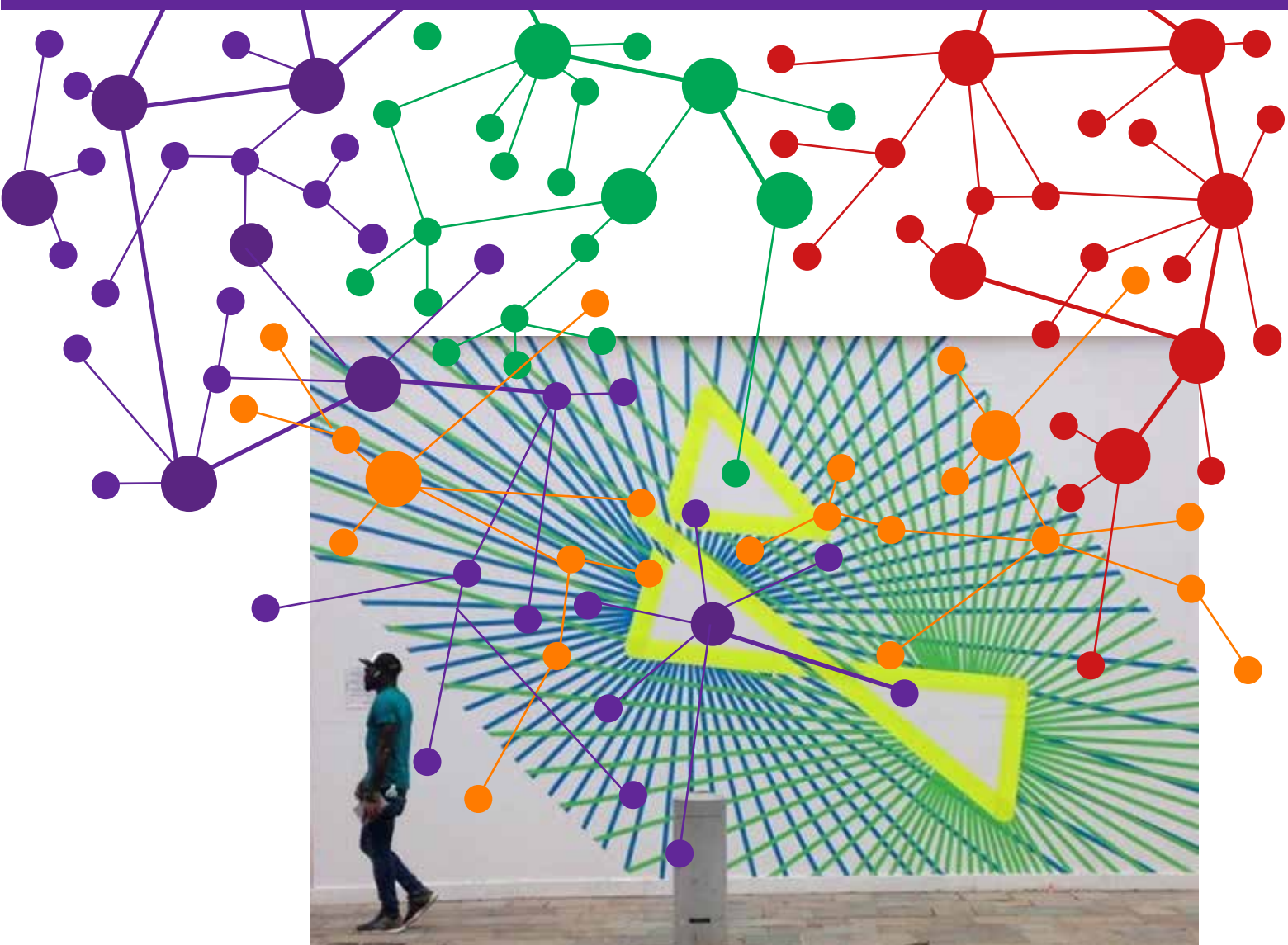


The Elephant Times

Tide~ on-line magazine



Issue Five: **The AGM Issue** MAY 2021



Building a network

Making connections

Tide~ Teachers in development education



Tide~ publications are now available for free

You are welcome to adapt them for your teaching.

They represent the contribution of thousands of teachers over the years and hundreds of teachers that have taken lead roles in both curriculum projects and study visits.

Note: Copyright remains with Tide~ and should be acknowledged.

The first AGM of the new Tide~ Network will be on Zoom at 7.30 on Thursday 17th June 2021
>> Sign up to receive Zoom Link

The Elephant Times is edited by Jeff Serf and Scott Sinclair.

We have taken on this voluntary role as Tide~ Trustees.

The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of Tide~.

On each page:

< Click on The Elephant Times to go to the Tide~ website for back issues.



Welcome to Elephant Times 5

This magazine enriches the Tide~ website by seeking fresh dialogue and ways to re-establish the creativity of a Tide~ teacher network.

This AGM issue takes stock of the first year ... and looks to the future.

Covid 19 is inhibiting plans but a number of projects are shaping up.

CONTENTS

First AGM of the new Tide~ network - <i>Where are we going?</i>	4
<u>Commonwealth in town - an opportunity for learning?</u> Seeking expressions of interest	8
<u>ET Ubuntu Project with University of Worcester</u> Visions of education responding to the challenges of an uncertain future	12
<u>How to stay sane in an age of division ~ a conversation</u> The stimulus of Elif Shafak's book	14
<u>Connecting Dialogues - a new core framework for Tide~?</u> Seeking expressions of interest	20
<u>Mali revisited ~ Where camels are better than cars</u> Sarah Snyder reflects on experience in Mali and her work now	24
<u>Bridging gaps and building wisdom</u> Harriet Marshall reflects on ET2 and poses challenges for the future	30

To go to article click on titles



This Logo offers links to documents on the website: www.tidegloballearning.net

Click on underlined text to go to other websites.

On each page:

To go to Contents Click on: 'Tide~ on-line magazine' >

ET ~ thinking afresh?

The Elephant Times is about reflecting on issues, sharing ideas and thinking about the implications for teaching.



In this first year six issues of Elephant Times have been produced.

Thank you to the 65 people involved in writing. This gives us a considerable body of ideas to build on. The key challenge now is to do that building.

They are all available online: [Elephant Times](#)

To bring in the New Year a booklet:

‘What is it about Tide~ and Elephants?’ was published. [\[Click on cover\]](#)

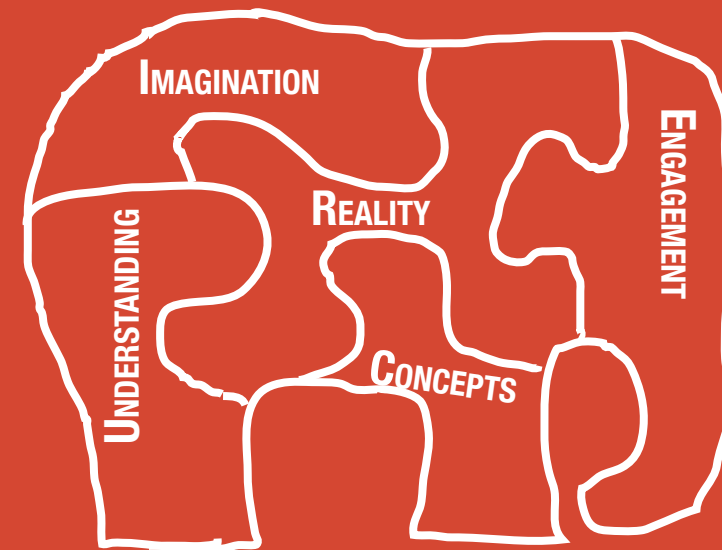
It included several suggestions for a Tide~ Elephant Jigsaw for 2021 including the one opposite by Darius Jackson.



What is it about Tide~ and elephants?

Events in 2020 have highlighted the need as Clive Harber & Jeff Serf put it [\[ET 1-22\]](#)

“to consider afresh the challenges of engaging learners in contemporary controversial issues with appropriate professionalism”



As long ago as 1959 C. Wright Mills* described the sense of powerlessness. This sense of powerlessness is, if anything, even worse today.

Our young confront an impersonal, uncertain future where even examination results are unreliable and can be changed overnight. Education is about equipping our young people, not only, to live in this world but to make the changes needed to make life sustainable, enjoyable and just.

At the heart of my elephant is **reality**; we live in a world of events and processes that exist independently of our imperfect knowledge. Put simply Covid 19 exists, whether I know about it or not, simply ignore it or even deny it really exists.

To develop an **understanding** of the world we need to use the concepts of diverse disciplines, it is through the application of these **concepts** to the events and other accounts that we see the nature of our world. However, these **concepts** also provide a critique of the world; how is it possible to talk about Human Rights, human dignity or Justice when around 1.5 million children under 5 years old die of diarrhoea every year?

This leads us to the importance of **imagination** in conceptualising a more just, sustainable and pleasant world and the **engagement** needed to bring us closer to this ‘green and pleasant land’.

* W C Wright Mills (1959) The Sociological Imagination New York Oxford University Press

By Darius Jackson





A pamphlet 'A new vision for 2021' was published. [Click on cover]

It outlined a plan to revitalise Tide~ creating a sustainable **Network Hub** to facilitate the voluntary work of Trustees and those co-opted to take lead roles in co-ordinating Tide~ activity.

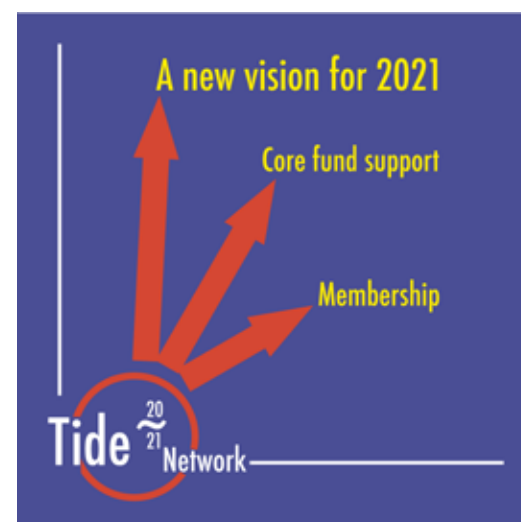


A time for new models of global learning?

This raises core matters - e.g. Mick Waters [ET 2-20] on "a curriculum that educates" and Chris Durbin on global citizenship [ET 2-18]

Dorit Braun. Let's talk about Covid 19 [ET 2-14]

"Never has it been more important to enable and encourage young people to assess and evaluate information, to recognise their own assumptions and prejudices and those of others, to review those assumptions and be willing to change their opinions and ideas on the basis of new information and ideas."



Our biggest asset - people & ideas

What would you bring to the Tide~ agenda?



The development of an issue of the ET has become the focus for a Tide~ project at School of Education, University of Worcester.

See ET [6]



Welcome to the ET Tide~ AGM issue.

This AGM will be the first of the new network ... a network that aspires to have many of the qualities of the old one, not least the focus on the role of teachers and the need to design 'space' for teacher creativity to respond to contemporary global concerns.

At the last AGM the idea of winding Tide~ up looked like the responsible path. Work on the [Tide~ website](#) and in particular making [Tide~ Publications](#) available to download for free, demonstrated interest. This led to the idea of an online magazine. We chose **Elephant Times** as a distinctive, if a little quirky, title because it symbolised communication and co-operation.

The first five ETs have highlighted a wealth of experience and generated questions pointing to the potential - and the need - for revitalising Tide~.

ET 6 results from an ET Project in partnership with School of Education, University of Worcester. It features an Ubuntu theme. [see page 12]

Thank you to all that have contributed. **Thank you** also to those that have become members. And **thank you** to those that have donated to help establish a core budget that makes all this voluntary work possible.

Building on this work and the many ideas that have been shared we are now in a position, at the **Annual General Meeting**, to discuss the next phase ... seeking to engage a wider range of school practitioners.

It is proposed, in addition to continuing work on the Elephant Times and the SDGs curriculum development project, that we focus on two key themes:

1. **Commonwealth Awareness** and making the most of the learning opportunity of the Games in Birmingham in 2022. [see page 8]
2. **Connecting Dialogues** and the development of a Tide~ framework that a) gives focus to an approach and b) provides context to a variety of small projects. [see page 20]

The other key dimension to revitalising the network is about engaging new members and supporting them to take on lead roles in Tide~ and its projects.

I look forward to hearing views at the Zoom AGM -- [7.30 on 17th June]

Scott Sinclair Chair of Tide~ Trustees

Please sign up to the AGM
to receive Zoom link

Commonwealth in town ... an opportunity for learning?

Seeking expressions of interest

Please use this form

Birmingham is hosting the Commonwealth Games in 2022.
There is an opportunity to use the interest this will generate to stimulate learning about the Commonwealth.

Such learning will draw on a wide range of curriculum and other activities, but at the heart of it is the need for us, as teachers, to be comfortable about engaging with ideas and issues relating to the Commonwealth's complex and contested history.

In preparation, over the next 6 months, we need opportunities to enable us to reflect on our own awareness of the Commonwealth starting with a discussion at the Tide~ AGM on 17th June.

We are initially asking interested teachers and leaders in schools to come together informally to discuss perspectives, ideas, and the resources and approaches that either exist or we could create together. It will be useful to build an informal and open network of professionals so we can share our thinking and ideas as we progress and thus create a network of support for planning and implementation.

We know that there is renewed focus upon the curriculum and, therefore, we would expect this to be an opportunity, especially for schools in the West Midlands, to think about aspects of KS2 and KS3 curriculum planning for 2022.

Clearly there are likely to be many school based projects and we will work to share their good practice with the wider network and beyond. For instance, Hodge Hill College is already mapping learning opportunities across non-core subjects, Selly Park Girls School is already thinking about transition projects for 2022 in this context.

Coordination Group:

- ❑ Gilroy Brown
- ❑ Rita Chowdhury
- ❑ Nikki Craig
- ❑ Jeff Serf
- ❑ Scott Sinclair



An enquiry framework

There are 54 countries in the Commonwealth of which 32 are described as small states.

It has been suggested that it would be useful to develop a basic 'enquiry framework' for use by students to apply to any member country.

Africa

Botswana
Cameroon
Eswatini
Gambia, The
Ghana
Kenya
Lesotho
Malawi
Mauritius
Mozambique
Namibia
Nigeria
Rwanda
Seychelles
Sierra Leone
South Africa
Tanzania, United Republic
Uganda
United Republic of Tanzania
Zambia

Asia

Bangladesh
Brunei Darussalam
India
Malaysia
Maldives
Pakistan
Singapore
Sri Lanka

Caribbean and Americas

Antigua and Barbuda
Bahamas, The
Barbados
Belize
Canada
Dominica
Grenada
Guyana
Jamaica
Saint Lucia
St Kitts and Nevis
St Vincent & The Grenadines
Trinidad and Tobago

Europe

Cyprus
Malta
United Kingdom

Pacific

Australia
Fiji
Kiribati
Nauru
New Zealand
Papua New Guinea
Samoa
Solomon Islands
Tonga
Tuvalu
Vanuatu



Connections?

A good starting point may be the connections that you or your school community have to particular countries.

- ◇ What resources exist that are suitable for use in school to enable learning about that place and its history?
- ◇ What sources exist that could help develop a teaching resource?
- ◇ Would you be interested in joining a teacher group to help develop such a resource?

At this stage we are seeking:

1. consultation with teachers and school leaders* as outlined.

We will be holding a virtual meeting in June to start the process.

Initial Zoom consultation: Tuesday 6th July at 6.00. Please sign up*

David Brown has agreed to lead a process of consultation.

[He is Chair of Directors Hamstead Hall Trust & CEO at EPA Trust
Oxfordshire and has been a member of Tide~ since he was a young teacher]

2. proposals* for ET articles about the issues, curriculum opportunities, specific places in the Commonwealth ... and featuring recommended resources.

There will be an **Elephant Times Commonwealth Publication** in January 2022.

3. a group* of teachers and education practitioners to explore, for the network, what a 'Commonwealth Awareness Framework' could look like. Is such a concept is a useful planning tool?

As part of this it may also be productive to consider:

- ☐ the dynamic of personal stories, art and music;
- ☐ the contribution of different curriculum areas;
- ☐ the stimulus of resources in the community such as buildings, names, museum collections and individuals;
- ☐ the needs of learners at different key stages.

* We are seeking expressions of interest

Please use this form

Partnership and Co-operation

This Tide~ initiative seeks to contribute to, and cross reference with, a range projects that will respond to the Games. In particular we have been consulting with Birmingham Education Partnership [BEP].

We are also aware of plans being developed by The British Council and BEP, as well as by Birmingham City University. We look forward to learning more about them and how we can focus our work to maximise co-operation.

The Games Logo - like new pair of glasses at the centre of a complex web



The key challenge at this stage is thinking about the significance of the Commonwealth's "complex and contested" history.

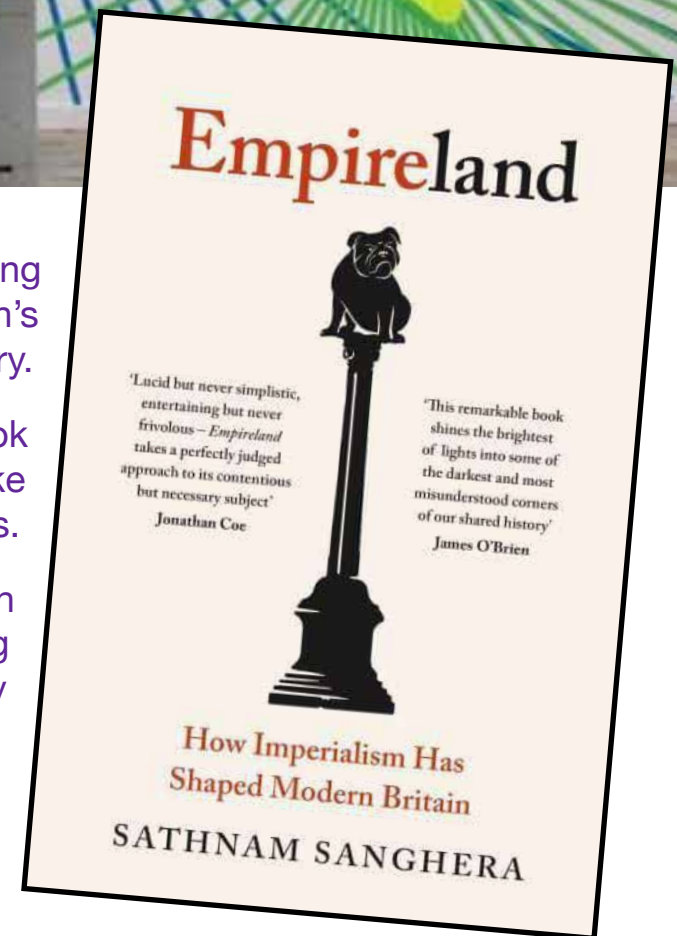
Sathnam Sanghera's recently published book '**Empireland**' offers an overview that feels like the stimulus we need to start the process.

His ideas about education are narrow but in just over 200 pages he captures something of 500 years of history and opens up key debates about the implications for us today.

The book gives us a lot to think about but he offers a disposition to find positive ways forward ... rather than add to division.

Thinking about such challenges builds on many Elephant Times articles, in particular **ET[3]** ... as Daniel Stone put it:

"We were never asked to reflect on how and why, people were able to dehumanise other people for centuries, and which parts of that psyche are still alive in us today"



Visions of education responding to the challenges of an uncertain future Ubuntu

A Tide~ partnership project with School of Education, University of Worcester

The Elephant Times [ET] was envisaged as a vehicle to stimulate Tide's future work, not only in terms of themes and issues, but also potentially offering different ways of working. The latter became especially relevant as the pandemic developed, resulting in a need to review previous strategies. Further, ET was conceived, partly, so as to utilise Tide's considerable catalogue of [free downloadable resources](#).

This project illustrates these characteristics, using the stimulus of previous Tide~ Ubuntu projects to inspire a fresh look at our own aspirations for schools to respond better to learner needs in the context of post-Covid global uncertainty.

Virtual meetings considered the basic tenets of Ubuntu. Participants' thoughts then turned to developing an issue of the ET exploring how the basic principles of Ubuntu [see box] might inform education's future development.

Contributors consider Ubuntu in a wide range of contexts: in Early Years Education and Care; in Music Education; in how schools may respond to the challenges faced by learners as they return from lockdown.

Coordination Group:

- ❑ Richard Woolley
- ❑ Elena Lengthorn
- ❑ Clive Harber
- ❑ Jeff Serf
- ❑ Scott Sinclair



The Elephant Times [51]

From 'Towards Ubuntu' page 16

Fundamental value	Educational implications
1. Democracy	Empowerment of population to exercise democratic rights; provision of skills to participate, think critically and act responsibly.
2. Social justice & equity	Access to education is the most important resource in addressing poverty - only then will liberty be achieved. Reconciliation requires social justice to address past injustices - education for all is an essential element of social justice.
3. Equality	Access for all to an educational provision that does not discriminate on any grounds. Equality in the treatment of all, by all.
4. Non-sexism & non-racism	Regardless of race or gender, learners afforded the same opportunities and the same degrees of security.
5. Ubuntu [human dignity]	Mutual understanding and active appreciation of the value of human differences.
6. Open society	Participation rather than observation; empowerment to think and act; a culture of dialogue and debate.
7. Accountability [Responsibility]	Power and responsibility for all involved in education - learners, educators, managers, parents, etc.
8. Rule of law	Rules within which learners, educators, managers, parents etc, operate - including the law of the land
9. Respect	Precondition for communication and teamwork - schools require mutual respect between all partners.
10. Reconciliation	Acceptance of all individuals through learning about each other, valuing differences and diversity

The starting point for the contributors' thinking was what Barack Obama described as Nelson Mandela's greatest gift ...

"There is a word in South Africa – Ubuntu – that describes Mandela's greatest gift; his recognition that we are all bound together in ways that can be invisible to the eye; that there is a oneness to humanity; that we achieve ourselves by sharing ourselves with others, and caring for those around us."

Obama, at Nelson Mandela's memorial service, 10/12/2013

Such thoughts are surely strong enough to generate a review of learners' experiences in school and to offer one guide as to how Tide~ may function in the future.

As part of the AGM process we plan to review the approach used to develop this project.



[Back to contents](#)

Tide~ on line magazine

How to stay sane in an age of division

A conversation

The group ...

Helen Backhouse

Dorit Braun

Tim Boyes

Vipin Chauhan

Rohini Corfield

Cathryn Gathercole

Darius Jackson

Lucy Kirkham

Elena Lengthorn

Audry Osler

Jeff Serf

Scott Sinclair

Elif Shafak is a British-Turkish author who is entitled to wear many hats – novelist, commentator, activist, strategic change maker and academic with a PhD in Political Science. Her non-fiction works include **How to stay sane in an age of division** (2020, Profile Books). In this short, almost essay-length, book Shafak posits that **“ours is an age of contagious anxiety”**, in which many feel overwhelmed by day-to-day events, “by injustice, by suffering”. She considers the often pernicious role of formal and social media, how extremist views are moving into private and public areas, and the trichotomy of information, knowledge and wisdom.

Shafak does, however, offer some hope in arguing that listening to each other, and especially those with different views to one’s own, can **“nurture democracy, empathy and our faith in a kinder and wiser future”**.

A Tide~ network group came together to discuss Shafak’s work and what inspiration it might offer for Tide’s future. The group began by responding to -

“What one thing stands out as being important for us to debate?”
Any of the comments [below] could have been the starting point for a lengthy and absorbing discussion.

Flexible / Multiple identities

Identities

Public spaces invaded by extremist views

No short cuts to understanding complexity

Apathy as a response to being overwhelmed

Damaging to reduce to a single characteristic

Burden of being a teacher

However, time forced the group to focus on selected aspects of Shafak’s discourse, especially the manner in which she **challenges individuals to become active citizens without being “preachy”; to accept complexity of issues; and to recognise emotional and logical aspects of creating change**. As the discussion progressed, Shafak’s themes, which include the polarisation of society, the creation of more ‘us-them situations’, and the introduction of “Storyland” - a place with “no borders, no passports or police, no barbed wire fences, and no need for any of these” - seized the group’s attention.

On reflection, the conversation coalesced around key themes.

Conscious Optimism / Creative Pessimism

A recurring theme in the discussion was the need to address the pessimism within society that has been accentuated during the pandemic, and channel it into creating “something better” - be that in school, the local area, British society or the global community. Hans Rosling’s possibilism rather than optimism was quoted as providing a lens through which to view the future, one that may help overcome feelings of helplessness.

Such feelings may originate from the sheer complexity of “future problems to be faced”, some new, some existing before Covid.

Shafak’s entreaty to not be afraid of complexity was echoed by the group and seen as a prerequisite to understanding current events. However, it was suggested that the nature of the demands on schools pre-Covid did not lend themselves to looking in depth at complex issues or at trying to unpack them so both teachers and learners could gain more understanding.

It was recognised that craving simplicity would help no-one, including learners, to handle “big issues” that are complex by their very nature.

Danger or privilege of withdrawing/becoming observer from afar

Does education guarantee anything?

Importance of learning from difference

Danger of staying in an echo chamber



Post-Pandemic Challenges

Deep divisions existed within society (be that national or global) prior to, say, March 2020 and there is evidence that those divisions have since become greater. How can we help heal society's deep divisions? How can fractured relationships be repaired? **The causes of such divisions are far from simple and one very real challenge is “How do we get learners to handle the complex, underlying causes?”**



In the past many teachers have welcomed the opportunity to work collaboratively on making complex issues accessible to learners, and one outcome of ‘home learning’ may be the need for teachers to resurrect the notion of learners talking together to share experiences and to deconstruct complexity. It was suggested that such collaboration in the past, say through Wenger’s Communities of Practice, had sometimes become a means of management, rather than a framework for teacher support and creativity. One challenge would be to avoid this pitfall.

Individuals and communities will need space and support to cope with the post-pandemic landscape. To simply abandon learners to adjust alone will not suffice. Teachers will have to enable learners to deconstruct complexity because it is quite possible that in the future learners will feel lost because the world will in some ways be different to how it was, and in ways that as yet are unclear. Networks and systems will be needed to support learners as they try to cope and to help them lose any fear of complexity and, indeed, the unknown. This is equally true of teachers as they too adjust.

Talk and conversations were seen as crucial for learning (for all ages), but not just in an “echo chamber” i.e. with those who hold the same views as oneself. There is a very real need to have conversations with people you disagree with and to listen to other viewpoints and opinions. These are difficult conversations, perhaps encapsulated by the phrase ...

“I disagree with your view, not you”.

Teachers will need to help pupils develop skills such as listening to those with whom they disagree so they can engage in these sometimes uncomfortable conversations.

Most communication channels, particularly social media, have become dominated by political personalities, with overly simplistic phrases and slogans. There is a need to get beyond these ‘images’ and slogans to reveal the underlying causes as to why such individuals and groups get support and to explore the ideas they represent ... and to address such individuals’ and communities’ concerns, say, relating to migration.

However, it is important that we reflect the breadth of how people experienced the pandemic. In the discussion we identified some positives for us; for example, time to think, to enhance existing or learn new creative skills such as art, cookery, music, as well as spend more time with family and loved ones.



It may also be that during the pandemic the nature of education has resulted in a slowing of tempo in the classroom and that this can be utilised to expand learning away from the pursuit of knowledge, as defined by, say, a set of facts, to encompass aspects that previously were marginalised or even ignored; an opportunity to distinguish between ...

knowledge (that gives an illusion of understanding),
understanding (a realisation of how things are) and
wisdom (an ability to act and think with understanding).

When humans act with wisdom, they draw on both “head and heart”, employing logic and emotion, and such emotional intelligence enables us to both shape and review the impact of our behaviour on others.



Shafak's book is optimistic in the face of such challenges, inspiring a focus on hope, on better listening and on creating an environment where people without power have opportunities to speak and be heard; on becoming active citizens willing and able to challenge abuses of power.

Tide~ Post-Pandemic

It follows from what is stated above that many teachers would benefit from mutual support in supporting their learners. For example, access to resources with integrity, including resources that help learners assess the value of information they receive from a wide range of sources. To be able to do this, teachers have a key role in helping learners develop critical media literacy, perhaps especially relating to social media.

- ❑ *Would learners benefit from a framework of knowledge within which to ask questions, and develop empathy?*
- ❑ *Where is that framework to come from?*
- ❑ *How would it best be used?*

As teachers we are well placed to consider how schools could be different so as to help learners make sense of the world in which they live. What should stay the same? What could change? What contribution could we, as a network, make?

How can we avoid the rush to get back 'to normal' mitigating against rebuilding better? What have we learned?

In conclusion, consider what Elif Shafak says.

"After the pandemic we won't go back to the way things were before. And we shouldn't. 'What we call the beginning is often the end ... The end is where we start from.'"

References

Rosling, H., 2019. Factfulness. Flammarion.

<https://wenger-trayner.com/introduction-to-communities-of-practice/>

Wenger, E., 1998. Communities of practice: learning, meaning and identity. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

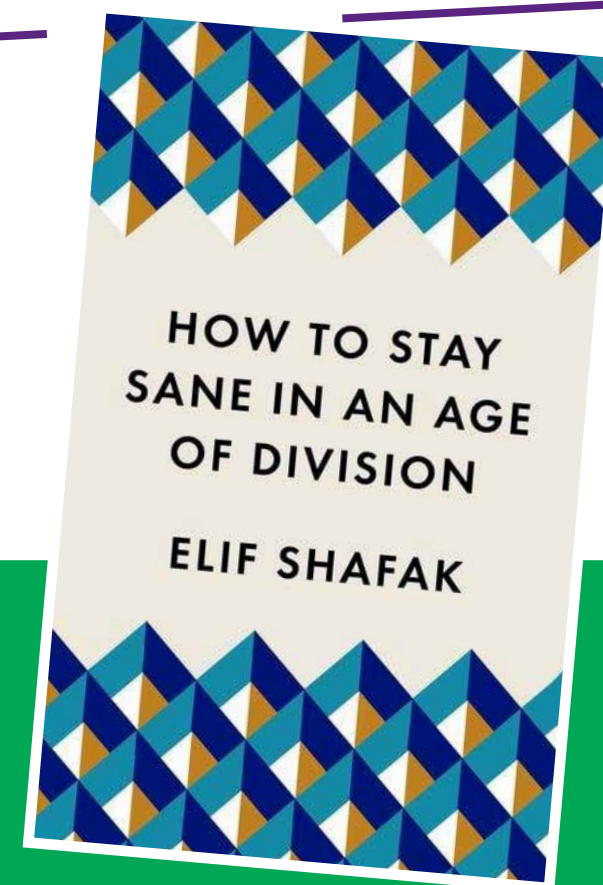
T.S.Eliot, "Little Gidding", The Four Quartets, Faber and Faber, London, 1941.

Consider the inspiration of this book let us know what you think

From our experience we recommend that ***'How to stay sane in a world of division'*** is a useful stimulus to thinking about contemporary challenges and the implications for teaching.

We would value feedback from other individuals or groups making use of the book.

Please email us



Seeking Conversations

empathy

us - us & them

identity

complexity

democracy

optimism

creative pessimism

multiple belonging

'the other'

anger, anxiety, confusion

fatigue, apathy, wisdom

connect to 'the other'



Connecting Dialogues ...

proposals for a new Tide~ framework

Seeking expressions of interest

Please use this form

Discussion about Elif Shafik's book - 'How to stay sane in a world of division' [see page 14] has led to thinking about an initiative to engage with the challenges she profiles.

We believe we should be concerned about a "rush back to normality" ... that there is a need to reflect on the Covid 19 experience as **an opportunity to think afresh**.

In particular there is a need for approaches that enable a positive disposition to exploring division[s] and to engaging with ideas about an uncertain future locally and globally.

Tide~ has a role of offering 'space' to stimulate our own learning as teachers as well as opportunities for creativity about teaching strategies and learner stimulus.

'Connecting Dialogues' will be a participative learning and teaching process that enables and empowers participants to:

- ☐ engage in critical dialogues about diverse experiences, locally and globally
- ☐ make connections between local experiences here [in our own place] and those in other parts of the world.

To do this we need to start with learner "dialogue skills" and review what they mean in practice, including from a young age. Practically this project can make use of a wide range of existing stimuli, but there is also a need to generate new resources relating to contemporary situations.

The project will also create a new core framework for the Tide~ Network building on a range of past work about learning, such as the spiral from Essential Learning illustrated opposite.

Co-ordination group ...

- ☐ Dorit Braun
- ☐ Vipin Chauhan
- ☐ Rohini Corfield
- ☐ Jeff Serf
- ☐ Scott Sinclair



Dialogue skills ...

- ◇ to connect personally with people - people from other schools - people with diverse cultural or life experiences;
- ◇ to connect with the natural world - to connect different aspects of environment, locally and globally;
- ◇ to connect with political and economic perspectives locally and globally;
- ◇ to connect with people locally and globally who lack power, voice and visibility;

These skills contribute to a life long capacity to reflect on ideas and make connections between different aspects of learning.

Reflective Dialogue - enabling learning

We believe learners need to build up their own critical process for assessing reality, even more so in the context of social media and increasing "fake news".

The project will develop a core approach to Dialogue with an emphasis on enabling - using frameworks to:

- ☐ make connections;
- ☐ engage complexity;
- ☐ generate questions;
- ☐ explore dispositions.



From **Essential Learning for everyone**
Section 3: Building a framework

Get involved. Please register your interest [using this form](#).

We are seeking expressions of interest from education practitioners:

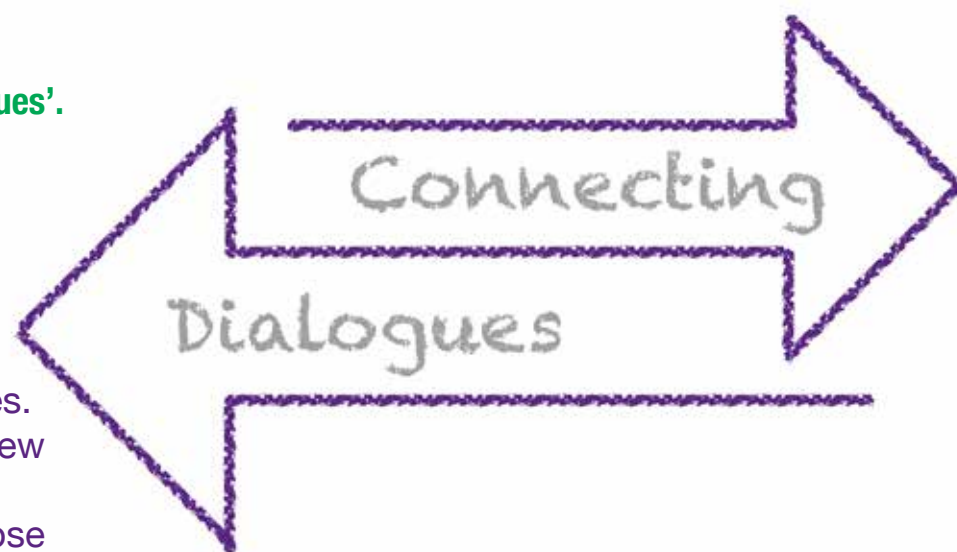
a] to contribute to a core ET publication: **'Connecting Dialogues'**.

We are seeking articles about approaches to dialogue and useful resources at each key stage and from a variety of subject areas.

b] to focus on specific themes. We are seeking articles and new stimulus for student dialogue. To start the process we propose groups working on units about

☐ **'Britain and Ireland - Ireland and Britain'** [See opposite]

☐ **'The Pandemic as a global issue'** [See mind map below]



Covid 19 has amplified many key global issues and raised important questions about the need for international co-operation, for example about vaccines.

Grow the community

At this stage we need to grow the community ... to involve a range of practitioners in an approach to project design stimulated by [Wenger and Trayner](#) who talk about "cultivating a community of practice".

There is a wealth of existing practice to draw on, not least many Tide~ publications, such as ['Essential Learning'](#) for background thinking and ['Fat Felts and Sugar Paper'](#) for very practical activities.

But there is also a need for fresh ideas about both the approach and stimulus material relating to contemporary 'division' issues.

These ideas also link to those generated by the the [Tide~ Worcester University project](#) [page 12] and thinking about ['Commonwealth Awareness'](#) [page 8].

Is the relationship between Ireland and Britain still a microcosm of international misunderstanding?



[Half the lies are true](#) was published some 35 years ago as a follow up to a event that brought practitioners together from Britain and Ireland.

We propose that it is timely to revisit this question in 2021 as a stimulus to **'Connecting Dialogues'**.

We hope to attract articles and stimulus material for student dialogue from each of the jurisdictions in 'these islands'.

We propose to develop this unit in co-operation with the Irish development education organisation [80:20](#).



Mali revisited ...

'Where camels are better than cars'

Sarah Snyder

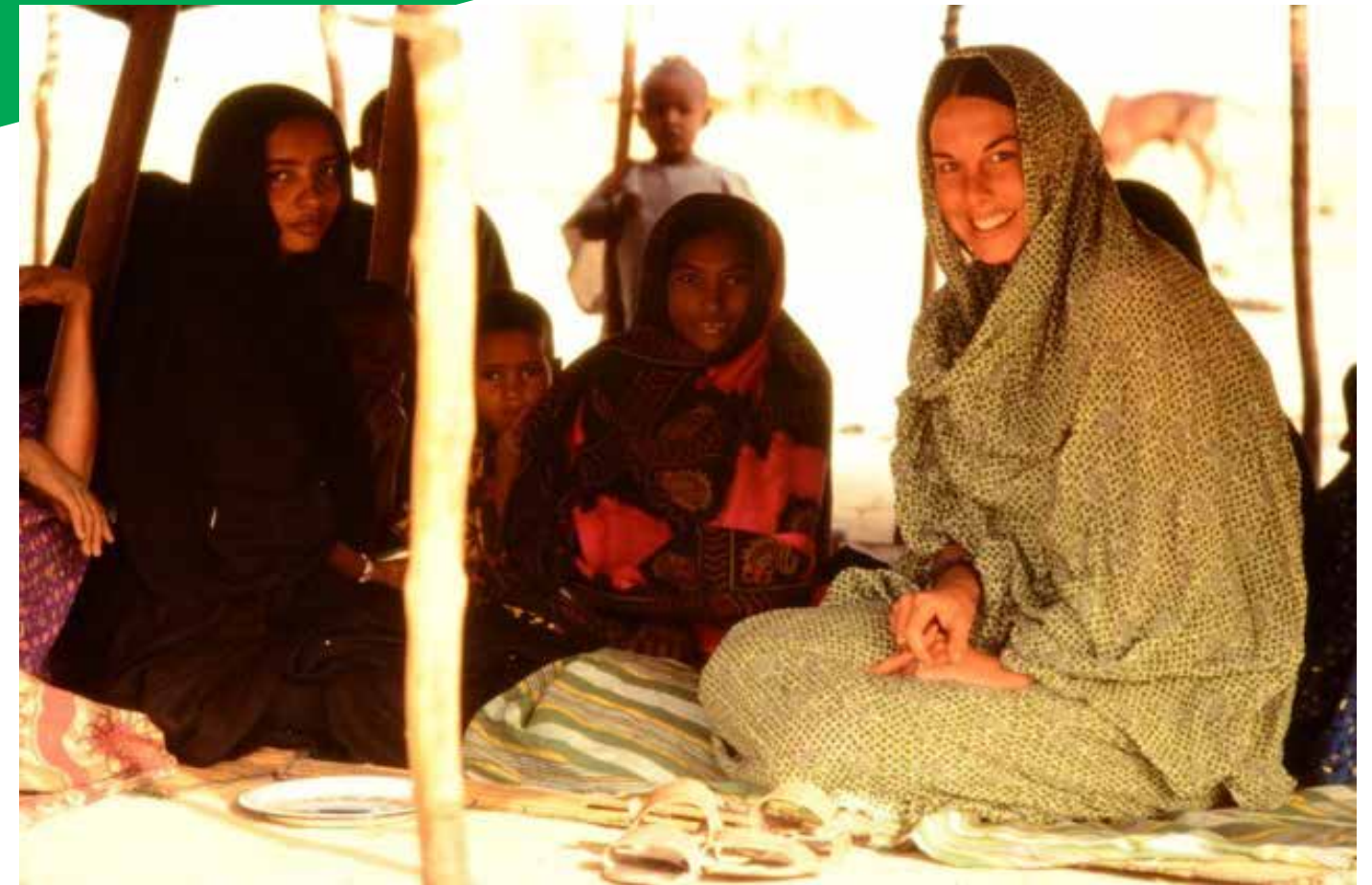
Challenges in Mali and Britain

Living and travelling with the Tuareg nomads in the Sahara isn't exactly everyone's first year of marriage, but that's what John, my husband, and I did in 1989-90. It was not long after Live Aid, when British televisions showed pictures of starving Africans with begging bowls, waiting for our generous donations to relieve their hunger. A story of white helps black, in which white hold the keys to change, the power, and black was, at best, a passive recipient.

This could not have been further from the truth in Mali. Located in The Sahel, whilst environmentally fragile, it is home to vibrant, multi-cultural societies which have much to teach us, including qualities many of us have lost – time, respect, loyalty, resilience, entrepreneurship, story-telling, care for the elderly, to name a few.

We wanted to demonstrate the many gifts Africa has to offer the world, including multi-cultural living, laughter and living so closely attuned to the natural world in a very fragile environment. We focused on the market place in the village of Doentza, about 500 miles west of Bamako, Mali's capital. It was a gathering point for many different people, exemplifying the way in which different economic lifestyles co-exist in vital ways, trading fish for grain, fruit and veg for meat and milk, and so on.

There were, of course, underbellies to this euphoric description. The Tuareg keep slaves, a separate ethnic group called the Bella. After many years of living together, the Bella are now integrated within society, supposedly free to leave, but choosing not to. Yet chores are clearly delineated – Tuareg women do very few menial tasks – and there is



no inter-marriage between the two groups. Local flare ups between pastoralists and agriculturalists, whilst rare at that time, were violent, and medical clinics few and far between. Incidences of baby and child mortality were high, and we witnessed the tragedy of 'unnecessary' young deaths from, for example, diarrhoea-related sickness.

We lived with four of the groups co-existing in the Doentza market and surrounding desert:

- ◆ Dogon farmers,
- ◆ Bozo fishermen,
- ◆ Tuareg pastoralists,
- ◆ Songhai horticulturalists.

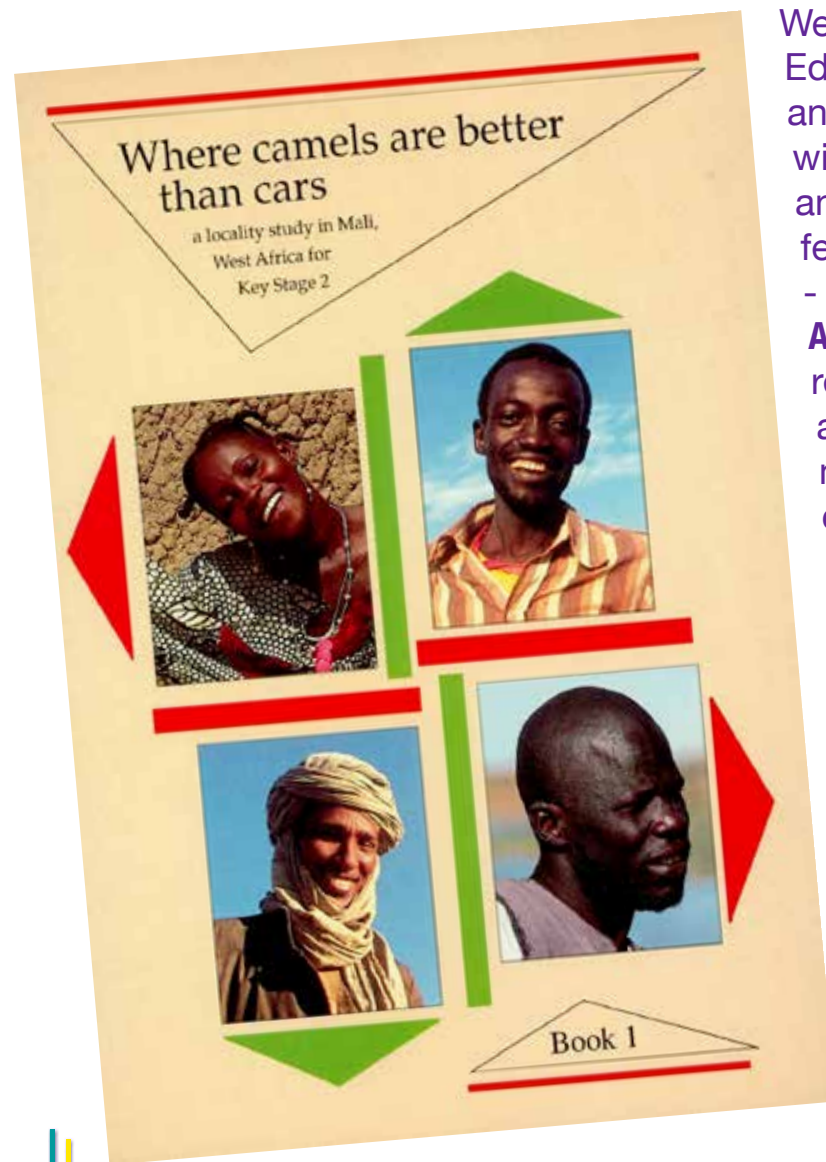
We experienced the symbiosis of their multi-cultural, "multi-economic" lifestyle. On our return from Mali, we wanted to capture that and share it.



Sarah Snyder is Founding Director Rose Castle Foundation and the Archbishop of Canterbury's Special Adviser for Reconciliation.

She reflects on challenges from her experiences in Mali as an anthropologist, working with DEC and how that connects to what she is doing now.





We approached the Development Education Centre in Birmingham and ended up setting up a project with a group of teachers to produce an educational resource pack. It featured the lives of four people - **Fatime (Songhrai), Moktar (Dogon), Amadou (Bozo) and El Malud (Tuareg)** - representing four diverse ethnicities and economies. They met in the market place – noisy, crowded centres in which relationships mattered more than transactions, though the latter enabled a functioning economy where everyone has a part to play. The ‘car park’ was for camels and donkeys, not vehicles. In fact the only cars in the region were owned by international NGOs, Toyota land cruisers that frequently broke down and waited weeks for new parts to arrive. Hence the pack title: **‘Where camels are better than cars’.**

Both Books 1 & 2 and the photographs are available to review or download

We hoped to introduce positive images and stories of diversity and coexistence to the classroom, and to engage young people in the real colourful stories of individuals living in a part of the world that might otherwise seem very remote, very challenging and very different to their own.

Today - my challenges lie in two, overlapping areas.

Firstly - I lead the [Rose Castle Foundation](#) which is committed to equipping the next generation and their teachers to cross the divides within their spheres of influence, and **understand ways to disagree more healthily.**

We are not teaching unnecessary compromise, but rather a recognition that respecting our differences is part and parcel of living and working well together. We need to find ways of working shoulder to shoulder rather than back to back.

Much of the work I do now emanates from that experience in Mali.

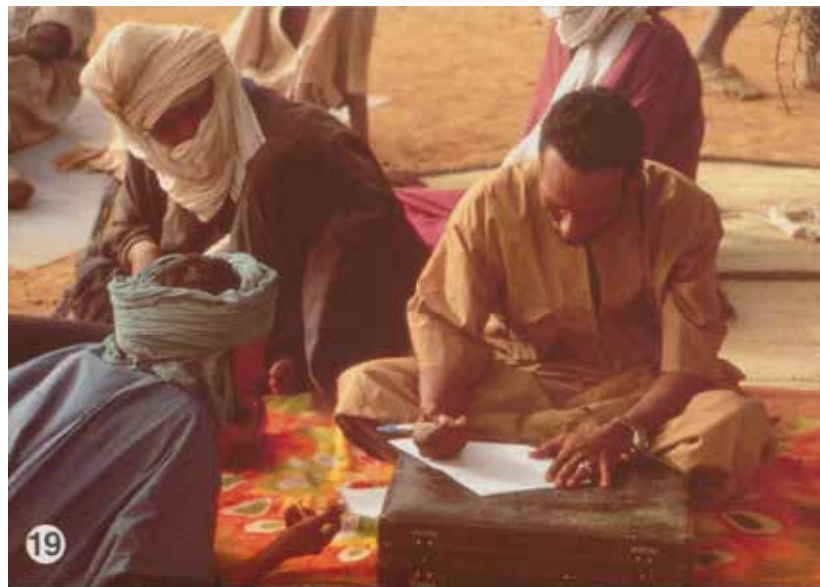
We witnessed first hand the religious dimension of life in that part of the world, in which one’s ideology permeates every aspect of life.

It is not just a private affair on a Sunday (or Friday or any other day) like here in the UK. We also witnessed the symbiotic nature of living in a fragile environment, in which one group’s productivity can support another’s in very mutual ways.

We recognised and hugely valued the very different lenses through which we experienced life there.

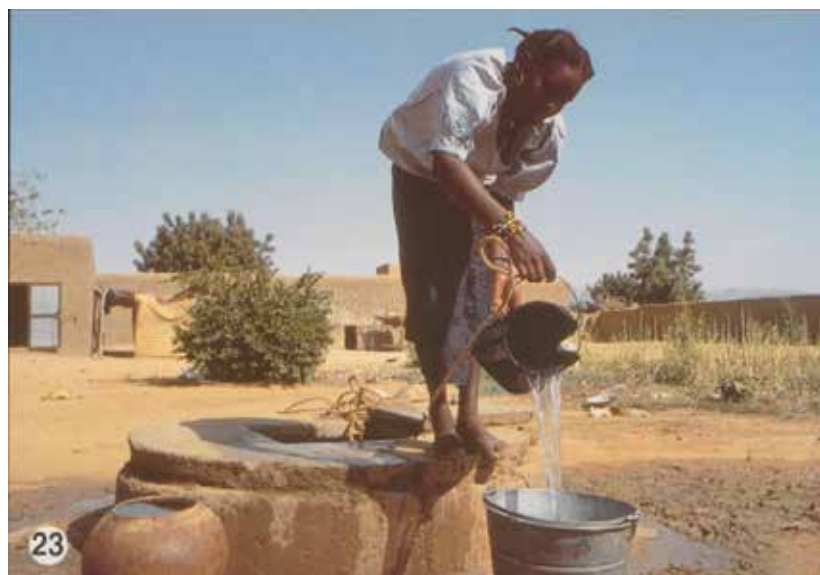
For example, the way in which the Tuareg have 100 different names for grains of sand, and the humour of the women as they observe and sometimes ridicule the behaviour of their menfolk. They are a matrilineal society, so the women have, for example, a significant hereditary role.





Secondly - as the Archbishop of Canterbury's Advisor for Reconciliation - I now work as a mediator and peace-builder in parts of the world where communities like we witnessed in Mali are no longer happily co-existing, but are in deep conflict.

I long to see communities flourish in ways that we observed in the Doentza market place, and **know that it is possible for people with very differing lifestyles, economies and beliefs to coexist.**



Tragically, these communities can also fall prey to divisive ideologies and clashing lifestyles, for example, between pastoralists and agriculturalists as we see now in northern Nigeria with the Fulani.

At Rose Castle we have developed **12 habits of a reconciler**: a series of reflections and practices to help us prevent and transform conflict within our own contexts - at home, at work, in the community, or in our places of worship.

The process has brought together Jewish, Christian and Muslim theologians and practitioners.

The habits are

**Hospitality Curiosity Generosity
Empathy Vulnerability Humility
Lament Forgiveness Gratitude
Hope Stewardship Creativity**



Challenges for Young People today ...

For me, they face two challenges and, therefore, we all do.

Firstly, the majority of our young people have grown up in a world where they and their parents have, on the whole, experienced peace and not war. **So there's almost an inability to understand the implications of moving towards alienation between communities, and what usually results from social fracturing.**

Secondly, the impact of social media should open us up to a wide spectrum of different ideologies, cultures and ways of life. However, what happens is that our own lives become "normalised". Through algorithms we are mostly unaware of, we're fed more and more of our own "likes", "views like us", "shopping like us", and so we imagine the whole world thinks and acts like we do.

This is true for children too, because they are seeing and hearing more from social media than from interacting with people who are different. What if we had a "Surprise me" button alongside the "Like" button? One that throws you an opposite view and challenges your usual ways of thinking.

We become more informed about our own views when in the presence of people who hold different views.

I am aware of Tide~ debates about the work of Elif Shafak, this observation is pivotal to those ideas. [See page 14]

Finally; The Future?

There is a very real need for us to recognise how different groups of people are able to coexist in a shared, often fragile environment, in which competition for scarce resources can lead to unhealthy conflict. **We need to find complementary ways of living rather than antagonistic ways.** That's the desired end-goal, but it's a long and challenging and difficult journey.



Bridging gaps and building wisdom

You can't change what you can't see... or feel

Harriet Marshall

A few weeks ago, I tried to explain development education to a teacher friend. My definition went along the lines of

"helping people see, understand and feel connections and interconnections, disconnections and gaps in order to make the world a more just and sustainable place... it's a pedagogical approach that helps us recognise power, purpose, perception and misperception".

I then went on to draw lots of circles to illustrate – alas judging by my friend's face by the end, I was only partially successful!

Recent reading has caused me to draw lots of circles to represent fields, ideas and world-views in order to understand the disconnect and interrelationships between them.

Elephant Times [ET 2] posed some vital questions to me about moving forward in the field of development education – for example ...

Mick Waters:

Are we stuck in a model of curriculum-design that will always be antagonistic to pluralist or alternative world-views?

Elena Lengthorn:

Do we need to be better at working with 'facts' to counter the negativity instinct?

Robin Richardson:

Are our motivations for making this world a more sustainable place anything other than self-interest, or the avoidance of premature death?

What are our key contextual constants and shifts?

A long-standing dilemma and raison d'être for global learning* links to what might be called a '**connection gap**' between seeing the need for change to happen in order to make this planet a more just and sustainable place for all (species) and actually wanting to make that change happen so much that we actually transform behaviour, policy or even systems.

Harriet Marshall
Education Consultant
(Freelance) and
Head of Educational
Research (Lyfta).

Twitter: @ham1

Harriet reflects on
issues in
[Elephant Times \[ET 2\]](#)

* **Global learning.**
Which I see as a loose umbrella term used to include global citizenship education, development education, education for/about sustainable development, futures education and other adjectival educational concepts.



The Elephant Times [51]



Contextual dilemmas ...

1 - that **socially 'perceived' subject hierarchies within schools** are immensely powerful, value-laden social constructs within society and look set to continue to haunt any interdisciplinary curricula for the foreseeable future [see any sociologist of education that has ever written];

2 - that those in the field of global or development education need to also **reflect upon the instrumentalism** within our own agendas ^[1] when they critique others; and

3 - that **many teachers ARE actively engaged** in different 'forms' of global learning but perhaps prefer to use different labels ... [from UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools, to diversity education through BLM or LGBTQ projects, to #TeachSDGs or #TeachtheFuture].



But for this article, let's stick to the '**connection gap**' issue.

Most people agree in principle that we need to act now to address our global 'wicked' problems like climate change and biodiversity loss** ... with the exception of a minority who are highly unlikely to be reading the Elephant Times.

Millions of people have watched David Attenborough's 'Our Planet' which significantly topped the Netflix chart in 2019 and the number of those aware of the UN's SDGs is slowly increasing (although we in UK have a long way to go as illustrated [here](#)). But how to shift our mindset to such an extent that we 'act' is a whole different matter.

** A wicked problem is an issue that is difficult to explain and inherently challenging to solve, e.g. poverty, many of the SDGs.

[Back to contents](#)

Tide on line magazine

... and ongoing concerns ... stimulated by ET 2

4. Some of us in the environmental action or awareness-raising world occasionally **forget that we are operating in a bubble** – that not everyone prioritises nature, that not everyone loves animals and trees, and not everyone ‘feels’ these issues [no matter how much evidence or emotion you throw at them].

As the elections here and in the US have illustrated, people hate being told off or told ‘how they think’ is ‘wrong’.

If we enter into that approach we lose the very people whose mindsets we are trying to engage.

5. Often ‘mindset change’ strategies relating to global learning and climate change target formal schooling and school curricula in isolation from an intergenerational or life-long learning approach. There has been an increase in projects in this vein often linked with ed tech or youth leadership and some of these have utilised PR messaging that implies sustainable development or global citizenship is new or revolutionary.

They may not have been as technologically sophisticated, but projects in this field have been around in the UK for 50 years, as Tide~ knows well. So, how can we better connect projects and generations in the increasingly broad field of development education without dismissing the new or disregarding the more established?

6. The contrast between ‘**6th extinction**’ predictions juxtaposed with the ‘**2nd renaissance in human capabilities**’ has the danger of appearing so complex and overwhelming that it will lead to inertia, brain freeze and avoidance.

Do we have tools to navigate this tension in the dev. ed. world?

What tools are out there to help us achieve ‘wisdom’?

In various keynotes and media appearances in 2019-20 both Jane Goodall and David Attenborough have been calling for greater ‘wisdom’ to combat the world’s great environmental and biodiversity threats... but what does this actually mean? To bridge the connection gap we can craft beautiful ‘global citizenship’ curricula and teacher training courses, we can push for the prioritisation of SDG 4.7 within government policy and practice, and we can work hard to support teachers who share



By 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4, Target 4.7

our vision... but if the ‘wisdom’ is not co-owned by the target audience, if the connection between ‘seeing/understanding’ the change and ‘feeling’ it in order to ‘act’ differently is not achieved, then is this always the best use of our time?

With these dilemmas in mind, I recall Scott Sinclair’s invitation for us to return to some of the why, what and how questions of development education. Here are my thoughts.

Simply put, **I think we would benefit from a bit more neuroscience (the why), economics (the what) and systems-thinking (the how) and a reminder of the wealth of expertise we already have as a global education field.**

a] **Neuroscience** helps us better understand how we actually learn [rather than how we ‘suppose’ we might learn based on social norms and generations of formal schooling]. The reason I think it can really enhance our field is that there are some interesting findings ^[2 & 3] emerging on the relationship between human connection, empathy, learning and the significance of the emotional dimension of learning.

When we create resources that are aimed at challenging stereotypes or embracing diversity or recognising alternative world-views, are we really taking on board the empathy-building aspect of this process?

Development education pedagogy has been talking about the connection between head, heart and hand models of transformative learning [for sustainability values for example] for decades, but are we simultaneously providing rigorous evidence to back up this approach beyond the anecdotal?



b] Economics and quantitative data are not always within a humanities expert's or social scientist's comfort zone, but we ignore them at our peril.

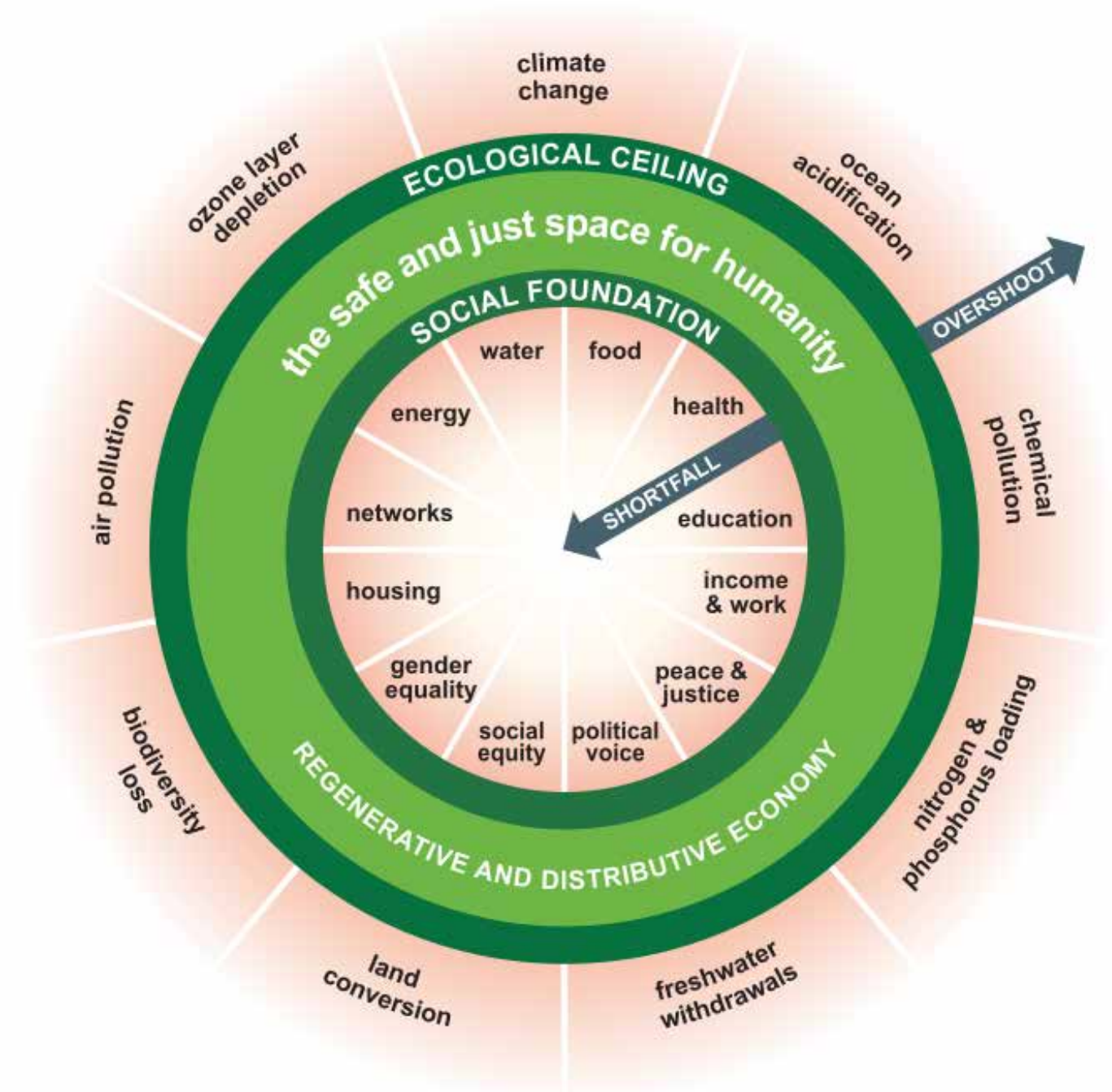
The brilliant Kate Raworth makes regenerative economics more accessible than ever before via her work on '**doughnut economics**' and this knowledge is vitally important in the field of development education. What it helps us to do is to better explore 'purpose' and 'resilience', relating planetary and societal resilience through an accessible, economic lens.

c] Systems thinking focuses our attention on interconnections, synthesis, causality, and the fact that design is 'fundamentally world-view dependent, and the design decisions of previous generations, as well as the present generation have... shaped our world-view and value systems'^[4].

It helps us see systems as circular rather than linear and look at relationships rather than issues in silos – for example it helps us imagine the circular economy and sustainable living within ecosystems. It is a great framework for looking more deeply at the SDGs for example rather than looking at any single goal in isolation from the others.

d] The educational field of global learning – back in 2005 I called the movement for global education a 'field' because it both catered for its heterogeneity (i.e. different approaches each with a unique history) as well as its commonalities (such as broader social justice and environmental agendas). As Doug Bourn has since argued, 'GE can be seen to have developed over the past decade as a distinctive body of thinking, research, ways of working and practices' (2020:19). This field manifests itself in research hubs, academic journals, researchers and practitioners at an international level.

The rich work of practitioners and theorists (such as Vanessa Andreotti and Karen Pashby) and the influence of critical pedagogy in the field is important. Though an expert will point out a myriad of ways we can improve, the field has advocated post-colonial thinking and generally been good at taking an intersectional approach to identities and prejudice [e.g. taking into account people's overlapping identities - race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, age - and their experiences].



Doughnut diagram source - <https://doughnuteconomics.org>

In fact, in relation to movements like Black Lives Matter and stop climate change, those within have championed these messages for many years.

To summarise, development methodologies and practices that encourage a different way of hearing perspectives or reframing an issue (e.g. Philosophy for Children) and academic work like '*The Bloomsbury Handbook of Global Education and Learning*' (Bourn 2020), collectively provide an excellent selection of tools to help us achieve wisdom!





How might this thinking further influence development education practice?

As to how these four points (a-d) manifest themselves in our plans, pedagogies and practice ... *I believe the opportunities are endless and the appetite amongst educators is strong.*

[Lyfta.com](https://lyfta.com) is a good example of a global learning approach taking on board some of this wisdom as it develops and grows. Lyfta is a digital learning platform that captures human stories around the world through powerful short films.

Lyfta makes it clear that these stories are partial, simply glimpses into the unique lives of others around the world, but valuable in so many ways as immersive learning experiences

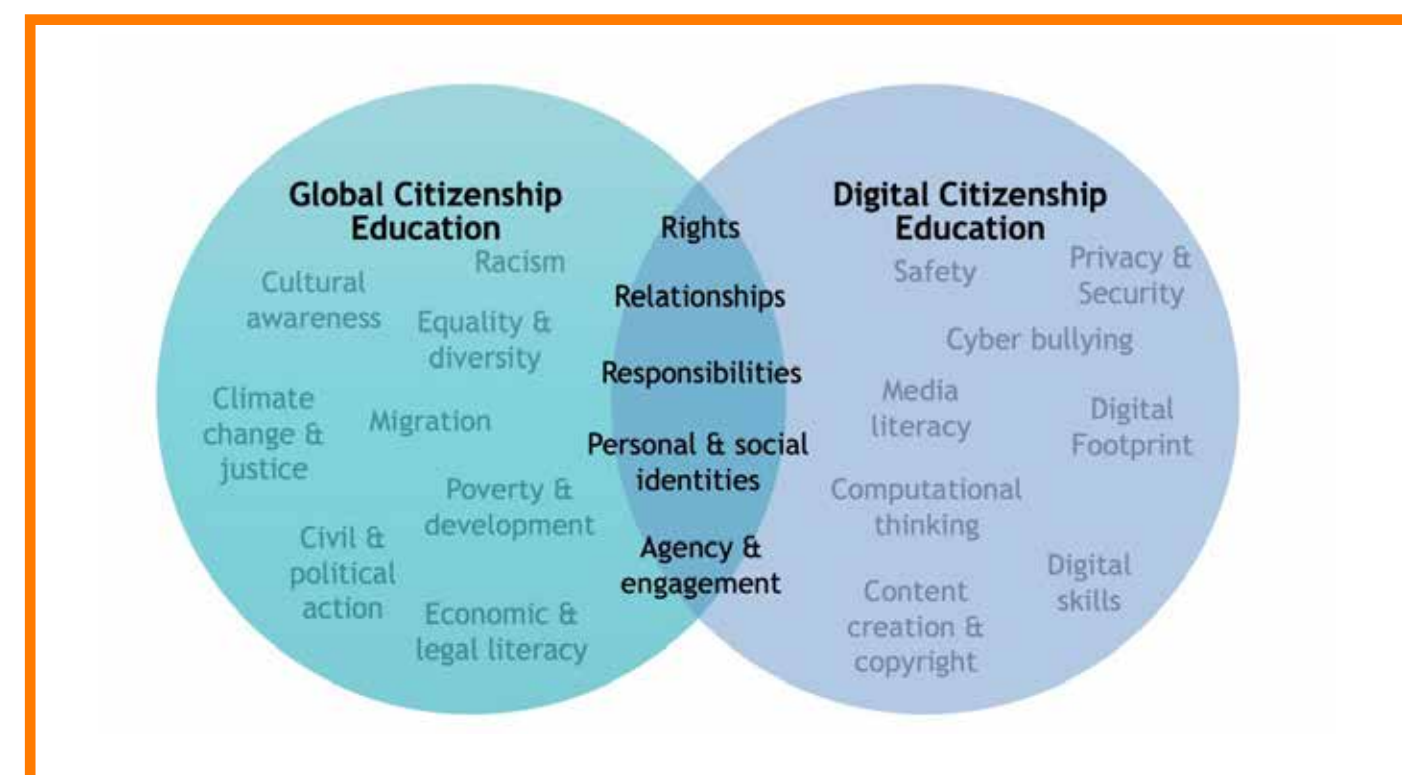
These films are then turned into 360 degree interactive spaces in which teachers and their students can learn about people, places, values and skills. The teacher resources, developed by practitioners, are mapped to the SDGs.

Lyfta has been well-received in primary and secondary schools across Finland and the UK, in part because of how engaged students and teachers have been with the authenticity and diversity of the stories encountered throughout the resource.

One of the strengths of this global learning resource is that it recognises the importance of building meaningful connection and empathy to key global issues in order to move towards action because just 'seeing' or 'understanding' the change or action required for a better world is not quite enough.

Lyfta chooses to achieve this through the ancient art of human storytelling enriched by the modern art of film making and the underpinned by the pedagogic expertise of teachers to achieve an immersive, educational experience.

This is an example of the critical dev. ed. work within the digital learning space ... an important space for us to 'get right' as highlighted by recent research by Dublin City University ...



From: Martinez-Sainz & Barry in 'Digital Technologies to Advance Global Citizenship Education in Schools' - ([Centre for Human Rights and Citizenship Education, 2020](#)).

Links

1. [Marshall 2012](#)
2. [Immordino-Yang, Darling-Hammond and Krone 2019](#)
3. [Sylvan 2019](#)
4. [Wahl 2017](#)
5. [Bourne 2015](#)

