4th Class Boys

Duration of Workshop: 60 minutes

Estimated number of workshops: 2

Resources: Volunteer support, fabric, buttons, needles, thread, rulers, scissors.

Aims of Scheme of Work:
1. Activate young children’s civic engagement
2. Connect young and old through the civic literacy concept.

Desired learning outcomes for this Scheme of Work:
1. Have an enjoyable learning experience where pupils recognise that teaching and learning have taken place
2. Take personal responsibility for task completion.

Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Subtopic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1: Sewing button on fabric</td>
<td>Threading, knotting, and measuring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2: Sewing button on fabric</td>
<td>Revise Week 1.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Short-term learning outcomes/indicators
Pupils will take home a button sewed on fabric as evidence of learning

Long-term indicators
New concept of personal responsibility, new psychomotor skills

Assessment of learning (AoL):
- Summative
  - When the topic is complete, sewing artefacts will be displayed.

Assessment for learning (AfL):
- Formative
  - Progress will be monitored and extra help given where necessary.
## APPENDIX 12: Sample lesson plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>SAMPLE LESSON PLAN</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research-practitioner name:</strong> Marie Hanmore-Cawley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subject:</strong> French language (Topic: Greetings in French)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date:</strong> 22 November 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson Number:</strong> 1 of 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participants:</strong> Volunteers and pupils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Social interaction between pupils and volunteers through French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Introduce the rules for courtesy and French etiquette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Develop in role-play through French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Social interaction between pupils and volunteers through French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Introduce the rules for courtesy and French etiquette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Develop in role-play through French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This lesson features a combination of: teacher-led instruction; active learning approaches; role-play and mime; and pair/group work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Acknowledging different learner types (Honey and Mumford, 1984): activists—use group learning opportunities; theorists—follow the teacher instruction; reflectors—analyse their own and another’s contribution; and pragmatists—apply real-life situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Pair weaker with more abled students and allow them more time and volunteer support if possible.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 13: Profile of volunteers/cuairteoirí

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Voluntary Organisation</th>
<th>Previous Occupation</th>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Gender</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seán-na-Baincéarachta</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>GAA</td>
<td>Bank Manager</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Áine-na-hAirde</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>Walkers’ Club</td>
<td>Teacher—secondary</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Máire-na-Learóige</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>Music Society</td>
<td>Teacher—primary</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micheál-na-Learóige</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Let’s go Club</td>
<td>Forester</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AnnG</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>Active Age</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
<td>Lower 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mairéad-na-dTéidí</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>Active Age</td>
<td>Secretarial</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Daire</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Active Age</td>
<td>Office Clerk</td>
<td>Lower 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Máiriann</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>Hospice</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td>Micheál-na-Béarsaiócta</td>
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<td>Church Services</td>
<td>Procurement Officer</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MáirMichil</td>
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<td>Church Services</td>
<td>Secretarial</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>Manachas</td>
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<td>Historical Society</td>
<td>Teacher—secondary</td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manacha</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>Meals-On-Wheels</td>
<td>Teacher—primary</td>
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<td>Married</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fichealla</td>
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<td>Meals-On-Wheels</td>
<td>Teacher—secondary</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>An-Fhicheall</td>
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<td>Family Business</td>
<td>Lower 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>Maedhbhíseach</td>
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<td>Inner Wheel</td>
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<td>Peigín-an-tSuibneá</td>
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<td>Family Business</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>PóilínShéamaír</td>
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<td>Homework Club</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Séamas-na-bhFoigne</td>
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<td>Golf Club</td>
<td>Men’s Outfitter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concessa-na-bPeataf</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>Citizen’s Information</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
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<td>Seósa (R.I.P)</td>
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<td>Day-care Centre</td>
<td>Family farm</td>
<td>Lower 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alúsrú (R.I.P)</td>
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<td>Macra na Feirme</td>
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<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>CáitShéamaír</td>
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<td>Toastmasters</td>
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<td>Séamas-na-nlassc</td>
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<td>Anglers’ Club</td>
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<td>Married</td>
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<td>Cormacnalámha</td>
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<td>TomáisAine</td>
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<td>Family Farm</td>
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<td>MairAine</td>
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<td>Family Farm 325</td>
<td>Lower 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brídín-na-nAmhrán</td>
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<td>Church Choir</td>
<td>Secretarial</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Widow</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Age</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Gender</td>
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<td>Mairéad-na-gCniotála</td>
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<td>Daycare Centre</td>
<td>Family Farm</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micheál-na Lúibhe</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>Botanical Society</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Máirochóng</td>
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<td>Teacher—secondary</td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>Alaoígsea</td>
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<td>Teacher—primary</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cealla</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Golf Club</td>
<td>Teacher—secondary</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>F</td>
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<td>Padraicín</td>
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<td>Church Choir</td>
<td>Teacher—primary</td>
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<td>MáirFhionn</td>
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<td>Physiotherapy</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>F</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 14: Record of interventions

RECORD OF INTERVENTIONS

Note: Schools A and C are pilots; Schools B and D are research.

YEAR 1: PILOT SCHOOL-A: 22 Pupils

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>90 minute workshops</th>
<th>Desired outcome for civic literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19/10/11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Artefacts from the past + Music/dance</td>
<td>Critical thinking, Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26/10/11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Music and dance + Storytelling from WW2 + knitting/crotchet</td>
<td>Perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/11/11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Music and dance + Knitting/crotchet</td>
<td>Caring community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/11/11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Puppy care + Music and dance + Environment</td>
<td>Environmental care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/12/11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Music and dance + Concert preparation</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/02/12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Weaving + local history</td>
<td>Group work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/02/12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Local History and archaeology</td>
<td>Environmental care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22/02/12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Children teach older people to knit</td>
<td>Caring for others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/03/12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>‘World Café’ Evaluation Day</td>
<td>All civic literacy themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13/03/12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Crochet and Knitting</td>
<td>Group work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/05/12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>‘Word Club’ (developing vocabulary)</td>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/05/12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>Aon Focal Amhán Eile</em></td>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
</tr>
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</table>

END OF YEAR 1: PILOT SCHOOL-A

[12 workshops (1 hour 30 minutes): 18 hours]

YEAR 1: RESEARCH SCHOOL-B: 49 Pupils

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>90 minutes (13.25-14.55)</th>
<th>Subtheme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15/11/11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Artefacts from the past + storytelling</td>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22/11/11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Knitting and Embroidery + French</td>
<td>Caring community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Subtheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29/11/11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Knitting and Embroidery+ French</td>
<td>As before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06/12/11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Knitting and Embroidery + French</td>
<td>As before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/01/12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Weaving + local history</td>
<td>Group work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/02/12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Local History and archaeology</td>
<td>Environmental stewardship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21/02/12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Storytelling from WW2: AnnG reads her story (No 64)</td>
<td>Perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06/03/12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>‘World Café’ Evaluation Day</td>
<td>All civic literacy themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13/03/12</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>‘Word Club’ (vocabulary building)+</td>
<td>Leadership efficacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>‘Children computers’</td>
<td>Care for another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/04/12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Children teaching computers</td>
<td>Care for another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Caring community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/10/12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Interview Day:</td>
<td>Research skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Children interview older people. Topics include: careers; sports; creative writing; volunteering; forestry and environment; sculpting; world travel; life long ago; WW2; Berlin Wall; pet-care.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/01/14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Reconnecting with the new 3rd and 4th classes through weaving</td>
<td>Communication Group work</td>
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</table>

**END OF YEAR 1: RESEARCH SCHOOL-B**

[12 workshops (1 hour 30 minutes): 18 hours]

**YEAR 2: PILOT SCHOOL-C**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Subtheme</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>90 minutes (11.00-12.30)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/09/12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sewing on button+ Storytelling: ‘The Walrus and the Carpenter’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26/09/12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sewing on Button+ vocabulary building from last week’s poem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/10/12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Basic German greetings+ local author reads from her WW2 story of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/09/12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90 minutes (11.00-12.30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25/09/12</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>01/10/12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/10/12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>23/10/12</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>06/11/12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Activity</td>
</tr>
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<td>----------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>20/11/12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Children teaching adults Irish reading+Irish song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/12/12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Irish singing and German (Greetings/courtesies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/12/12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Basic German (counting/days of week/seasons…time)+Christmas Carols+party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29/01/13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Saint Brigid’s Crosses+ Storytelling: Labhraigh Loinsigh + song: Down by the Salley Gardens + discussion of meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/05/13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Creative writing with local author</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/05/13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Creative writing with local author</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21/05/13</td>
<td></td>
<td>Environmental stewardship day (presentation by M on orchids; others presented curative plants and herbs; children identify and label wild flowers of Co. Roscommon)+ children read their own writings to the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27/06/13</td>
<td></td>
<td>Older people invited to attend at Graduation Day and Awards 2013+ Complementary close (party).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**END OF YEAR 2: RESEARCH SCHOOL-D**

[12 workshops (1 hour 30 minutes): c. 18 hours]

**TOTAL WORKSHOP TIME: A+B+C+D [18+18+12+18] = 66 HOURS**
APPENDIX 15: Student questionnaire (Chi et al., 2006, pp.29-31)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>No Way!</th>
<th>Not Really</th>
<th>Sort of</th>
<th>Yes!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. If I break something, I try to fix it.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To solve most problems, I have to learn how to work with others.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I try to think how someone else would feel before I say something.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I want to help when I see someone in need.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. It is important for me to get information to support my opinions.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I try to get my family to recycle at home.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Once I know what needs to be done, I am good at planning how to do it.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. If friends are fighting, I try to get them to talk to each other and stop fighting.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I try to think before I say something.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. When I make a decision I try to think about how other people will be affected.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I try to be kind to other people.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I usually do what I am supposed to do.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. When I see something that needs to be done, I try to get my friends to work on it with me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I want to have friends who have different backgrounds from me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Most students at this school treat each other with respect.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I can learn more from working on group projects than from working alone.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I have a responsibility to help keep the community clean.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I am pretty good at organizing a team of kids to do a project.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. It is important for me to follow the rules even if no one is watching.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I apologize when I hurt someone’s feelings.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**PAGE 2:** Please circle the number that shows what you think about each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>No Way</th>
<th>Not Really</th>
<th>Sort of</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21. If I’m the leader of a group, I make sure that everyone in the group feels important.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. I put things away when I am done with them.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. I spend time on projects with other people to help the community.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. I like working with other people on group projects.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. I always try to do my best work.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Most students seem to care about each other, even people they do not know well.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. I think it is important to change things that are unfair in society.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. I feel like I can stand up for what I think is right, even if my friends disagree.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. I am able to give reasons for my opinions.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. I keep my mind open to different ideas when making a decision.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. If I do not do a good job, I try to do better the next time.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Teachers at this school will not let students make fun of other students.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. When I see something that is wrong, I try to change it.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Students have an opportunity in this school to debate and discuss issues.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Students feel like they are an important part of this school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. I summarize what another person said to make sure that I understood.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. I have done things to help people in my community.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. I think it is important for people to follow the rules.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. I try to get my friends to recycle bottles and cans.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. If a friend is mad at me, I try to understand why.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. I try to watch other people’s body language to help me understand what they are trying to say.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. I believe that I can make a difference in my community.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>---</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>I can learn a lot from people with backgrounds and experiences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>that are different from mine.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>When I play with others, I take turns.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>I know how to avoid a fight when I need to.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>I want to help when I see someone having a problem.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>I do my part to help the environment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>I make sure I understand what another person is saying before</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I respond.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>When I am listening to someone, I try to understand what they</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>are feeling.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Students can talk to the teachers in this school about things</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>that are bothering them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 16: Teacher checklist (Chi et al., 2006, pp.36-37)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Observation Checklist of Civic Skills and Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For Fourth and Fifth Grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directions: The intent of this assessment is to assist you in documenting student civic development during the school year and to provide evidence for your report card ratings on student civic literacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please respond to the following question for each of the items below, using a scale of 1 to 4:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How frequently does the student exhibit the described skill or behavior?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personally Responsible Behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes responsible choices during free time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follows through on responsibilities such as class job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses materials respectfully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows impulse control</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Productive Work Habits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completes class and homework assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is organized (e.g., locates materials/items quickly and starts work)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participates in class and actively engages in the material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works independently with minimum teacher support by attempting to resolve questions before seeking help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stays on task and shows best effort</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARING FOR OTHERS AND FOR COMMUNITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caring for Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntarily helps peers who require it (e.g., shares materials, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is concerned about the feelings of others (e.g., asks about a student who is upset or includes a student who is left out)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows patience with younger children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring for Group or Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates concern for needs in the class or community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is cooperative in group situations with peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is able to see the needs of the group as important as one's own (e.g., waits turn, accepts not getting own way if group decides differently, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not single out or tease others based on characteristics (e.g., gender, race, class, neighborhood, disability, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is able to work on a project with a person who is different from him/her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puts trash and recycling items in appropriate receptacles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considers effect of behavior/choices on the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not waste resources/materials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Start of Year</th>
<th>1st Prog Report</th>
<th>2nd Prog Report</th>
<th>End of Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

334
How frequently does the student exhibit the described skill or behavior?

1 = Almost never  2 = Sometimes  3 = Frequently  4 = Almost always

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEADERSHIP</th>
<th>Start of Year</th>
<th>1st Program Report</th>
<th>2nd Program Report</th>
<th>End of Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assumes leadership role in peer activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is able to help make decisions that benefit the group</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocates for changes or improvements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes choices to do what is right, even when peers make other choices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perspective Taking Skills</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows understanding for other people’s feelings, ideas or actions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is able to interpret what peers are trying to do and understand their intentions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is aware of the effect of his/her behavior on others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Critical Thinking Skills</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is able to give reasons for his/her opinions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is able to separate facts from opinions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates problem solving skills (e.g., brainstorms multiple solutions to a problem, breaks tasks into simpler activities, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication Skills</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expresses needs and feelings in a constructive manner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens to the ideas of others even if s/he disagrees with them</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can succinctly present main idea or point</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asks questions that extends what is being discussed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows appropriate body language to demonstrate active listening (e.g., leans toward the speaker, faces the speaker, nods head, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidently and clearly expresses her/his thoughts in front of a group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group Membership Skills</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compromises with peers when situation calls for it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works with others to solve a problem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is willing to wait his/her turn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conflict Resolution Skills</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriately copes with aggression from others (e.g., tries to avoid a fight, walks away, seeks assistance, defends self when necessary)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expresses emotions appropriately (e.g., without becoming violent or shutting down for long periods of time)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses “I” messages or other respectful communication to resolve problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tries to use own resources first and then seeks mediator if needed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 17: Tests for normality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investigative Tool for analysing themes</th>
<th>Personal Responsibility</th>
<th>Civic Responsibility</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ŷ/mean=3.33 (SD=.35)</td>
<td>ŷ/mean=3.15 (SD=.34)</td>
<td>ŷ/mean=3.05 (SD=.35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skewness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>±1=excellent;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>±2=acceptable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neg. skewness (-.86, SD=.24) →scores clustering high (right-sided) =excellent</td>
<td>Neg. skewness (-.58, SD=.24) →clustering towards centre =excellent</td>
<td>Neg. skewness (-.25, SD=.24) →wide dispersion of scores =excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kurtosis</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>±1excellent; ±2acceptable</td>
<td>Kurtosis=(.67,SD=.47) →peakedness =excellent</td>
<td>Kurtosis=(.56, SD=.47) →peakedness =excellent</td>
<td>Kurtosis=(.09,SD=.47) →flatness =excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Homogeneity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levene’s EV Test for independent groups</td>
<td>(F=2.01, Sig.=.16) =above cut-off =EV not violated.</td>
<td>(F=-2.34, Sig.=.13) =above cut-off =EV not violated.</td>
<td>(F=4.17, Sig.=.04) =below cut-off =EV marginally violated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violation at p≤.05.</td>
<td>p-value ≥.05 (t(44)=-.03, p=.97) →no sig. dif.</td>
<td>p-value&lt;.01,(t(101)=-2.69, p=.008) →sig. dif.</td>
<td>p-value&lt;.01, (t(101)=-4, p&lt;.01) →sig. dif.</td>
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### APPENDIX 18: Plan of civic literacy themed interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civic Literacy Themes</th>
<th>Chosen Intervention: singing and dance; artefacts; knitting, sewing and weaving; conversational German/French/Spanish; storytelling (including history) and creative writing; technology skills; and environmental awareness.</th>
<th>Values: dialogue, connectedness and practice:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>Pet care, children teaching volunteers ICT</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Concern for Others</td>
<td>Irish language workshops</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Value of Group-work</td>
<td>Crafts (knitting, sewing, weaving)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Care for Community</td>
<td>Crafts (knitting, sewing, weaving)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Appreciate Diversity</td>
<td>Introduction to conversational European languages (4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Environmental Stewardship</td>
<td>Environmental issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Leadership Efficacy</td>
<td>Vocabulary enhancement and general reflection</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Critical Thinking</td>
<td>Artefacts, interviews and storytelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Perspective-Taking</td>
<td>Storytelling, mimicry and role play</td>
<td>All</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Communication</td>
<td>Languages, storytelling, creative writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Conflict resolution</td>
<td>Storytelling</td>
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## APPENDIX 19: Template for qualitative data collection

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<td>Teachers/principals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents/guardians</td>
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<td>Researcher reflections</td>
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<td>Subtheme 2: Valuing group work</td>
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<td>Volunteers</td>
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<td>Teachers/principals</td>
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<td>Parents/guardians</td>
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APPENDIX 20: Sample SPSS results: excerpts showing significance

### THEME 1: OVERVIEW PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY: QUESTIONNAIRE AND CHECKLIST

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<th>PAIRED SAMPLES TEST</th>
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<th>df</th>
<th>SIG (2-TAILED)</th>
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<td><strong>Theme 1 PRE Pers. Resp. – Theme 1 POST Pers. Resp.</strong></td>
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<td>Std. Error Mean</td>
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**Paired Samples Test**

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a. No statistics are computed for one or more split files
### THEME 2: OVERVIEW CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY: QUESTIONNAIRE AND CHECKLIST

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#### Paired Samples Test

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## Theme 3: Overview: Leadership: Questionnaire and Checklist

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*a. No statistics are computed for one or more split files*
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### Paired Samples Test

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### INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TESTS: Student self-report civic literacy scores: Lowest versus Highest academic abilities

**Independent Samples Test**

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### INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST: Teacher Checklist of pupil civic behaviours Lowest versus Highest abilities

**Independent Samples Test**

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APPENDIX 21: Principal’s evaluation at year-end

INTERGENERATIONAL PROJECT

Marie Hannare organised and undertook an intergenerational project in St. Rosecommon with third and fourth class during the 2012-2013 school year.

The intergenerational group visited the school each week to work with the 33 pupils in third and fourth class. Each week the group undertook different projects with a curriculum element to each specific class. The work undertaken was of a wide and varied nature which connected all involved in the intergenerational project together.

Topics covered involved classes in French, Italian, Irish, English Poetry, Creative Writing, Music, History, Nature, Weaving and many more. All age groups both young and not so young benefited from the weekly interactions which help all develop and progress in different ways.

I was amazed by the learning opportunities presented to the third and fourth class pupils each week through their interactions with the senior members of our intergenerational group. The pupils benefited hugely from their work on creative writing and poetry. Over several weeks the pupils undertook the direction of the senior members of our group engaged in writing their own poetry. Several senior members of the project group wrote and read their poetry to us and we learned how to write our own poetry in reply to them.

Music was a major part of our get-togethers each week. We all enjoyed the different types and styles of music that was a natural bond and base for growth for all involved. History and nature were also central to this intergenerational project that Marie Hannare organised and acted as a facilitator for. We can all learn from History and especially through intergenerational groups who can bring years of experience and knowledge with them to each session.

All this experience and knowledge made our History lessons very enjoyable for the younger members of our group. We are all very interested in nature and the environment in St. Joseph’s B.N.S. and this interest was fostered and encouraged through these weekly lessons. Through these lessons a core of local flora and fauna was fostered and encouraged by their knowledge and understanding of these topics.

On each visit by the members of the Intergenerational group, the pupils learned from each visit. The language classes of French, Irish and Italian proved very popular with both senior and junior members of the Intergenerational group. Each class proved very successful and educational with all members learning new phrases and vocabulary from each session. We recorded, learned and verified all the vocabulary and phrases learned by checking before each class if these phrases and vocabulary were already known by the pupils. By using this process, we can honestly say that the pupils learned many new phrases and words in French, English and Italian. The same is true for all the work they undertook in Music, History, Poetry and Creative Writing. This project has brought much joy to all who invested their time and hard work in giving so much to the pupils. The Intergenerational group also benefited from these regular classes. Hopefully this project can be kept going and all the good work built on.
APPENDIX 22: Sample qualitative data

A. CLASS DISCUSSION


Researcher: One thing that worked?

Team-A: Pupil-1. Taking turns worked. We all got a go at all the jobs

Researcher: One thing that didn’t work?

Team-B: Pupil-6: There was too much noise in the room and some of the cuairteoirí couldn’t hear us. We had to bend over across the tables up close to them to hear us.

Researcher: How did you feel as a result of the experience?

Pupil-12: I was so glad I was able to talk to him [the stonemason] and he understood me when I told him about me [dyslexia] and I was glad to be able to ask him these things because I was a bit embarrassed and he didn’t mind telling us either ‘cos he wasn’t a bit embarrassed and I’m not as worried now because I’m good at art like he’s good at stone and I know I’ll be OK.

Researcher: What was the biggest thing you learned?

Team-D: Pupil-16: We learned that there’s tons of different types of trees and, ahmm, he [Micheál-na-Learóige] told us that they [leaves/branches] were all from around the school so it’s nice that we have such a vary of trees around the school. Anyways now we know the different trees and we know to plant trees and help out the environment.

Researcher: What did you achieve?

Team-E: Pupil-19: I can talk to the cuairteoirí if I see them out and I won’t be shy anymore. I usedn’t be able to say, like, ‘Hi’ but I can now. I like saying, like ‘hello whoever’ and they always speak to me.

B. EXCERPTS FROM REFLECTIVE DIARIES

School-D: [Boys]
What was the best thing you enjoyed about learning songs?

If I had to choose, I would say that learning songs is not the best thing I enjoyed about the project. I can learn at 9 or 10 after a stroke.

Labhair means 'to speak'
Labhair lion 'means speak to me
Loineach means Leinster

You can kill a person
but not their thought
How can you stop someone from thinking?

Ni hreacht go cuir le chéile
No strength until we come together
do anything

Say greetings and courtesies in German, count to 10, your age, family, time, title, say the days of the week, the months...the food and customs.

How has hearing different languages affected you?
You can speak to people from all over the world and in their countries.
C. GROUP DISCUSSION WITH VOLUNTEERS:

Researcher: Would you like to tell me about today C?

Concessa-na-bPeataí: I’m not too convinced [about pet-care]...Maybe the responsibility thing will soak in later...but it has to be taught first:

Researcher: Would ye like to tell me how you got on in there today?

Maebhíseach: I was delighted to be able to do all this and to help and, you know, to see all the children and, you know, they were so confident and that made me confident and I so much older and I was well able to do the same things.
Máiréine: Yeah! I enjoyed it. I didn’t think it was ever anything I would be able to do. Apart from lecturing my own children when they were small. I think this was actually easier. Today chatting to the children. You know, they made me feel good, and it brought back memories, as [blurred] said. And making friends with them, you know, that was the main thing really. It gave me a lift. That’s right. Afterwards one child said to me, and I wrote this down in the copy, and I’ll read it out: ‘my grandmother…ahmm… she’s dead’ and another little one then said ‘my granny died of cancer’. They were delighted they could talk to us. You were almost one of them.

Maebhíseach: Yes, and even one told me about her sister dying when she was 14 and the grandmother died 2 years ago. They were eager to tell all.

Researcher: And overall??

Máiríead-na-dTéidí: It reminded me of my connection with young people because all mine now are well grown up so it just brought back memories of sharing, you know, doing things together, and sitting like that, as equals because when you meet children outside, I think there is a different atmosphere altogether. They’re kinda, like [blurred] said. You’re something different, you’re older…but inside there today you belong. Nobody was any different. You were Marie, I was [blurred], I wasn’t Mrs, I wasn’t anything. I was just a person. It was nice to feel I could do the same thing as the children…I felt I could keep up with them. Then when we taught them something that we knew, that made them and us equal.

D. MORE CHILDREN’S DATA

Excerpts from ‘World Café’ evaluation: School-B: 6 March 2012
Bongor!

we learned French.

we were naiving,

we don't notice stocking and

made rushes.

Oh! And Don't

Forget I learned How To

FUN!

I Love

Thursday's!