

Sabbatical Leave Study Report

"Study of the use of arts professionals working alongside teachers and students in rich learning situations."

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1 Executive Summary

This report marks the completion of requirements for my sabbatical study during Term 3 of 2013. My study covered four schools in Auckland, New Zealand which took part in Project Lightbulb in 2013.

Project Lightbulb was a long term arts residency programme that actively engaged students and teachers in arts processes. The programme worked from a strong partnership base, matching artists and arts companies with schools and teachers to deliver projects which supported and enriched The Arts learning area of the New Zealand Curriculum. Project Lightbulb was an arts infused programme that aimed to create authentic learning opportunities that illuminated the difference between knowing and understanding.

Based on collaborative practice models from the USA, the UK and Australia, Project Lightbulb was a unique leadership arts programme for young people in NZ.

The founder of Project Lightbulb, Sally Markham, sadly passed away in 2013. Sally's daughter Natasha Pearce continued the programme for a further year until its end in December 2014.

2 Acknowledgements

Thank you to the artists, students, principals and teachers from the four schools involved in this study. Particular thanks go to Karen Eaton, Deputy Principal of Pakuranga Intermediate School, the Producer of the school-wide production at Pakuranga Intermediate in 2013. Grateful thanks also to Natasha Pearce who coordinated the programme and capably continued the programme after the death of her mother and founder, Sally Markham. Thank you also to Joseph Casalme from Vodafone Events Centre for his support and inspiration over several years of Project Lightbulb and to Jenny Whatman, NZCER and Elizabeth Anderson, University of Auckland for commentary and support.

Sally Markham:

Students, teachers and schools across Auckland have benefited from Sally's foresight, generosity, creativity and courage. She loved working with students to give them opportunities to express themselves in The Arts by providing arts professionals to work alongside teachers and students. The productions in all of these schools not only stunned audiences with the creative intensity and skills developed but also with the amazing advances these students made in their learning. She was a courageous, brave, inspiring person and will be in the memories of many students and teachers from far and wide whom she reached through the arts.

3 Introduction

An emergency gathering of the World Insect Council, a waka trip down a polluted river to discover the truth behind New Zealand's clean green image, a television studio holding a debate on whether we should grow or buy our food, sitting on an island and being engulfed by ever-encroaching ocean waves, and the destruction of our rainforests. These were the five scenes of the Pakuranga Intermediate School showcase evening at the end of Term 2, 2014. Held in five different locations across the school, the audience moved around the five stages participating and taking in the messages delivered in each presentation.

The school's inquiry theme in term 2 centred around 'Sharing the Planet'. Classes paired up and each group undertook its own research on a chosen inquiry question. The showcase evening was a chance to present their inquiry findings artistically.

Pakuranga Intermediate School was part of Project Lightbulb, an arts residency programme under the Vodafone Events Centre's schools' programme. It provided professional arts practitioners who worked with students and teachers across the school during term two. Mark Clare, a well-known NZ actor, Jonathan Besser, one of NZ's foremost composers, and Gaby Thomas, a dancer who has performed with both the Atamira and Black Grace dance companies, worked alongside Pakuranga Intermediate teachers and students to produce the five performances.

Project Lightbulb is a legacy left by Sally Markham, who founded the programme with support from the ASB Trust. Sally was renowned in NZ and internationally for her ground-breaking work in using the performing arts as a tool to inspire thousands of young people from all walks of life. Many of these young people became not only audiences of the future, but practitioners of the highest calibre. On a sad note, the founder of Markham Arts, Sally Markham died in April 2013. Sally had worked with arts projects at Pakuranga Intermediate since 2005 and with Project Lightbulb in a range of schools since 2008.

Bringing in the elements of dance, musical composition and drama to the presentations enhanced the message that each group was trying to give. It also brought meaning to their work in literacy and numeracy. The audience was challenged in its thinking about environmental issues and was even made to feel a bit uncomfortable on occasions during the performances. The following comments from respected arts educators sum up the event.

"Congratulations to the whole school which has staged not only an excellent educational experience but also a great school and community event. I am sure the students who were 'on stage' have learned so much from their journey. It was their night and they have done themselves proud! The costumes, the lights, the stage design, the smoke machine, the use of the outdoor setting, the front of house --- the whole production --- is setting a higher bar in school productions. Even the rain added to the setting and overall message of the evening.

A big hand to Mark, Jonathan and Gaby for sharing your gifts to the children and for Natasha for also organising the residencies! I agree with Stuart that the students will have a lasting memory of this wonderful experience which will help build their character as well." Joseph Casalme, Vodafone Events Centre

"It was a wonderful concept for a school wide inquiry and very brave and forward looking in its execution. I loved the fact that each of the five pieces was so different. I also noted that this year there were far more students taking on speaking roles and speaking strongly and clearly and adopting very interesting "characters". I am in awe of Jonathan, Mark and Gaby and the way they helped weave in

the different art forms enabling each student to contribute where they felt most comfortable and as well to extend their repertoires.” Jenny Whatman NZCER, Wellington

“I enjoyed the performance on Tuesday evening very much. I was impressed at how the big idea ‘Sharing the Planet’ had been used so well for learning and to shape the performance. I loved the milking shed one – that was very clever and the use of the waka and paddles to move the audience through was great...and the finale was extraordinary – when I saw the chainsaw I thought Yess! I liked the insects very much too – there was a good sense there of a performance group working collectively.” Elizabeth Anderson, University of Auckland

Global Warming:



Insect Council:



Grow or Buy



Waka Journey down one of our clean green rivers:



Deforestation:



The 2014 Inquiry projects were nothing new in education. The different in this school was that every pair of classes worked with an artist in the presentation of the results of their inquiry. Not only that, having an artist present on a regular basis throughout the term ensured that that the arts informed the inquiry process as well as vice versa. What is also significant in this way of working is the increased engagement by the students as they take on board, through their artistic involvement, the messages they are sharing with their audience. The use of the elements of dance and drama in particular is a way of drawing in students' thinking to a deeper level of cognition during which the students' involvement is more than just as observers but quite literally as participants. The Arts draws the students into the process so that they move from learning about an inquiry to actually being part of the inquiry.

Evidence gathered at Pakuranga Intermediate suggests that students' involvement in these programmes, despite time out of normal classes, has resulted in gains in literacy and numeracy. This study will investigate:

- the extent to which authentic learning programmes such as these occur throughout New Zealand and internationally and the funding of such programmes;
- the extent to which students' involvement in such programmes contributes to gains made in literacy and numeracy.

During the sabbatical I visited several other schools involved in the arts residency project, interviewed key staff, discussed academic data and recent progress of the students involved and talked with students involved. I have also researched, through readings and web links, similar programmes that are run in Britain and Europe. I have looked at programme variety, benefits to staff and students and the ways schools fund such programmes and the sustainability of doing so.

4 The extent to which authentic learning programmes such as these occur throughout New Zealand and the funding of such programmes:

There is a brief history of government funded arts residency programmes in New Zealand Schools dating back to the 1980s where composers could apply to be a composer in residence in a region of NZ. Various well known composers such as Anthony Ritchie and Cheryl Camm availed themselves of this opportunity to launch their careers. It not only provided a launching pad for the composer but also a source of inspiration and craft knowledge for senior students in high schools across New Zealand who were studying composing as part of School Certificate, Bursary or Scholarship Music courses. During the 1990s Government funding for these programmes transferred from the Ministry of Education to The Arts Council and several composers worked in schools during the 1990s. The last known arts residency programme funded by Creative New Zealand was the Artists in Schools Residency programme in 2008 focusing on projects involving arts professionals in dance, drama, music and visuals.

There have been two community funded programmes in New Zealand in recent times.

An Artist in Residence programmes currently exists in one NZ private school. Supported by a local car company, the programme provides a working artist to the school each year for a five-week residency. The resident artist has the use of a dedicated studio space in the Art and Design department and presents master-class style workshops and presentations for students. At the conclusion of the residency a solo exhibition is hosted by the car company to celebrate the works produced by the artist during the residency.

Apart from the above mentioned programme the only other artist in residence programme recently in existence in New Zealand Schools was Project Lightbulb, an arts residency programme led by professional arts practitioners who worked with students and teachers for one to two terms within the school environment. Each project was a collaboration among the artists, students, teachers and senior management to produce high quality learning results. In 2013 this programme extended to seven schools, three colleges, two primary schools and two middle schools all in South Auckland. This programme came under the auspices of the Vodafone Events Centre Education programme and was managed by Markham Arts with funding from a local banking trust.

Internationally, Artist in Residence programmes exist as follows:

Queensland

The Artist in Residence program (AIR) is a three year partnership (2013 - 2015) between the Australia Council for the Arts and the Queensland Government.

AIR aims to:

- increase engagement of Queensland students, educators and school communities in creative and innovative practice
- increase capacity of educators, artists and arts and cultural organisations to work collaboratively in provision of high quality arts-led creative learning programme
- enhance learning and skill development outcomes for Queensland students and educators
- foster innovation and collaboration across the arts and education sectors, and encourage new relationships with the private and other sectors that can deliver improved outcomes.

In 2013 funding packages ranging between \$13,000 to \$20,000 were awarded to 13 schools and projects ranged from students exploring cultural storytelling with aboriginal visual artists to doll-making and film making with a theatre company to developing performance music skills with a resident conductor. Perhaps the most innovative programme with a strong authentic context was at Innisfail State College in a multidisciplinary arts project that explored the built, natural, social, political and sound environment of Innisfail. Students worked with artist Darragh O'Callaghan and a Council town planner to research and explore their existing environment and imagine a rebuilt Innisfail. This project considered space recently affected by flooding and provided creative opportunities for students across multiple artforms.

New South Wales

The New South Wales Artist in Residence programme is a federal initiative that is implemented in NSW through a partnership between the Learning and Leadership Directorate of the NSW Department of Education and Communities, Arts NSW and the Australia Council for the Arts.

The NSW program - Fresh AIR, is a three-year initiative that places professional artists in school-based residences over a three-year period. It aims to improve children and young people's access to quality school-based arts education by supporting professional artists in residence in NSW public schools.

The three residency projects for 2014-2016 are:

- A collaboration between three high schools placing three practicing artists in each school for each year of the program. The visual arts staff across the three schools are working together to create collaborative teaching and learning programs with a focus on contemporary arts practice. They will also facilitate non-residential camps and extend opportunities gained through the residencies to other local schools through gifted and talented student workshops and teacher professional learning sessions;
- Four Aboriginal artists (working in dance, music and visual arts) based at Alexandria Park Community School (K-12) with outreach to the National Centre for Indigenous Excellence, to develop their practice while engaging both primary and secondary students;
- Room 13 – Delivered by [Shopfront Youth Theatre Co-operative](#) in collaboration with Athelstane Public School (K-6) and Woniora Road School (Years 7-12). Room 13 initiates a whole-school, multi-arts studio at each school. It is an international model of creative and social enterprise that explores artistic development and student-focused leadership and governance.

New Brunswick, Canada

Schools in Anglophone districts are eligible to apply to the Artist-in-Residency School Program (A joint project with the Arts Council and Department of Education) by initiating a project together with a professional artist(s) in any but not limited to the following artistic disciplines; Music, dance, theatre arts, literature (playwriting, storytelling), plastic arts and media arts such as film and video.

The general objectives of this program are to encourage students to express themselves and to think creatively and critically through education in the arts. Six residencies worth \$3000 each are awarded

Illinois Arts Council Agency Grants

The StARTS Program in Illinois provides grants of up to \$2000 to not-for profit organisations, schools and school districts to conduct short term residencies with Illinois artists in any artistic discipline. This programme will support an artist, company or ensemble to work on-site between five and thirty hours over no more than a six week period.

5 The extent to which students' involvement in such programmes contributes to gains made in literacy and numeracy

The following information about three students and the whole cast involved in the Lightbulb Production at Pakuranga Intermediate School in 2012 was gathered by Karen Eaton, Producer. This production was an inquiry-type programme covering terms 1 and 2 of 2012. Students and staff visited Tiri Tiri Matangi Island for a day observing, studying and researching the inhabitants of the island. With the help of two arts professionals (Actor Mark Clare and Composer Jonathan Besser) the students and staff wrote and composed an original musical production based on these bird characters. The production was called "Kev, the totally true story of a reluctant hero." Quite significant gains were apparent in student achievement not only in Literacy but in the Key Competencies of the New Zealand Curriculum.

Student 1 (Taxidermist): Student 1's mother passed away a few years ago. Student 1 unexpectedly arrived at our school (from Whangarei) at the start of the year when her main caregiver (grandmother) went into hospital for a short stay. Her grandmother, unexpectedly, never came home but passed away during the hospital stay and Student 1's life was turned upside down.

Student 1 had suicidal thoughts at the start of the year and both her auntie and the school were struggling to support her. We were very apprehensive at the start of the year as to whether she was emotionally able to cope with the demands of being a lead actor. With lots of support and care, the production appeared to be her main life line. **Student 1** excelled on the night of the production. Before everyone’s eyes she came out of her shell and gave the most delightful performance. Hopefully the Lightbulb project has shown **Student 1** that she can go on, that she has potential that she didn’t realise and that there is hope for the future.

Student 2 (Hawk): Student 2 was involved in last year’s Lightbulb production, the APO Dance Project and again this year’s Lightbulb production. On entry to Pakuranga Intermediate, it was reported that **Student 2** had learning needs in reading and writing. **Student 2** had RTLB support during his primary school years and many interventions to support his learning. **Student 2** has grown in confidence throughout the last year and a half and academic results in reading show that he was able to leap two sublevels in the two months that he was involved in the project.

Student 3 (Greg): Student 3 was quite an emotionally needy student last year. Although talented in The Arts, she was up and down last year and it was touch and go whether she would be able to overcome her own self-doubts. Although, still struggling with self-doubt this year, **Student 3** was able to sing a solo item on stage and take on one of our leading roles. I believe she is able to recognise the enormity of what she has been able to achieve.

The Lightbulb Cast 2012: There appears to be a strong correlation between the Lightbulb Production and student achievement. The following (e-asTTle)reading graphs show significant shifts in academic results for both the Year 7 and Year 8 Lightbulb students.

The Lightbulb students were withdrawn from their regular class programme for 4 hours each week during terms 1 and 2.

The graphs below signal that there has been accelerated progress for the students involved in the Lightbulb project throughout the first half of the year despite their absence from regular classes.

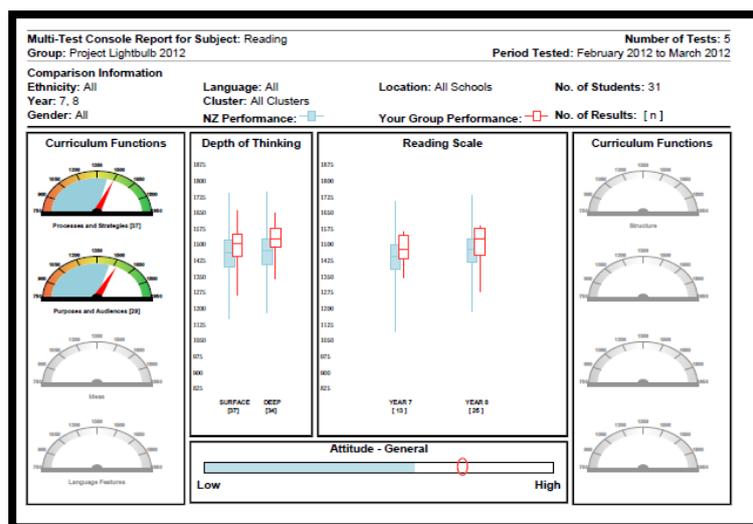
Pakuranga Intermediate

e-asTTle console reports showing overall picture of entry data in Reading for 2012 Lightbulb Project Students.

Entry Data Feb 2012.

Entry data shows both year groups working above National norms of achievement

The Year 8 tail of underachievement is significantly longer than the Year 7 tail.



Pakuranga Intermediate

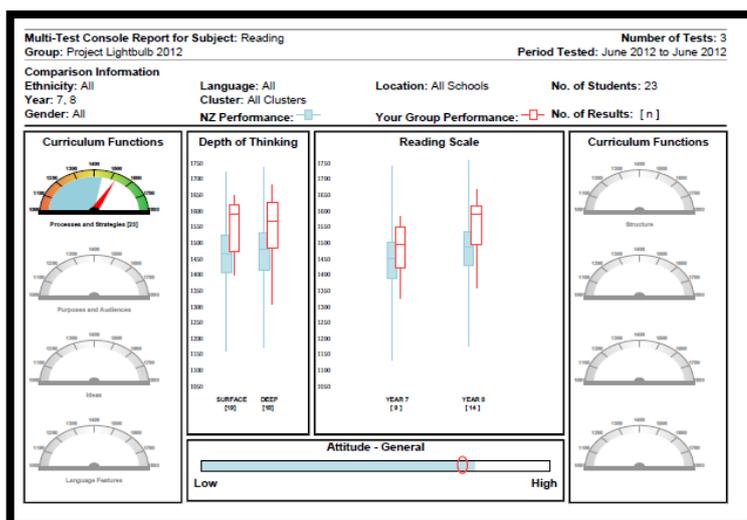
e-asTTle console reports showing overall picture of entry data in Reading of 2012 Lightbulb Project Students.

Mid Year Data June 2012.

By June 2012, there has been a marked shift forward against National norms of achievement in reading for both year groups.

Data shows accelerated progress for both year groups and significant shifts forward for the majority of the students involved in the project.

Interestingly the Year 8 students, whom 9 of the 20 students were involved in Lightbulb last year, have made considerable academic gains.



School 3 was also able to give information on literacy development for the 26 students involved in the Lightbulb Project 2013. All 26 students achieved gains in reading and writing levels over 2 terms, a significant finding.

Reading

| Reading over 2 terms | Number of students |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Reading level lifted 3 years | 3 |
| Reading level lifted 2.5 years | 3 |
| Reading level lifted 2 years | 2 |
| Reading level lifted 1.5 years | 6 |
| Reading level lifted 1 years | 8 |
| Reading level lifted 4 PM levels | 2 |
| Reading level lifted 3 PM levels | 2 |

In Writing all except one student made gains of at least on sub-level on the e-asTTle graph over 2 terms.

The appendix details comments from teachers and students in each of the four schools involved in this study. Teachers speak of the high expectations of the artists, the skill level they are able to impart, the confidence gained and the high level of engagement. The students speak of the discovery of different ways to express themselves, techniques learnt, using their imagination and achieving excellence. In all, the combination of artists teachers and students brings about a rich tapestry of learning that is enhanced considerably by the mix.

6 Conclusion

The partnership of arts professionals working alongside teachers and students brings about rewards which are rich and lasting. If, as in Project Lightbulb, these programmes are based on solid communication, commitment to children and young people and challenging expectations they can

change lives. Arts infused programmes such as these open all doors, give glimpses of other worlds and encourage different perceptions about people and place and bring a strong sense of community.

7 Appendix

Outcomes:

Edited comments from staff in School 1: (Drama and Dance)

When working with Arts Professionals you realise how much you don't know. Expectations were very high.

It supported the classroom programme.

We kept reflective journals.

It is satisfying when you can link the curriculum - links to writing were very strong.

Students gained in confidence. Focus and engagement were high.

It was particularly successful for Sebastian who had only one leg. The artist (Dancer) had high expectations of him. At one stage in the performance Sebastian came flying across the stage on his stomach. Sebastian has since talked about being a paralympian.

One of the most powerful results is engagement.

We are giving these children the most amazing gift!

We have the prospect of the curriculum narrowing. There is now a hierarchy of subjects. We need to provide a very broad curriculum. We need a connected integrated curriculum. We are very careful to preserve the integrity of each subject.

Edited comments from children in School 1

It is cool to use our imagination – creating our own words.

I enjoyed rebuilding my confidence.

I enjoyed getting to be the best I can be.

Edited comments from staff in School 2 (Visual Arts/Storytelling)

The school management sees enormous benefits for the children.

The artists had to listen to the school and the school had to listen to the artists.

It opens up students to the world and ways of expressing themselves.

It is an organic set up from what the children know - creating the curriculum with the children collaboratively.

Creativity, problem solving, entrepreneurship are in abundance.

Edited comments from children in School 2

I learned to believe in myself and confidence in being on stage.

I learned a lot of techniques about drama and to keep on trying.

I learned how to express my emotional side.

I learned how to use my focus point.

I learned how to synchronise and how to feel the movement – sharper movements.

It helped me with my writing ('wompom' – freeze frame or shape).

It helped me put feelings on paper.

It helped me show who I really am.

Edited comments from staff in School 3 (Drama)

The artists worked with one class.

The class is now so confident – they are like an elite class because they have performed to the school.

There has been a definite increase in motivation of parents – 12 parents turned up in Term 1 for a parents' evening while 22 out of 26 turned up in Term 3.

Edited comments from students in school 3

I have changed from being shy to now a very confident person.

I know what it is like to be a professional actor and dancer.

I am now thinking of being an actor and I am not afraid to act in front of a large audience.

Edited comments from staff in Pakuranga Intermediate (2013)

It is particularly pleasing to see the growth that both staff and students have shown as a result of this process. The project and presentations were a huge success and the deeper learning the students achieved is a testament to the project

The opportunity for students to be involved in the design of real concepts, trying new things, creating and building things and solving problems resulted in high levels of engagement

Each class worked with their individual artist to create powerful presentations. I believe the project will leave lasting impressions on the students

I learnt how to bring comedy and conflict into drama

The students' experiences in this project are often heard in daily conversations

The artists challenged us to think outside our usual 'boxes'

With the support of the artists the students developed more confidence in the creating and performing process.

I felt the students really saw their ideas come alive. They discovered their inner confidence and had a chance to be part of something quite unique

Teachers learnt to hand responsibility over to students and allow them to be creative when presenting their learning.

Edited comments from student in Pakuranga Intermediate School (2013)

I learnt to be more confident about being on stage

I learnt that teamwork is very important

I learnt confidence and leadership

I learnt more about art, music and drama

Edited comments from staff in Pakuranga Intermediate (2014)

Teachers learnt to integrate dance and drama and engage the audience

script writing skills developed with students. How to express themselves to the audience

Growth in confidence from students involved

We noticed talents emerge that we wouldn't otherwise have seen.

Great learning opportunity with 3 different areas of the arts.

Great opportunity for students to see the 3 arts areas integrated together.

Students were given the chance to shine in a different light

Something for the children to remember forever

Amazing turn-out of parents

Range of media, many different performance types.

The 3 arts elements worked beautifully for our performance

Was a huge success. Pupils were very excited and enthusiastic to showcase their learning. Parents were excited and very supportive of also being part of this learning journey....engaging and inclusive.

The lighting, sound and the weather to a certain extent really complimented to the story. The host students did a really good job in informing parents of what is about to unfold.

Edited comments from students in Pakuranga Intermediate (2014)

The artists were a big inspiration for all of us

I liked inspiring people about rainforests

The artists have helped me build my confidence and stay in character as I perform

I have learnt that it takes a lot of discipline to create an amazing performance like we have

We learnt how to be and feel the character through our bodies and feelings

Without the artists I wouldn't be able to perform properly and overcome my fear.

The hardest part of doing this was staying in my character

Thank you artists for teaching us how to stay in complete character all the time and how to put emotion in acting

I appreciate the time the artists put into making the children/me and the performance look astounding. My parents were so proud they bought me dinner!

The artists helped us discover our hidden talents

Performing was like we were on TV and the lights made it feel like the trees were alive

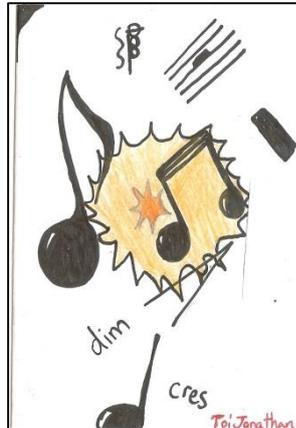
I learnt how to be confident in front of an audience

I like how the singers sang a great song that they made up instead of finding a song on Youtube or something

Thank you for spending the time with me teaching new chords and blending the music with the actions so smoothly that it makes a 100% match with it

I learnt to put ideas together and make them stronger

The artists boosted my confidence in all ways possible to prepare me for the big performance
 My favourite things about Lightbulb were getting to learn new stuff on the piano, performing in front of over 300 parents, using teamwork and getting to know new people. Things I learnt were adding new knowledge to my mind, how to make music blend in with acting, feel what the actors are feeling, to carry on when a mistake is made and put ideas together and make them stronger



Dear Jonathan,

Just amazing
 On to it
 No one like you
 Always positive
 + thinking deep
 Has alot of skill
 A awesome pianist
 Never giving up.

Thank you for spending your time with me, teaching new chords and blending the music with the actions so smoothly that it makes a 100% match with it.
 My favourite things about lightbulb were getting to learn new stuff on the piano, performing in front of over 300 parents, using teamwork and getting to know new people.
 Things I learnt from lightbulb, adding new knowledge to my mind: How to make music blend in with acting, feel what the actors are feeling, to carry on when a mistake is made, and put ideas together and make them stronger. Here's 2 little poems I wrote:

The time passed so quickly, the good times don't last,
 but I'll see you next year, this will not be the last,
 Yours truly,
 Hubert ☺