

COLLABORATING TEACHER REFLECTION

Mentor Name	Sangay Biddha (Faculty of English)
Mentor Discipline Area	English language and literacy (Primary Education)
Artist Name	Trish Donald
Activity Name	Children’s literature: Creating Characters, Stories, Masks and Games This alignment document applies to the following lessons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson 1 – Understanding the Role of Illustrators • Lesson 2 - Creating Characters • Lesson 3 - Exploring Genre and Story Development • Lesson 4 - Creating a Picture Book • Lesson 5 - Mask Making and Performance • Lesson 6 - Expanding Stories and Learning Through Games
Activity Outline/ Description Include a brief overview of the activity and who was involved.	<p>The artist, Trish Donald and I (Sangay Biddha) collaborated to teach the module ‘Children’s Literature’ (ENA404) in two sections of B. Ed (Primary Education) final year students (of Paro College of Education) for a month. Trish was also kind enough to offer similar two-hour workshops to M. Ed (English) and B Ed (Dzongkha) students.</p> <p>Many interesting hands-on activities related to writing and illustrating children’s books were carried out. The activities engaged students in creating characters using drawings, developing the character traits, deciding on the theme, audience and genre, and finally, writing a story.</p>
How did the activity relate to the discipline area?	<p>The module ‘Children’s Literature’ (ENA404), which I am teaching this semester, perfectly aligns with the artist’s expertise, which is writing and illustrating children’s books. Since this module aims to develop student’s knowledge, skills and competencies in teaching literature in primary school, the artist’s expertise was apt and a perfect fit for my students’ learning.</p> <p>The hands-on sessions facilitated by the artist, Trish Donald, on picture storybooks, book conventions, creating book characters, and illustrating and writing a storybook have enhanced the students’ knowledge and skills in children’s literature. As a result of the activities, the students may be able to select quality books for children, teach literature more efficiently and write books for children when they graduate. Hence, I would state that all the activities conducted by the artist were relevant, current and meaningful.</p>
Were Expectations Met? If yes, in what way, if no, why?	Yes, my expectations were met. By the end of the one-month sessions together, students were inspired to write children’s books. Students could recognise and appreciate the creative work of writers and illustrators. In addition, they were able to create their own unique characters for a story.

	The engaging activities like drawing unique characters, making character masks, using mood spinners, and asking reflective questions about their characters drew out the best of their creativity and imagination. Some students said they are inspired to write too.
Overall comments and feelings about the activity	The activities were fun-filled and meaningful to every student in the class. Moreover, the artist's approach to teaching was commendable. For example, Trish made every student participate joyfully through her friendly, kind, amicable and gentle yet persuasive manner. I felt invigorated to teach with her, every step of the way. Like my students, I am thoroughly inspired too.
What did you enjoy?	I enjoyed all the activities mentioned earlier.
What surprised you?	I was surprised to know that illustrators require qualities beyond being the best at drawing or painting. I learned that illustrators move beyond creating images for the story. For example, they create and provide more depth to a story through multiple ways.
What were the three main things you took away from facilitating the activity?	Three main things I took away are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Co-teaching is an opportunity to enhance one's knowledge and skills, both in content and pedagogy, especially with an international faculty. For example, there was a meaningful exchange of ideas, culture and practices between Trish and me, from which I learned a lot. 2. Students' interest in the module escalated due to the artist's presence in the class. It added value to the teaching-learning process. For instance, my students were excited to be taught by Trish Donald for a change. 3. Learners learn more from a series of practical experiences than from lectures or a momentary learning experience. The practical experiences have to be progressive and sequential until the outcome is evident. For example, the activities facilitated by Trish enabled students to develop their creativity and skills in writing a book, step by step, raising their level, immersing them in their character-building task and developing their skills until they were ready to write the story.
What are some of the impacts you think this activity will have on participants?	Based on some students' informal feedback, I am confident that many students are inspired to write children's stories. As mentioned earlier, the students will be able to recognise quality books and appreciate the work of writers and illustrators in its truest sense. One of the activities showed that illustrators creatively move way beyond their art skills to tell the story in the book. The students actually saw that in the picture book, "Tissy Woo and the Worry Monsters"

<p>Did the activity help shift your perspective in some way?</p>	<p>Yes, the activities changed my perspectives in some way. I think I might also write stories for children. I will incorporate the ideas from the activities into the other modules related to language and literacy. Most importantly, I will replicate the activities next year when I teach the same module, 'Children's Literature.'</p>
<p>Would you undertake the activity again and if so, would you make any adjustments?</p>	<p>Yes, I would be happy to undertake the activity again, if possible. There is no need to make any adjustments since everything, including the timing of the artist's visit, module and class schedule, worked well.</p>