

# **BRIDGE – A joint initiative between St Paul’s Primary School and St. Joseph’s High School Albion Park.**



**Reference Number: 8180**

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## **Background**

The BRIDGE project was developed as an outcome of the partnership between the Flagship for Creative and Authentic Leadership at the Australian Catholic University and four Catholic Dioceses within New South Wales. The ACU project was entitled Leaders Transforming Learning and Learners (LTLL). It involved nine NSW Catholic schools coming together to work with the University in a pilot project focussed on leadership for learning and learners. The purpose of the project was to impact on the quality of learning by linking leadership and learning.

The fundamental belief that underpins the program is that authentic Catholic leadership can transform learning in Catholic schools. It is based on the work of Jerry Starratt (2004) in the area of authentic ethical leadership and has seven goals which focus on how authentic Catholic leadership can help to transform schools to ensure that authentic learning and teaching not only occurs, but that it is sustainable. At the heart of the project is the idea that if teachers are authentic and ethical in leadership then this must transform the teaching within their schools, which as a result must also be authentic and ethical. In essence, this is leadership transforming learning.

The BRIDGE project is a collaborative learning venture between St Paul's Catholic Primary School and St Joseph's Catholic High School and the title of the project reflects this. Given that there had been discussion about building bridges between the two schools, the acronym chosen was BRIDGE, or Building Rich Integrated Diverse Growing Experiences.

Despite the physical proximity of St Paul's and St Joseph's there had traditionally been limited communication between the two schools. The appointment of a new principal to St Paul's in 2005 signalled a new beginning in the interaction between the schools. The project began to coalesce around the idea that there was a need to firm up relationships with the staff and students of both schools to establish and develop a continuum of learning from K-12 by smoother lines of transition and blur the boundaries between Year 6 and Year 7.

In highlighting the transition of students from Year 6 to Year 7 there were perceived opportunities to improve the learning opportunities for our students in Stages 3 and 4 as well as provide a catalyst for staff development and a greater dynamic for staff interaction and

involvement across both schools. BRIDGE was adopted as a project to foster community and build an authentic Catholic learning community in Albion Park.

The core focus is the development of the learning program across Stages 3 and 4. The idea is to utilise inquiry based learning to create sustainable learning environments in order to develop reflective, self-directed learners who engage in a range of learning opportunities that address specifically identified outcomes. It is anticipated that this process will create experiences that will encourage all participants in the project to grow as learners and leaders.

The team at St Joseph's was comprised of four people: the principal, the assistant principal, a third year science teacher, and the special needs coordinator of some twenty years experience. While the principal and assistant principal were mandatory team members, the other two teachers were chosen because of the gifts and talents they would bring to the project and also to provide a gender balance as well as diversity in teaching background.

The team at St Paul's was also comprised of four people: the principal, the assistant principal an experienced female teacher of Year 6 and a younger Year 5, male teacher, because of the implications for learning across Stage 3. To create a continuum of learning from Stage 3 to Stage 4 would require representatives from both Stage 3 year groups. A younger teacher would also add to the sustainability of the project. In time it became apparent that it was necessary to include the other Year 6 teacher.

## **Process**

The first step in achieving sustainable learning environments that develop reflective, self-directed learners who engage in a range of learning opportunities and grow as learners and leaders, was to create a set of guiding principles (see Table 1). These were fashioned around the four focus areas of the Catholic Education Office, Wollongong: leading, learning, supporting and growing. It was agreed that the project would create opportunities that:

**Table 1. The Guiding Principles of the BRIDGE project.**

<b>LEAD</b>	develop a Catholic faith community that values living Catholic tradition connections based on the Emmaus paradigm
<b>LEARN</b>	encourage and enable all learners to enjoy learning and to be self-motivated, reflective, autonomous, competent, life-long learners
<b>GROW</b>	promote continuity and coherence of learning and facilitate transition between the stages of schooling
<b>SUPPORT</b>	provide a supportive environment and utilise flexible structures that enables authentic learning and leading

From these principles the team members then developed a set of outcomes (see Table 2) that were developed from *The Essential Learnings* as outlined by the Department of Education, Tasmania.

**Table 2. BRIDGE Outcomes**

<p><b>CONNECTING</b></p>	<p>Learners will embrace a Catholic community in which they value relationships which are characterised by mutual respect, forgiveness, faith and hope</p>
<p><b>THINKING</b></p>	<p>Learners will become inquiring and reflective thinkers able to reason, question, make decisions and solve complex problems and recognise connectedness in their learning experiences</p>
<p><b>COMMUNICATING</b></p>	<p>Learners will become effective communicators able to create, communicate and convey ideas clearly and confidently in a variety of learning contexts</p>
<p><b>TEAM BUILDING</b></p>	<p>Learners will be able to operate in teams and negotiate, collaborative goals and outcomes, and contribute positively and harmoniously in a group</p>
<p><b>PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY</b></p>	<p>Learners will become self-directed and ethical people having positive vision for themselves and their future, developing academic and moral self-concept and contributing to constructive futures</p>
<p><b>SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY</b></p>	<p>Learners will become responsible citizens prepared to participate actively in a democratic community, valuing diversity and acting justly and equitably</p>
<p><b>GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY</b></p>	<p>Learners will become world contributors willing to consider the consequences of innovations, make thoughtful decisions about their application and act to maintain, protect and enhance local and global environments</p>

The program was written collaboratively by all team members. It was designed to allow the learners to meet the broad outcomes listed above. The program allowed them to work individually and in small teams to design, research and create their finished product. In effect it was personalising learning and shifting the responsibility for the learning to the learner. Upon completion all projects were published. The shift in pedagogy has seen a “focus on learning first, then achievement, then testing, so we never lose sight of the learning that truly matters as we strive to increase students’ achievement” (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, p. 32).

There were around 28 students in each of the eight groups with learners from both Year 6 and 7. Each group was managed by a team of middle school educators, which included teaching staff from the high school and the primary school as well as School Support Officers. Six of the groups were based at St Joseph’s and two at St Paul’s and the groups were swapped each semester to ensure that all of the primary students had time at the high school.

### Link to the conceptual model

The fundamental value underpinning the program was to transform learners and learning as demonstrated by the conceptual model (Figure 1) which links leadership and learning to create a transformed learner.

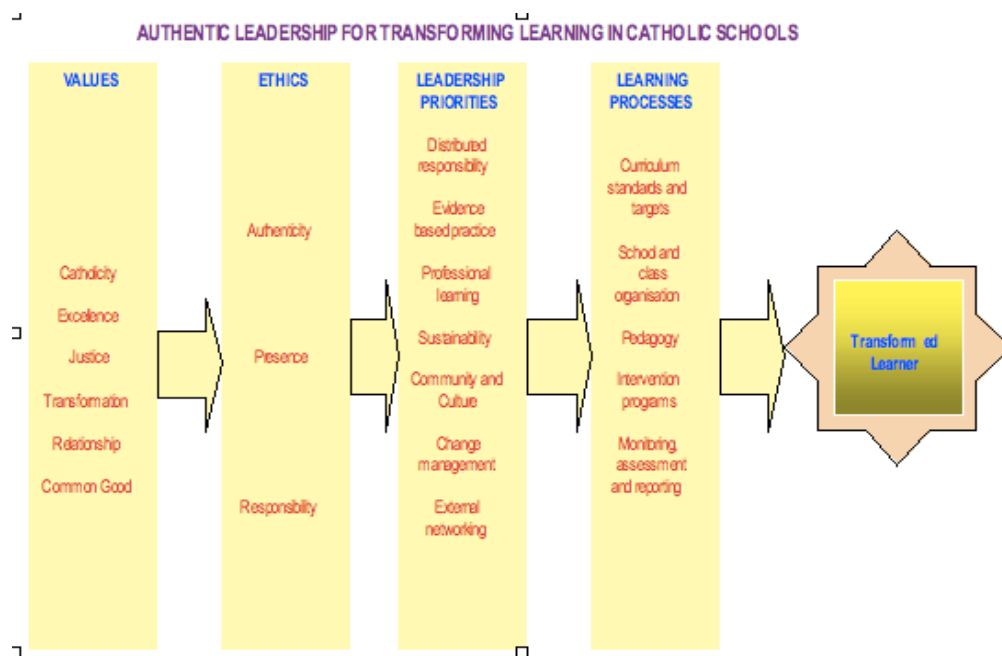


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

The starting point for the BRIDGE project lies within the ethics column of the conceptual model. Leaders from both schools acknowledged the shared responsibility of establishing open and effective relationships between the high school and the primary school. It was decided that this should be done through the creation of a learning program that would be structured around authentic learning experiences. For this to occur, it was important in the selection of team members that they be present to the students and themselves as described by Starratt in Ethical Leadership (2004).

Leadership is a construct embedded within the BRIDGE program at several levels. Firstly, there is the leadership of the management team within both schools who have created the overarching focus, secondly there is the leadership of the teachers who are leading their own group of learners, and thirdly, there is the leadership of the students themselves. In fact, the program has created opportunities for leaders at all levels. This has been evidenced by some of the classroom teachers developing as leaders by taking a leading role among their peers in the planning of the project. A further development was these teachers becoming advocates for the process of sustainable change.

Many students have also been present to themselves and this has been displayed in a number of ways. Firstly, in the way they approached the inquiry based activities and assumed responsibility for their own learning. Further, this matured into a shared leadership perspective as students working within a group format openly discussed and assisted each other with their problems.

A self-directed learning program based on inquiry learning is a significantly different way to organise classes in a traditional secondary school. Therefore, this approach had an impact on learning and teaching styles in mainstream classrooms. As a result the transformed learner was able to apply their learnings in other situations to make their learning more authentic. The program facilitated this, while incorporating the values of justice and excellence from the model. All students were encouraged to strive for excellence in all aspects of their development. This went beyond the purely academic into each learner's holistic development.

## **Learnings**

Exactly how BRIDGE has impacted on the learnings of various participants (teachers, students, LTLL team members and the wider school communities) continues to be explored. A survey conducted at the end of Semester one and another at the beginning of the following year tapped into some of the impressions learners had of their BRIDGE experience. The assessment tool indicated how well learners were able to express their learnings via various presentation media. The survey questions and a brief analysis are contained in the appendix. A lack of baseline data regarding the skill levels of learners at the starting point of the project (particularly with regard to technology) frustrated efforts to evaluate just how far individual learners had progressed and in what areas.

Through the LTLL and BRIDGE team meetings discussion centred on the learnings of the project facilitators and this has informed planning for 2007. Also taken into consideration were the results of the surveys completed by the students at the conclusion of semester 1 and at the commencement of Semester 1 in the following year.

To accurately gauge the learning achieved by the students, more baseline data needs to be gathered regarding the learning profiles of student participants. This need not be test based but students themselves may rate their level of skill in a number of generic areas that are being targeted by the program.

Practical difficulties like timetable clashes and technology failure can impact on learning through loss of time and confusion. The more forward planning that can be done to prevent such difficulties occurring, the better, however, it is acknowledged that schools are busy places and need to be flexible to fit everything onto the calendar. There will be times when class time is lost and that is inevitable. The increased time allocation to the project in 2007 has alleviated some of these problems, although the crucial issue, as always, is creating the time and space for the teachers to meet and adequately plan for the success of the project. Distributed leadership (Harris, 2004) will ensure that project has a profile and is discussed in staffrooms but traditional Principal leadership at this point is essential to ensure the establishment of the project on an equal footing with other competing/existing learning agendas.

The perception of all project participants that learning experiences cannot be compartmentalised into 'KLAs' or any other arbitrarily designed "subject" is growing with the project.

Flexible learning environments are beneficial as they provide more opportunities for learners to learn from one another. For team members, working within flexible learning environments meant that they could determine which learners needed support and “scaffolding” and in what areas. The students also identified the extra support that they were able to give or receive from others while working in group situations, as one of the benefits of BRIDGE.

To ensure the long-term success of the project it is essential to involve the whole staff (and, for that matter, the whole school community) at both St Paul's and St Joseph's in the BRIDGE journey. As there has been little teaching staff turnover and a significant number of staff have been there for over ten years there is a relatively traditional curriculum, reluctance to change and, in some cases, an aversion to innovation. To ensure sustainability means demystifying BRIDGE by organising more staff development around the project aims and inquiry-based learning, broadening the BRIDGE leadership base by involving “fresh” staff in the project each year, involving parents in BRIDGE presentation day planning and keeping parents updated with BRIDGE news via the school newsletters and BRIDGE events and involving student learners in team meetings.

Some team members expressed the notion that their own views on what it meant to be a leader had shifted. They no longer associated being a leader with holding a particular title. They now believed that authentic leadership has more to do with being positive change agents in the school (and wider) community.

It is the opinion of these presenters that the implementation of the LTLL project needs to be reviewed. Prior to schools nominating a project focus the self-reflection tool should be administered to a wide cross-section of the school community. The collated responses should form the basis of discussion of the apparent strengths of the school and also the challenges it faces. The conceptual model should then be introduced. It is from these discussions and with a sound understanding of the model that project should be developed. While it is understood that the model is not meant to be viewed in a linear fashion, its construction does not lend itself to a broader interpretation. The transformation of the learner could occur at any stage and need not be the end point of the four columns. There needs to be multiple connections between each of the columns and the transformed learner.

## **The Future**

In 2007, the time allocated to BRIDGE was doubled from one 52 minute period. This had the twofold effect of expanding the number of teachers not previously involved in the program, by broadening the teacher base it ensures that the leadership created is more sustainable. Secondly, the increase in time allows students to be more present to their learning and should ensure greater depth of learning that can be transferred to other life contexts.

In 2007 the name of the project was changed from BRIDGE to IntelL (integrated learning). The purpose behind the name change was to shift the focus from BRIDGE being a learning program to that of the overarching link between the two schools. BRIDGE had become bigger than the classroom learning project so it was renamed IntelL which was more in keeping with its direction.

Given that in the Semester 1 survey the students identified social factors as being a key part of the project, it is acknowledged that more needs to be done in this area with the staff. More team building activities have been structured into the 2007 program to assist in breaking down the barriers between the Year 6 and Year 7 students. This year, more authentic interaction between the two cohorts has been evident.

While specific outcomes were targeted in the initial creation of the learning experiences, in 2007 this has become more formalised. Outcomes from a variety of Key Learning Areas have been identified and mapped across a number of assessment tasks. The students are aware of the outcomes that they need to demonstrate in any given activity. There was a recognised need to design instruments that were able to authentically gauge student achievement and growth without reducing the value of the process of learning itself.

Whilst the learning program across Stages 3 and 4 of the primary and high school remains the fundamental activity of BRIDGE there have been a number of other initiatives that have fostered the development of inquiry based learning within both schools. These learning opportunities have included the implementation of a parliamentary club with a focus on student leadership and the development of civics and citizenship. The science research expo has been expanded to include students from Stage 3 from St Paul's and science teachers from St Joseph's have worked with teachers from the primary school on scientific method. There is also the growth of

sustainable education with an environmental plan reaching out to include both campuses. These initiatives have created further opportunities for students and teachers at both campuses to become leaders and learners.

Whilst Intel currently has a focus on St Joseph's Catholic High School and St Paul's Primary School, it is envisaged that the program will expand in the next few years to include other feeder primary schools. Clearly there are a number of difficulties, not the least of which is the distance between the schools that will need to be overcome for the project to embrace these other schools successfully. Nevertheless in the interest of providing an authentic learning community across the domain of all Catholic primary campuses that feed into St Joseph's such challenges do need to be faced. Further, leaders have an ethical responsibility to ensure equity in the leading and learning experiences of other students not currently involved in the project. Our bridge certainly has firm foundations but it is the capacity to draw across these other divides that remains the most difficult problem that our future planning must address.

# b.r.i.d.g.e

*Building Rich Integrated Diverse Growing Experiences*

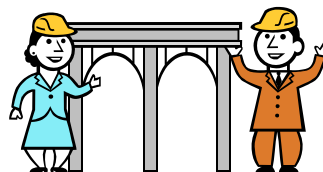


Semester 1 Survey



Question	Answer
1. What did you think the BRIDGE program was about before you started?	
2. What do you think are the main goals of the BRIDGE program?	
3. Circle any skills that BRIDGE has helped you improve. You can also write some in.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IT skills</li> <li>• Research skills</li> <li>• Social skills</li> </ul> others: • _____ • _____ • _____
4. What do you look forward to the most in your weekly BRIDGE lesson?	
5. Are there any aspects of the program you do not enjoy?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Name them:
6. Do you prefer to work in a group or individually?	Group <input type="checkbox"/> Individually <input type="checkbox"/> Why?
7. Do you like the BRIDGE topic for this semester? Why or why not.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Why?

Question	Answer
8. Did you enjoy the fact that you could choose who you wanted to base your research on and what activities you had to complete?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Why?
9. Is this different to your other subjects? How so?	
10. Do you prefer this way of learning? Explain your answer.	
11. Have BRIDGE lessons changed the way you go about learning in other subjects?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Explain.
12. Has BRIDGE changed your attitude towards learning?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Why?
13. How could the program be improved for next semester?	



# b.r.i.d.g.e

Building Rich Integrated Diverse Growing Experiences



## Semester 2 Survey



Question	Answer
<p>1. Circle any skills that BRIDGE has helped you improve. You can also write some in.</p>	<p>• IT skills                      others: • _____            • Research skills                      • _____            • Social skills                      • _____</p>
<p>2. What did you look forward to the most in your weekly BRIDGE lesson?</p>	
<p>3. Are there any aspects of the program you did not enjoy?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/>                      No <input type="checkbox"/>            Name them:</p>
<p>4. Do you prefer to work in a group or individually?</p>	<p>Group <input type="checkbox"/>                      Individually <input type="checkbox"/>            Why?</p>
<p>5. Did you like the BRIDGE topic 'QWILLS' for semester 2 last year? Why or why not.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/>                      No <input type="checkbox"/>            Why?</p>
<p>6. Did you enjoy that you were able to choose what you wanted to base your research on?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/>                      No <input type="checkbox"/>            Why?</p>

<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
7. Make a list of the things you DID like and the things you DID NOT like about the EXPO day.	
8. At the start of term 3 you participated in two days of workshops. Did you find these days useful? What did you learn?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Why?
9. Is this different to your other subjects? How so?	
10. Do you prefer this way of learning? Explain your answer.	
11. Have BRIDGE lessons changed the way you go about learning in other subjects?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Explain.
12. Has BRIDGE changed your attitude towards learning?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Why?
13. How could the program be improved for next year?	

## Results of the BRIDGE Surveys 2006

The first survey was administered at the close of semester 1, prior to the skills development days. The second survey was administered at the beginning of the following school year which could possibly account for the level of detachment in some of the second round responses. For a variety of reasons, not all students completed or submitted the survey. Semester 1 results are based on 110 respondents and Semester 2 results on 114 respondents. All figures in percentages have been rounded up or down.

### Question 1: What did you think the BRIDGE program was about before you started?

This question was asked in Semester 1 only and elicited 21 separate responses which have been clustered into the following:

Response	Number	%
Bridges	22	20
Bringing year 6 & 7 together	20	18
Undecided/not sure	18	16
Research, learning, study skills, organisation	16	15
Making friends, working with others	15	14
Fun/boring	8	7
Working with computers	7	6
Different activities	4	3
No response	3	3
Other	3	3

It is clear from the data that we need to explain the program and its purpose more clearly at the beginning of the year, although some responses were clearly based on experience of BRIDGE.

**Question 2: What do you think are the main goals of the BRIDGE program?**

This question was asked in Semester 1 only and elicited 22 separate responses which have been clustered into the following:

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Learning, skills development, study	44	40
Bringing year 6 & 7 together	24	22
Meet new people, socialisation	23	21
Learning about famous people	20	18
IT skill development	16	15
Research skill development	13	12
Working cooperatively with others	7	6
No response	3	3
Other	2	2

While a significant number of students identified study and the bridging component of the program, 18% did make the shift from activity to skill development. Responses to other questions support this and indicate that there needs to be something done to ensure the students view the skills developed here as transferable to other situations – classroom and elsewhere.

**Question 3: Circle any skills that BRIDGE has helped you improve. You can write some in.**

This question appears as Question 1 in the Semester 2 survey.

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Research	80	52
IT	55	39
Social	44	28
Public speaking/confidence	8	0
Team work, cooperation	8	2
No response	5	11
Presentation	5	1
Single response answers (writing, artistic, organisation)	3	0
Referencing	2	1
Other	2	2
None	0	5
Independent Skills	0	4
Literacy	0	2

The results for Semester 1, with the exception of 5% of students who did not respond, revealed that all students recognised that the BRIDGE program helped them improve in at least one skill area. The bulk of respondents selected from IT, research and social skills which were listed on the questionnaire and did not venture beyond it. Although the percentage differed, the pattern of response was similar for Semester 2.

**Question 4: What do you look forward to the most in your weekly BRIDGE lesson?**

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Using the computers	35	17
Socialisation	34	25
Variety of learning	15	1
Nothing	9	25
Choosing my work	8	2
Research	8	3
Not doing much work	6	9
No response	5	9
Having fun	5	2
Single response answers	3	2
Group work	0	4
Changing campuses	0	2
Learning	0	14

In Semester 1 the data indicated that the students enjoyed using the available technology and the socialisation and the contact with other students. Technology was available every lesson. The decline in 'using computers' response in Semester 2 can possibly be attributed to the fact that the novelty value of computers being available every period had dissipated and their use had become a part of how things were done. This could also be true of the variance in the 'variety of learning' response. Significantly 14% of students identified 'learning' as something they looked forward to in Semester 2.

**Question 5: Are there any aspects of the program you do not enjoy?**

The responses were polarised with the majority of learners indicating that there were aspects of the program that they did not enjoy. The reasons for the negative responses are listed below.

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	69	78
No	28	21
No response	3	1

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Speeches/presentations	18	9
Limited choice	16	0
Too many activities	9	0
Not being in groups	8	0
Doing the same thing every week	7	4
Research	7	4
Not being able to use a computer	7	1
Year 6 & 7 not working together	5	6
Lack of time	4	4
It doesn't help	4	0
Homework	4	3
Writing	4	0
All of it	3	22
Teacher talk	1	2
Hard activities	1	4
Going to St Paul's	1	4
Inability to choose class	0	2
Lack of structure	0	2
Computer work	0	2
Single response answers	3	4

In Semester 1 69% of respondents indicated that there were aspects of the program that could be improved. While this is obviously significant, the majority of students did not go on to identify what it was that they did not enjoy. There was concern that this reflected an inability to articulate their lack of enjoyment. Perhaps this could be countered by providing a number of choices from which the students could choose, supplemented by a free response section. Another factor could be that students were not used to considering their classroom experiences as enjoyable. The number of students who listed speeches/presentations as an area they did not enjoy may indicate the need to focus on this area more explicitly.

Interestingly the percentage of students who indicated that there were aspects of the program they did not enjoy increased by 9% in Semester 2. This is somewhat surprising as students were allowed much more choice than earlier in the year and were also able to work in a group if they so desired. Perhaps the increase in the 'all of it' response was also due to the increased choice and the fact that some students prefer to be directed in their work rather than having to think and create their own projects. The use of fertile questions in the second semester placed the emphasis on the students.

**Question 6: Do you prefer to work in a group or individually**

This question elicited a polarised response and the findings are reported as such:

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Group work	69	80
Individually	25	17
Both, depends on the situation	5	2
No response	1	2

	Semester 1	Semester 2
<b>Response to individual work</b>	%	%
No disagreements working on your own	26	5
More control working on my own	26	11
Get more work done on my own	22	26
Don't have to depend on others	15	16
To see if I can do it on my own	4	0
Groups muck around	4	5
It's easier	0	5

	Semester 1	Semester 2
<b>Response to group work</b>	%	%
Hear other ideas	29	16
More enjoyable	25	25
Get more work done	14	19
Share the work load	14	12
Socialisation	11	15
Easier	11	11
You can help and be helped	8	9
Team work	5	9
More organised	1	0
More confident	1	0

A clear majority of students preferred to work in groups and identified the sharing of ideas and workload as key factors in this regard. While there were opportunities to work in a group in Semester 1 there was a much greater chance of this in Semester 2 and this is reflected in the responses.

**Question 7: Do you like the BRIDGE topic for this semester (1)? Why or why not?**

This question does not appear in the Semester 2 survey because the students selected their own topics.

<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	54
No	31
Yes and no	6
No response	5

<b>Responses - affirmative</b>	<b>%</b>
Learn about Australians	44
Fun	17
Irrelevant response	12
Liked the ability to choose	12
Using computers	7
Variety	2
Could choose on work level	2
Good introduction for Year 7	2

<b>Responses – negative</b>	<b>%</b>
Waste of time/boring	38
More choice	24
Friends were in other classes	9
Hard to make choices	9
Don't like the matrix	3
Too much research	3
Too easy	3
Too hard	3

The majority of positive responses suggested that they enjoyed the program and the initial focus on a famous Australian. Conversely, 31% of learners indicated that the program did not allow them enough choice and were not pleased with the focus on an Australian identity.

**Question 8: Did you enjoy the fact that you could choose who you wanted to base your research on and what activities you had to complete?**

Despite the number of learners who identified lack of choice as an issue with the program, this question shows that within parameters, they enjoyed the freedom to choose the subject of their research. Again, with the increased choice of Semester 2 came an increase in the number of students who did not like the ability to choose their own areas for research.

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	81	85
No	8	13
Yes and no	6	1
No response	5	1

The different responses have been condensed into 8 categories, half of which focussed on the choice aspect, 2 of these in a positive way.

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
The freedom to choose	42	31
Interesting, fun/ someone I liked or was interested in	42	37
Better, easier	0	2
Choice was too restrictive	11	3
Allowed me to focus more on learning	7	0
Too much choice	3	3
Boring/to hard	2	1
I need to work more	1	0

**Question 9: Is this different to your other subjects? Explain your answer.**

The separate explanations have been re-categorised into 14 responses.

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	75	73
No	17	11
No response	6	15
Unsure	2	2

The reasons that students identified as making BRIDGE different or similar to other classes are listed below.

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Socialisation, the ability to mix with others	15	3
Working with primary/high school students	14	11
Use of computers	13	7
Choice	13	7
It's easy	7	3
Different/interesting topics	7	7
It's still school	5	0
It crosses a number of subjects	4	0
It's uninteresting	4	4
More focus on research	4	4
We have choice in other subjects	4	0
It was a set time, different to primary school	2	0
Single response answers	4	6
Less restrictions than other classes	1	2

A number of students made comments that implied they did not see the skill value or the learning inherent in the program. Although this reflects their understanding of learning, it is obviously important to be explicit in the teaching of skills and to explain the concept of learning

transfer. Other significant factors to emerge were the concepts of choice and the ability to work together in teams or groups. It appears that many students do not associate this with main stream classrooms.

**Question 10: Do you prefer this way of learning? Explain your answer.**

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	66	33
No	21	42
No reply	6	22
Unsure	6	4

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Better, more interesting, easier, less listening	25	11
Choice	14	4
Group work is better	12	3
Using computers	12	5
Socialisation/meeting others	11	3
Didn't like using computers so frequently	9	0
Ability to work at own pace	5	2
Prefer to work on my own	3	2
Regular class is easier	3	4
Primary teachers don't allow you to have responsibility	2	0
Didn't want to mix with the other school	2	0
Enjoyed the opportunity to research	2	1
Want more freedom to choose	2	0
Single answer responses	4	2
Boring	0	9
Didn't learn as much	0	3
Wanted more structure	0	2

The overwhelming number of respondents in Semester 1 said that they preferred to learn in the 'BRIDGE' way. Again, the extra choice available to students in Semester 2 has resulted in a decrease in satisfaction with BRIDGE. Clearly this has repercussions for the way the program was structured as well as for mainstream classes. It is clear that when choice is provided for students it needs to be well supported in its implementation.

**Question 11: Have BRIDGE lessons changed the way you go about learning in other subjects?**

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
No	65	69
Yes	24	13
No reply	9	18
Yes and no	2	0

The explanations as to why BRIDGE did, or did not change student learning in other subjects were collated into 9 separate answers.

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Learning was the same as other classes	31*	22*
Learning transfer – use BRIDGE approaches	77^	60^
Didn't learn anything new	15*	6*
BRIDGE is BRIDGE it is not like other subjects	15*	5*
Learning is fun	15^	7^
Set our own degree of difficulty	8^	0
I don't like BRIDGE	1*	1*
I like my own way of learning	0	4*
Deeper understanding	0	7^

\* % calculated on the negative responses

^ % calculated on the positive responses

The majority of students did not see BRIDGE as being different; again this reflects more on their attitude to learning and what they see as learning. It is clear that some saw it as just being a part of school while others compartmentalised it and locked in its learning. Part of the increase in percentage for Semester 2 may reflect the fact that students made changes to how they structured learning at the end of semester 1 and did not identify these changes later because they became a part of how they learn.

**Question 12: Has BRIDGE changed your attitude towards learning?**

	Semester 1	Semester 2
<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
No	61	61
Yes	25	23
No reply	10	16
Yes and no	4	0

	Semester 1	Semester 2
<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
It's still school, no impact	34*	19*
Learning can be fun	46^	19^
Improved time management	25^	4^
It's boring	7*	6*
It's still learning	6*	7*
It's better to use computers for research	14^	4^
Makes me think more	7^	15^
Confidence has increased	7^	0^
Already happy with my learning	1*	1*
Other classes are more structured	1*	0*
More serious about learning	4^	4^
Help others	4^	4^
Learnt new things	0^	4^

\* responses based on negative answers

^ responses based on positive answers

**Questions 13: How could the program be improved for next semester?**

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
More choice of topics	25	4
More group work	19	6
No reply	11	26
It's good – no change needed	7	4
Choose your partners/people your own age	6	1
Don't know	5	11
Make it more fun	5	19
Rotate the groups	5	0
Learn how to make a film	3	0
Do less work	3	1
Irrelevant personal responses	3	0
No presentations	2	0
More outdoor activities	2	0
Choose whether you go to St Paul's/St Joseph's	2	0
Scrap it	2	11
Do a PIP	2	0
Better, more involved teachers	2	1
More time	2	4
Single response answers	8	4
More computer use	0	2
More structure	0	2

Clearly the learners believe that BRIDGE needs to incorporate more choice. Allowing students a broader choice of topic and maintaining the matrix in its current format will still be effective in the development of identified skills.

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