

Oban High School Rich Task

‘Science and Ethics’

blog -- <http://richtask.edublogs.org/>

The pupils presented their learning in this task on the evening of the 28th of March when they assembled in the school and working in groups led the audience and invited guests in a debate on ‘Stem cell research’



Each group of pupils had spent time in the science, religious and moral education and computing departments learning and discussing all aspects of cells, stem cells, ethics and stances, and with a contribution from English, used their skills in computing to produce a power point presentation of their group learning to initiate the discussion on the evening of the presentation

A panel, who had volunteered for the debate, drawn from medical, cell research and religious backgrounds then made their contributions before the audience were invited to ask questions.



After a lively debate which saw a full range of opinion being expressed on the issue, a vote was taken to see if positions had moved from that expressed in the vote at the start of the night, and indeed there was a shift of opinion to be seen.

It was clear from the presentation of learning by the pupils that extensive work on the nature of cells and the purpose of different groups of cells had been done in the science department, along with some interesting and appropriate experiments. At the same time the religious and moral education had clearly held lively lessons on the various stances taken worldwide, and the ethics of these. The quality of the presentations both in terms of the use of power point and the use of language was a compliment to both computing and English departments.

Staff are now busy with an evaluation of the experience and this will be on this website when ready. However some clear principles are emerging



- staff need planning time together before and during the task to keep things flowing
- the pupils work best if the task and the assessment criteria are explained to them from the start
- ‘cooperative learning’ had a significant influence on the way the groups worked.
- The pupils attention was caught by this approach and they were highly engaged and motivated.

The pupils were asked next day for their opinions on the Rich Task and of this style of learning and were clear in saying that it led to a more interesting and engaging experience. All the comments follow –

The Rich Task helped me to be a successful learner by:

Helping us to understand the stem debate that is going on and helped us work in groups.

Ruaridh

Because first of all the topic was extremely interesting and it would affect all our lives and secondary because we worked in a group. I enjoyed it because it was challenging but fun.

Raeannon

Working as a group and have been able to share our ideas. Using computers and power points to share info to the audience and telling people something that they didn't know.

Leanne

It was fun doing something no-one else could do in the school and the fact we could be creative.

Dougie

Having an interesting subject.

Doing more group work which is better than working alone.

Thomas

Helping us to work in groups. We all worked together and made a challenging topic easy.

Euan

Giving us group work to do this was good because it is challenging and funny.

Callum

Making me concentrate.

Callum

Working in groups, learning about cells and ethics. It was very challenging.

Sasha

They combined lots of classes to teach us about stem cells and ethics. This work was quite challenging but I really enjoyed it and would like to do it again.

Angus

It was very interesting and understanding I mostly liked it because it was challenging and fun.

Megan

Working in groups and learning about stem cells and doing fun work. It challenged me and everyone else.

Mairi

Doing fun work. The Rich Task helped me to be an effective contributor by helping with the debate.

Craig

Learning new interesting facts, and learning things in a fun way. It was fun and challenged me and most people.

Joshua

Helping me to be a successful learner by helping me learn what to do and what not to do and making right choices.

David

Helping me understand the meaning of ethics, learning about stem cell research at a young age and by challenging me.

Louise

Helping me understand Ethics and what it is. It also helped me understand what stem cell research is.

Diarmid

Because now I know what cloning, stem cell research, animal testing and ethics is and I can talk about it for a long time.

Zoe

I enjoyed learning about stem cells, ethics, cloning and animal testing.

Mairi

The Rich Task helped me to be an effective contributor by:

Working well in my groups and contributed well.

Ruaridh

Working in a group with your fellow classmates because you knew them and you knew your ideas would be taken into consideration.

Raeannon

- Giving great ideas and helping them to see what was going on. *Leanne*
- By using group work a lot. *Dougie*
- By basically working in groups as you get used to this and find a good way to put ideas forward. *Thomas*
- By encouraging us to talk more. *Euan*
- By working well. *Callum*
- By giving my ideas. *Calum*
- By making us work in groups and write letters together. *Sasha*
- By helping everyone. *Angus*
- By working together in groups and sharing information and ideas. *Megan*
- By helping me be good at group work.
By helping with the debate. *Martin
Craig*
- By working in different groups and being challenged with different work. *Joshua*
- By helping my group. *David*
- Because I listened and helped the group. *Louise*
- By making me work in a group most of the time which meant I had to give my view and listen to everyone else's. *Diarmid*
- By making me work in a group with people I wouldn't usually choose to be with. *Zoe*
- Because I helped my group with all the tasks. *Mairi*

The Rich Task helped me to be a responsible citizen by:

- Cooperating with others and their opinions. *Ruaridh*
- Learning about the current issues of the modern world. *Raeannon*
- Taking part in something big, different and interesting, seeing people satisfied. *Leanne*
- Respecting everyone's views. *Dougie*
- We stood up on a stage and presented an entire talk on cells and ethics. *Thomas*
- Respecting everyone's opinions. *Euan*
- The Rich Task did not make me become a responsible citizen. *Callum*
- Focussing on things. *Calum*
- Doing the debate and learning if it is right for us to do stem cell research to help other people that are ill. *Sasha*
- Helping others. *Angus*
- Helping others and working hard on a task together and sharing ideas and trusting other people and being kind. *Megan*

<i>Respecting others.</i>	<i>Martin</i>
Helped me to be a responsible citizen.	<i>Craig</i>
By learning to behave in a group.	<i>Joshua</i>
Helping out in the classroom.	<i>David</i>
I learned right and wrongs. It is important to get involved with things like this because it helps the environment by expressing your ideas and views of different subjects.	<i>Louise</i>
Looking at the debate and what is happening in the world.	<i>Diarmid</i>
We held a debate and wrote to important people.	<i>Zoe</i>

The Rich Task helped me to be a confident individual by:

Helping me to speak out and also helped me to muck up people's names by being in a hurry.	<i>Ruaridh</i>
By having debates in RME (Ethics).	<i>Raeannon</i>
Standing out and being in front of an audience.	<i>Leanne</i>
Being able to speak out my views.	<i>Dougie</i>
Helped me stand up on a stage.	<i>Thomas</i>
Standing up on stage and speaking out.	<i>Euan</i>
Giving me individual work.	<i>Callum</i>
Putting us in groups.	<i>Calum</i>
Making us talk on stage to the public.	<i>Sasha</i>

Working in groups and not worrying about the ideas you have and being able to trust other people in your group.

Megan

Doing lots of work myself.

Martin

I spoke at the conference and I presented good work. I did it with Josh.

Craig

Is to present to the public.

Joshua

Speaking out into lots of people.

David

It got me up on the stage talking to the public.

Louise

I presented slideshows and welcomed special guests to the public. Another reason is because we worked in groups a lot.

Diarmid

I had to speak to the public on the stage.

Zoe



Things we liked

- ◆ Computing tasks
- ◆ Working in groups

- ◆ Stem cell research in science and RME
- ◆ Learning about Ethics and Cloning
- ◆ Making posters
- ◆ Group work – lots of it
- ◆ It's fun and interesting
- ◆ It's different
- ◆ It was very fun and the teachers were great
- ◆ It is challenging but not really difficult
- ◆ It all came to a good cause
- ◆ You learn more because you don't know a lot to start with
- ◆ It was fun because it was new
- ◆ It was fun together
- ◆ Enjoyable, interesting, good work, good teacher
- ◆ Work together in groups
- ◆ The group work
- ◆ Hard work.....
- ◆ Work on the same subject but in different classes
- ◆ Working in groups
- ◆ Presenting a conference at the end
- ◆ Not working as hard but still learning lots
- ◆ More information than usual
- ◆ Worked together
- ◆ More group tasks

- ◆ Fun lessons
- ◆ Different
- ◆ Effective
- ◆ We had a brilliant teacher because he made everything FUN!
- ◆ Bacteria experiments
- ◆ Cells and what they are
- ◆ What stem cells are



Things we think could

- ◆ More experiments in Science
- ◆ Catching up on what we missed in Science (e.g. normal science once a week)
- ◆ No normal RME lessons
- ◆ On like the last 2 weeks it started to get boring
- ◆ Certain people in the different groups
- ◆ Not everyone put effort into it
- ◆ The end of the period
- ◆ The work was quite hard
- ◆ The classes were really hard to get to
- ◆ Didn't like nothing
- ◆ The work in English didn't have anything to do with stem cell
- ◆ The big ethics book that was HARD!!!!
- ◆ We enjoyed everything

- ◆ What could be better?
- ◆ Too much writing
- ◆ Too much to take in
- ◆ For older people
- ◆ Same kind of work different periods on same day, gets boring

SCIENCE

- ◆ Bacteria experiments
- ◆ Cells and what they are
- ◆ What stem cells are
- ◆ Why we have cells
- ◆ Posters on cells
- ◆ Embryos
- ◆ Balloons
- ◆ Comps
- ◆ Experiments on bacteria
- ◆ Made posters
- ◆ Learned about different types of cells;
i.e. Embryonic, Therapeutic, Adult, Stem
- ◆ Made booklets
- ◆ Helium balloons

- ◆ Poster competitions
- ◆ We made a massive nerve cell and brain
- ◆ Experiments on bacteria
- ◆ Posters
- ◆ Helium balloons
- ◆ Stem cells and what they are

ENGLISH

- ◆ We were making films, posters, power points and a song about going to school
- ◆ We all wrote letters with Mr Cassie and then he wrote a good copy.

COMPUTING

- ◆ We gathered all the information from other classes on stem cells and created a power point presentation. We learned how to make a powerpoint and to create new slides, background, efforts.

RELIGION AND MORAL EDUCATION

- ◆ In RE we were learning about Ethics and the arguments that surround them.
- ◆ We gave our opinions about what's right and wrong.
- ◆ We discussed issues surrounding the subject of ethics.
- ◆ We studied how ethics work with issues like stem cell research, cloning and animal testing.
- ◆ We learned how your opinion can change if the matter is different.