

# **Heritage Heboh!**

## **mid-project evaluation**

### **results to 30 May 2006**

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Between March and July 2006, Anak Anak Kota will deliver a participatory arts project that uses dance, music and design to explore aspects of George Town's heritage, to develop participants' expressive, technical and social skills, and to build knowledge and awareness of the historic environment.

The program will run for four months during which participants will learn a traditional performing art. They will then research the living and built heritage of inner city George Town and incorporate their impressions into the art form. This initiative will culminate in a young people's heritage festival on July 16 which will be open to the public.

This mid-project evaluation report summarises the findings of the evaluation strategy (see appendix A) to date.

### **The objectives of evaluation**

As the appended strategy indicates, the project's evaluation has two broad objectives which pertain to each of the major stakeholders.

- Objective 1, for Arts-Ed, was to collect evidence of learning.
- Objective 2, for Digi, the project's funder, was to collect evidence of participants' developing capacities for team work, documentation and interpretation of heritage through creative arts.

The initial project plan included the giving of cash prizes to participant teams whose development in these areas throughout the project was outstanding. But the project leader, in consultation with the project's facilitators and artists, did not introduce the possibility of prizes to the project's participants. All felt that this prospect could introduce motivations for participation that countered the development of the very skills the prizes were intended to reward.

### **The intended outcomes for Arts-Ed from the evaluation strategy**

Although the necessity of recommending prize winners to the sponsors was, therefore, eliminated from the evaluation strategy's tasks, team work, documentation and interpretation of heritage through the creative arts remain skills that have been central to every participant's experience of the project and which feature as focuses for the evaluation strategy.

These three areas are inevitably embraced by objective 1 which ultimately aims to assess:

- how learning occurred for participants;
- what learning occurred for participants;
- the impact of this learning on participants.

By assessing these crucial areas of enablement (how learning occurs), skills development (what learning occurs) and outcome (impact of learning), Arts-Ed aims to:

- continue to improve learning provision and environments that are conducive to learning;
- promote living heritage and the historic environment as a source of learning, inspiration and enjoyment;
- raise awareness amongst families and the community of the value of informal and creative learning;
- demonstrate the value and contribution to learning agendas to funders and other stakeholders;
- continue to develop new partnerships.

This mid-term report demonstrates that each of these five aims is already being achieved.

## **Definition of learning**

The evaluation strategy works from this definition, composed by the UK's Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and adapted by the MLA from the UK's Campaign for Learning project:

*Learning is a process of active engagement with experience. It is what people do when they want to make sense of the world. It may involve the development or deepening of skills, knowledge, understanding, awareness, values, ideas and feelings, or an increase in the capacity to reflect. Effective learning leads to change, development and the desire to learn more.*

So, the project and the evaluation strategy takes a view of learning as being an active rather than a passive activity. It encompasses social, analytical and creative skills and assumes a holistic view of life as offering learning experiences.

## **The measures of the evaluation: evidence of learning and GLOs**

The above definition underlies the intended outcomes for participants. These intended outcomes were identified by this report's author through discussion with the project's leader, facilitators and artists. They reflect a fundamental purpose of Arts-Ed's work: to offer alternative learning opportunities that build the individual's social, creative and analytical capacities, these areas of development being neglected by an assessment-driven Malaysian school system. They also reflect the project's concern about racial segregation amongst George Town's children, ethnic divisions being encouraged rather than reduced by Malaysia's largely nationality-based school system.

The attainment of any or all of these outcomes, which could be termed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in corporate parlance, would provide evidence of learning for participants:

- develop knowledge, understanding and skills
- become more self-confident, questioning, motivated and open to others' perspectives
- be enriched and inspired
- enjoy themselves
- do something different
- feel respected and supported in their learning

These intended outcomes relate to five generic learning outcomes (GLOs) identified in a planning and evaluation tool called 'Inspiring Learning for All'. Devised by the MLA in cooperation with the University of Leicester, the project's evaluation uses these GLOs to guide its evaluation tasks and analysis. The following table makes explicit the relationship between the GLOs and the outcomes identified by the evaluation strategy as providing evidence of learning:

<b>generic learning outcomes (GLOs)</b>	<b>the project's evidence of learning</b>
1. knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop knowledge, understanding and skills</li> </ul>
2. skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop knowledge, understanding and skills</li> </ul>
3. attitudes and values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>become more self-confident, questioning, motivated and open to others' perspectives</li> <li>feel respected and supported in their learning</li> </ul>
4. action, behaviour, progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>do something different</li> </ul>
5. enjoyment, inspiration, creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be enriched and inspired</li> <li>enjoy themselves</li> </ul>

## **The mechanics of the evaluation: methods**

Evaluation to assess progress towards the intended outcomes was guided by the GLOs. Three investigative approaches summarise the evaluation's methods: observation, interview and questionnaire (including self-appraisal through postcards and self-appraisal for facilitators). The evaluation programme used multiple evaluation methods to reduce bias and give a more reliable picture of learning progression.

These methods aimed to allow participants' to exercise their preferred communication methods, eliciting verbal, written and drawn responses to questions and discussions. There were four chief focuses of these methods: participants' documentation, participants' class experiences, participants' creative engagement with their media and subject, and participants' families' impressions. Apart from attendance rates and group-working numbers, evaluation of each of these four focus areas was necessarily qualitative. 'Inspiring Learning for All', the evaluative framework used by the evaluation strategy, offers tools for describing qualitative outcomes in consistent and objective terms.

## **How the evaluation objective relates to the aims, measures, methods and focus areas**

The evaluation strategy's overriding objective is to collect evidence of learning. Under this umbrella objective are three broad aims — to assess 1) how learning occurred for participants; 2) what learning occurred for participants; and 3) the impact of this learning on participants). For each of these three aims, the same set of measures apply, each of these being indicative of how and what learning occurred and the impact it had on the participant. The evaluation methods (observation, interview and questionnaire) use Inspiring Learning for All's GLOs. These GLOs provide markers for progress towards the attainment of identified outcomes, thus providing evidence of learning.

**Table: how evaluation objective relate to aims, measures, methods and focus areas**

objective of evaluation	aims to achieve the objective	measures: evidence of learning and GLOs	guidance for evaluation methods
collect evidence of learning	1) how learning occurred for participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop knowledge, understanding and skills (GLO 1 and 2)</li> <li>• become more self-confident, questioning, motivated and open to others' perspectives (GLO 3)</li> <li>• be enriched and inspired (GLO 5)</li> <li>• enjoy themselves (GLO 5)</li> <li>• do something different (GLO 4)</li> <li>• feel respected and supported in their learning (GLO 3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>GLO 1 Knowledge and understanding =</b>            Learning facts or information which can be subject-specific, interdisciplinary / thematic, about myself, family, community, the world            Making sense of something            Deepening understanding            Giving specific information            Making links between things            Using prior knowledge in new ways</p> <p><b>GLO 2 Skills =</b>            Knowing how to do something Intellectual skills – reading, thinking critically and analytically, making judgements            Key skills – numeracy, literacy, use of ICT, learning how to learn            Information management, social, emotional and communications skills</p> <p><b>GLO 3 Attitudes and values =</b>            Feelings and perceptions            Opinions about ourselves e.g. self-esteem            Opinions or attitudes towards other people            Reasons for actions or viewpoints            Empathy, capacity for tolerance</p> <p><b>GLO 4 Enjoyment, inspiration, creativity =</b>            Having fun, being surprised            Innovative thoughts, actions            Creativity            Exploration, experimentation and making            Being inspired</p> <p><b>GLO 5 Action, behaviour, progression =</b>            What people do, intend to do and have done            A change in the way that people manage their lives            Progression towards further learning            Behavioural change</p>
	2) what learning occurred for participants		
	3) the impact of this learning on participants		

## Evaluation tasks and results

### Mar 10 – 12: three-day introduction

#### *Evaluation task: heritage walk documentation*

In preparation for an introductory heritage walk around the streets of George Town, facilitators instructed the children in each of the three groups (visual arts, dance, music) on a documentation exercise for the day.

The aim was for each child to complete one page of their folio, a central tool used by the project to develop the participants' documentation capacity. Being unaccustomed to free reporting of an experience, the children required specific suggestions on how they might approach this task. They were to record their impressions of the walk by:

- pasting or keeping a found object;

- pasting on one photo taken on the walk (this required each child to direct the group member who had been assigned as camera person to take their desired shot);
- writing a short story about the walk, their response to it, something that happened, anything that struck them as interesting, funny, sad or impressed them in any way;
- drawing one picture.

The aim was to give the children ideas for ways of documenting their future experiences of the project and to reinforce awareness of multiple media and methods for doing this. Each participant was required to make an entry about every day on the project. This exercise was intended to encourage imaginative ways of recording their reflections which could take any form, apart from video. Some ideas for documentation were offered to the groups: scrap books, treasure chests, found objects, photos, diaries, postcards to real and imaginary people, stories, timelines, drawings, letters to grandma, aunties, friends...

Coordinators inspected the folios and any other form of recording every fortnight to check they were being kept up-to-date and to see if any help was required.

See Appendix B for some results of this introductory exercise which gave an anecdotal understanding of participants' starting points in each of the GLOs. Generally, uniform standards of attainment applied, though at this stage a small number of children stood out as having better-developed knowledge and skills, more sophisticated attitudes, greater readiness to progress their behaviour, and more receptiveness to inspiration and enjoyment than the majority of their peers.

To test the outcomes of this and other early experiences, we conducted an entrance questionnaire (see below).

### March 14

#### *Evaluation task: postcard 1*

Facilitators distributed postcards, created in a previous Anak-Anak Kota project, and stamps to the participants. They instructed the children to address their postcards to themselves, adhere a stamp, then write a letter that began: 'Dear Me, The best thing about being on the project is...' Then the children were asked to 'post' their cards into a homemade red letterbox. The cards were collected and reviewed by the evaluator before they were posted.

The postcards are reproduced at Appendix C (parts i, ii, and iii). A survey of the postcards reveals these results:

<b>The best thing about being on the project...</b>	<b>Number of visual arts responses</b>	<b>Number of dance responses</b>	<b>Number of music responses</b>	<b>total responses</b>
<b>Team work</b>	2			2
<b>Making friends</b>	6	5	10	21
<b>Fun/new teachers</b>	1	2	3	6
<b>Gaining skills in the medium</b>	4	3		7
<b>Gaining knowledge (including about Penang)</b>	3	4	3	10
<b>Site visits to Khoo Kongsi and Yap Kongsi</b>	3			3
<b>Performing for others</b>	1	1		2

<b>Heritage walk</b>	1	4	4	9
<b>Surprising new knowledge</b> E.g. "I can never forget what was done by the the tarik guy." "I even got to smell coffee from the shop that made their coffee old style." "The most happy thing is we clap our hand to make a music."		9	5	14
<b>Inspiration</b>		2		2
<b>Enjoyment</b>		2		2
<b>Fun/happiness</b>		3	4	7
<b>New experiences</b>		4	2	6
<b>New ways of learning</b>		6	2	8
<b>New skills</b>			4	4
<b>Self esteem ("I was very good in the class.")</b>			1	1
<b>Learning about respect for others</b>			1	1
<b>Learning about leadership</b>			1	1

These results are qualitative at best, not only because of the arbitrary nature of individuals' responses, but because of the limited analysis they have undergone. Many postcards are in Bahasa Malayu or Chinese and have not been included in the above table.

But even this casual survey offers valuable indications. Overwhelmingly, and perhaps predictably, many children cited making new friends as being the best thing about the project (GLOs 3, 4 and 5). Many also nominated the heritage walks and the knowledge they developed about their home town as being significant (GLO 1). And many reported satisfaction at being surprised by new discoveries (GLOs 1 and 5) and new ways of learning (GLO 4). Attaining new skills (GLO 2) and sensibilities (GLO 3) featured in a number of responses. And GLOs 5 was either implicitly or explicitly indicated in nearly every surveyed postcard.

A summary of the postcard's revelations indicates that participants enjoy being involved with the project, are inspired by the new knowledge and skills they are gaining from it and appreciate the social outlet it offers.

### **March 16**

#### *Evaluation task: entrance questionnaire*

Coordinators distributed and collected initial questionnaires. A sample, the returned questionnaires, and a summary of findings are at Appendices D, D (i), (ii), and (iii). The questionnaire uses the GLOs to develop questions that focus on learning outcomes:

#### **GLO 1: Knowledge and understanding**

*Relates to entrance questionnaire question*

*3 b. What have you discovered about your culture?*

#### **GLO 2: Skills**

*Relates to entrance questionnaire questions*

*1 c. Tell us five things you have discovered about one of your new friends.*

*4. What have you gained from the last few days?*

### **GLO 3: Attitudes and values**

*Relates to entrance questionnaire questions*

- 1 a. Have you made new friends?*
- 1 b. How many are: Malay? Chinese? Indian? Other?*
- 3 a. What have you discovered about yourself?*

### **GLO 4: Enjoyment, inspiration, creativity**

*Relates to entrance questionnaire questions*

- 2 a. Is it fun to work by yourself? Or with other people?*
- 2 b. Explain why.*
- 6. Please draw, or write about, your favourite memory of the project, so far.*

### **GLO 5: Action, behaviour, progression**

*Relates to entrance questionnaire questions*

- 5 a. Does the project make you want to know more?*
- 5 b. What would you like to know more about?*

The survey has not yet been rigorously analysed, and the full significance of its findings will not be available until responses to the exit questionnaire are fully analysed. This is because the entrance and exit questionnaires, coming as they do at the beginning and end of the project, should illuminate participant development in each of the GLOs and, therefore, indicate progress towards or attainments of the project's intended outcomes (see 'evidence of learning' above).

But briefly the entrance questionnaires reveal these findings in relation to the GLOs:

### **GLO 1: Knowledge and understanding**

*Participants report increased knowledge and awareness of their own and other cultures, respect for other cultures and religious observances, analysis of similarities between cultures, and appreciation of the visual and performing arts as expressions of cultural identity.*

### **GLO 2: Skills**

*Respondees indicate that they have developed their interpersonal and social skills, documentation and communication skills, observational skills, self knowledge and self confidence.*

### **GLO 3: Attitudes and values**

*Question 3 a (What have you discovered about yourself?) appears to have elicited unexpected and confused responses, many respondees claiming to have learnt about Penang and to have gained new artistic knowledge. However, many respondees also reflected on their increased self confidence and self knowledge, their faults and fears, and new acceptance of other cultures.*

### **GLO 4: Enjoyment, inspiration, creativity**

*The majority of responses welcomed team work as an enjoyable avenue for learning, citing advantages such as the efficiencies of sharing work, the satisfaction of cooperation, increased creativity with more minds on the same job, and more fun. Working alone won some adherents who noted the advantages of individual*

*thinking, being able to concentrate better, decreased pressure, its compatibility with competitive natures, and elimination of the need to compromise in favour of others' viewpoints.*

#### **GLO 5: Action, behaviour, progression**

*If responses here give a true indication of participants' personal experiences, then the project has had some success, even at this early stage, in inspiring new action and their desire to progress their learning. Many express a desire to learn more artistic skills and about Penang's history while a smaller group asserts interest in other cultures.*

These, and the results of the family survey (discussed below) demonstrate early achievement of the project's intended outcomes. Evidence of learning, summarised in the results above, answers the project's intended outcomes:

- develop knowledge, understanding and skills
- become more self-confident, questioning, motivated and open to others' perspectives
- be enriched and inspired
- enjoy themselves
- do something different
- feel respected and supported in their learning.

#### **May 7 - internal showcase**

*Evaluation tasks: family questionnaire and postcard 2*

##### Family Questionnaire

Before the performance, a 'family questionnaire' was distributed amongst the parents and siblings who had come to watch the show. A sample questionnaire and the completed questionnaires which were returned on May 7 are at Appendix E.

Again, the questionnaire uses the GLOs to develop questions that focus on learning outcomes:

#### **GLO 1: Knowledge and understanding**

*Relates to family questionnaire question*

*2. What knowledge do you think your child is learning on the project?*

#### **GLO 2: Skills**

*Relates to family questionnaire question*

*3. What skills do you think your child is learning on the project?*

#### **GLO 3: Attitudes and values**

*Relates to family questionnaire questions*

*1 a. Has your child made new friends on the project?*

*1 b. How do you feel about these new friends?*

#### **GLO 4: Enjoyment, inspiration, creativity**

*Relates to family questionnaire questions*

*4. Is your child excited by the project?*

*7. What does your child tell you about the project at home?*



### **GLO 5: Action, behaviour, progression**

*Relates to family questionnaire questions*

5. *What behavioural changes if any have you observed in your child since being on the project?*
6. *Has the project developed your child's interest in creative expression, learning by doing, research, asking questions, wanting to know more (curiosity), anything else?*
8. *Would you encourage other parents to allow their children to participate in such a project ?*

As is the case with the entrance survey, this questionnaire has not yet been rigorously analysed, and the full significance of its findings will not be available until responses to the exit questionnaire are fully analysed. In fact, the entrance and exit questionnaires, the family questionnaire and the postcard exercises are all designed to be compared with each other. Comparing the results of these evaluation tasks should serve to cross-check the veracity of responses, demonstrate progress and assess participants' skills, creative, social and attitudinal development. But, briefly again, the family questionnaire reveals these findings in relation to the GLOs:

### **GLO 1: Knowledge and understanding**

*Respondees (mostly parents) see that their children are learning about Penang's history, about traditional trades, and about Malaysian culture. They are also learning about team work and independent working, about accepting criticism, developing creativity and technical skills, and social skills.*

### **GLO 2: Skills**

*Apart from technical skills associated with visual arts, music and dance, parents report that children are learning how to communicate with people and make friends with people of other races and cultures, are building their observational skills and attention to detail, developing team building and leadership and time management skills, and building self confidence.*

### **GLO 3: Attitudes and values**

*Families are pleased, and in one case, 'excited', to see their children making new friends. "It's wonderful. They mix friends from different races," writes one mother. Some report that their children's facility in languages other than their own is improving through exposure to new friends. The new friends are welcome because they seem to be of the same mindset as their children, are well behaved and creative.*

### **GLO 4: Enjoyment, inspiration, creativity**

*Relates to family questionnaire questions*

*All respondees report that their children are much excited by being involved with the project though one also conveys the child's concern that the project may be taking too much time and clashing with school activities. All respondees say that their children share a lot of news about their project experiences with their families, one father noting that this brings new knowledge to the family. Another parent claims, "They enjoy this much more than school."*

### **GLO 5: Action, behaviour, progression**

*Relates to family questionnaire questions*

*100% of respondees would encourage other parents to allow their children to participate in the project.*

*Feeding this enthusiasm are the positive behavioural changes they note in their children. Becoming more extroverted and comfortable with other races are among the changes in socialising behaviours reported. A new-found interest in discovery and learning and readiness to voice their own opinions are recorded as well as children being 'very happy'. A couple of parents reveal that their children have developed their sense of commitment and their understanding that a job begun should be seen through. An increasingly responsible attitude, to time management, duties and things that should be valued is also reported. y*

*All responses are that the project has developed the children's curiosity and interest in learning more.*

These results indicate that the project is already achieving its intended outcomes, thus demonstrating evidence of learning in participants' reported:

- development of knowledge, understanding and skills
- increasing self-confidence, readiness to question, motivation and openness to others' perspectives
- enrichment and inspiration
- enjoyment
- interest in doing new things
- family support for their learning.

### Postcard 2

The performance marked the last day of the project before a three-week break. This exercise was partly motivated by an interest in keeping the children mindful of their project experience to that point in the hope that they would return with intact memories when the project resumed.

After the performance, blank postcards, stamped and addressed to Arts-Ed, were distributed, with a briefing to all members of each group. Participants were asked to decorate the blank postcards at home in any way they chose, but on the theme of their feelings about the showcase they had just participated in and seen. They were asked to write to anyone in Arts-Ed, the project leader, facilitators, coordinators or artists, and post the card as soon as they could.

Only two postcards were received by Arts-Ed. Many conclusions could be drawn from this result (lack of interest, motivation, time being among them) but to fathom precise reasons, a documentation exercise was devised.

### **May 29 – the project resumes after a three-week break**

*Evaluation task: 'Return to Heritage Heboh!' interview activity*

In addition to the visual arts, dance and music groups, a fourth discipline works with the project. Each group has a documentation team, and together, these representatives from their respective groups are the project's documentation team. Documentation team members are charged with representing their groups through communication: writing, speaking, photography and filming. The chief forum for the project's voice is a newsletter which, it is aimed, will be produced three times during the project. At Appendix F there is a discussion paper which outlines the project's initial plans for the documentation teams.

The 'Return to Heritage Heboh!' activity was designed as an evaluation exercise for the documentation teams. Each documentation team was responsible for interviewing every member of their group, using an interview sheet which the evaluator prepared. A sample for each group and the results and completed interview sheets are at Appendices G (i), (ii), and (iii). The interview comprised three questions aimed at identifying significant impressions of the participants' experience of the project, at recovering memories of the internal showcase, which had been the participants' most recent project experience, and at divining why the postcard activity received such little practical enthusiasm.

**question 1:** What is the first thing that comes into your head when I say 'Heritage Heboh!'?

**question 2:** What did you tell your family and/or friends about the May 7 internal showcase?

**question 3:** Did you send Arts-Ed a postcard about your impressions of the showcase? (if YES) Why? (if NO) Why not?

At the time of writing, the author has not seen the interview sheets but the next step in the exercise is to guide documentation team members in analysing the results of their interviews.

## Further recommended evaluation tasks

### 'Graffiti' Walls

Create 'graffiti' walls (long, wide strips of paper adhered to a wall of each groups' meeting room) headed, 'What We're Great At'. The idea of this is to encourage free and unfettered expression. Self adulation is desirable and team adulation the aim. Drawing, writing, pasting objects onto, the banner will bring participants into physical proximity with each other, sparking exchanges and injecting creativity and confidence into the 'graffiti' messages.

### Focus groups

Conduct focus group sessions to examine:

- learning styles and preferences  
and/or
- attitudes to team and independent working  
and/or
- how awareness of heritage is reflected in participants' appreciation of everyday life.

### Informal interviews

Conduct informal interviews with individuals from a sample group identified in each of the three groups. This should examine progress towards the intended outcomes (see 'evidence of learning' above) and should be tested against the GLOs.

### Body maps

Conduct this exercise as a game. Have a child lie on a big sheet of paper and other members of the groups trace their outline. Draw a thought bubble above the head. Then label the head 'knowledge', the hands 'skills', the heart 'attitudes and values', the feet and legs 'new actions' and the thought bubble 'inspiration and ideas'. Allow the participants to write down, on separate pieces of sticky coloured paper, any new knowledge, skills, attitudes or values, plans for action and inspiration or ideas they have gained during the

project. Tabulate the results to get a picture of the project's impact on participant intentions and capabilities.

#### Exit questionnaire

Compare result with those of entrance questionnaire and map progress towards the intended outcomes (see 'evidence of learning' above). Exit questionnaire at Appendix H.

#### Postcard 3

Coordinators distribute blank postcards for kids to draw and write on. Cards should be addressed to anyone they like and the message should discuss what George Town means to the writers.

#### Sooi Beng's survey

Objectives are to see if the project can teach children to cross boundaries of all types: cultural, religious, racial, and the boundaries set by their own confidence. Coordinate objectives with this evaluation strategy. Marry Sooi Beng's results with those of the main evaluation programme to throw light especially on inter-racial relationships and attitudes developed through the project.

#### Compile findings

- Attendance sheets and behavioural notes (map attitudinal change)
- Facilitator self-assessment sheets (see Appendix I)
- Documentation (map skills development)
- 3 x sets postcards (map participants' impressions and perceived project highlights)
- Entrance questionnaire (assess expectations and state of development in each GLO area) and exit questionnaire (satisfaction, GLO progress, sustainable impacts): compare results and record changes against GLOs
- Informal progress interviews (GLO progress)
- Focus group discussions (map progress to intended outcomes using GLOs as guide)
- 3 x graffiti walls (map confidence, team work, expressiveness)
- 3 x body maps (map impact, intentions)

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