

# Slough Learning Revolution



# Virtual Scrap Book



Organisation/Centre(s): Age Concern (Sally Catchpole)

Creative Partner(s): Spencer Lowe, Naomi Bennett

Programme Leader: Kieran Sheehan

Start Date: 11/01/10

End Date:

15/03/10

Aims of the project	Context	The Story	Learner's Creativity	Other impacts on learners	Staff Learning	Change	Learning from the work	Revisiting the planning	Next steps
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The partnership has set out to bring young people and older adults together through the use of music and memories. The main aim was to enhance the quality of life of older people in Slough and the surrounding areas, and to help make their later life a rewarding and enjoyable time. The partnership will also try to discover new and exciting ways of working together. Through creative methods we tried to stimulate memories.

To engage with old and younger members of Slough

To record the group's memories through film and sound.

To go on a memory trip through Slough (by bus)

To bring a group together

To have something to achieve

Regular activity

To develop sustainable project

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The context is important to the partnership and setting for a number of reasons. One of Age Concern's main aims is to keep clients active and mobile which this project will help with. The project is set in a town with an abundance of amazing stories / local history. The history lives through the older adults and their memories. Their stories are fascinating and essential learning for the young people on the project. The work fits perfectly in local history documentation which Slough Museum will find useful.



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## WEEK 1

Introductions - Get into small groups to get to know each other better  
 Young people can ask the older adults what type of music they listened to when growing up - make notes  
 How they listened to music? radio old and new  
 Access to wi-fi internet / itunes - music appreciation  
 Young people create a playlist for each older adult - copy to CDI will also bring in old records to play and look at - 1950's and 1960's  
 Young people can maybe even show older adults what music they listen to?  
 (Older adults are asked to bring in memorabilia/ photographs they may like to share in next session)

## WEEK 2

Project images from the past on the wall and chat with the whole group (images from heritage project etc).  
 Conversations start with photographs, objects from different era's  
 Assign one young person to work with a certain small group of older adults (one young person to three old adults?)  
 Get into small groups - young people talk to older adults about general memories (one young person to three old adults)  
 Small groups then share with the entire group - young people present to group? Record memories / stories  
 Plan bus route of Slough. Based on some of the memories (convert flash recordings to WAV files)

### WEEK 3

Bus trip around Slough to stimulate memories and creativity! Film the trip.

### WEEK 4

Listen back to some of the recorded memories from week before with whole group. Back into small groups - young people ask older adults to focus on one particular memory or story (record) Option to work on turning these memories or stories into a more rhythmic poem - young peoples input? Create a rap or spoken word piece? Listen to older adults playlist CD and discuss music direction (melody? rhythm? instruments? singing?) How will the track be constructed? Ideas? (Draw up a list of instruments needed for week 4)

### WEEK 5

Share with entire group some of the ideas from week 3 Small groups - work on lyrics, poems (Young people lead the music recording sessions - techy side - operating computers etc) Start introducing instruments to the track. Begin writing music - keyboard melody? guitar chords? beats from logic.

### WEEK 6, 7, 8 and 9

Music creation, writing and recording.

### WEEK 10

Final performance and playback of DVD with music

Older adults from age concern gave the memories. Young people assisted the Music production and participated in live recordings. The reason for this was to bring the two groups together and inspire creativity. Over the course of the partnership older adults wrote poetry and composed music. As the course progressed the young people became more engaged and more responsive to the older adults. This was achieved by keeping each session open to new directions. Although the partnership had a path to follow it really help not having a rigid structure in place. The reflective learning training helped with this.







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The impact of the learners working together was amazing. Each person told a different story which in turn had a knock on effect that would inspire another story to be told. This stimulated creativity in the young people and older adults. In the beginning the partnership tested different methods of working and by half way the partnership found a method which suited all and included everyone. Group recordings were made, which really pushed the creative side in us all and made it an extremely fun and unified experience. The learners were able to reflect on creative development through playback of recordings.



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The young people became more engaged as the project progressed. They learnt how to use professional software and gave more and more creative input. Age Concern felt the older adults enjoyed writing material and interacting with the young people. On the whole the passion for learning, creating and performing increased steadily throughout. Friendships were made within the group.





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Spencer Lowe and Naomi Bennett improved their knowledge of working in a group situation with a cross section of age and ability.

The project also helped Sally Catchpole of Age Concern with experience in bringing people together.

The partnership learnt about development – changing approaches and being flexible to the needs of the group. An example would be: during the 4th session the partnership realised doing individual recordings split up the group too much and lost a certain atmosphere we had at the beginning when chatting as a group. The partnership decided to change the way it recorded and involve the entire group. This proved very effective and fun!



Enquiry	Context	The Story	Learner's Creativity	Other impacts on learners	Staff Learning	Change	Learning from the work	Revisiting the Question	Next steps
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There was definitely a noticeable change in individuals confidence. The young people became much more engaged. The older adults became less afraid to speak up about memories during recording. They shared their experiences – people came out of their shell. Shy members of the group really benefited from the comfortable atmosphere. The work is recorded on DVD which will help to remind them how much they have achieved in just 10 weeks.  
Age concern plan to organise more activities which incorporate group sharing.





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If planning the project again Spencer Lowe thought it might be interesting to use a professional studio. On the other hand it was great for the group to see how easy it can be to bring a mobile studio – setup and record. The partnership tried to separate individual recordings which didn't help with the group dynamic – this was quickly changed by the next week. Young people didn't pick up skills in music software as quickly as the partnership imagined – so instead they took on more musical roles, such as playing keyboard.

Age Concern plan to implement more group discussions and projects sharing memories and knowledge.



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The partnership expected all the older adults to have memories of Slough. It turned out that the adults were from different parts of the country. Some had incredible stories of living in Africa and India during the 50's. This actually made the project more diverse and exciting!

Age concern felt the project brought out the best in their clients. Through the process of sharing memories with the group they gained confidence and became more outgoing. They also became inspired by the young people and enjoyed their company.



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Spencer Lowe will definitely build on these outcomes through his documentation of music heritage in Slough. ([www.thebeatexcavation.com](http://www.thebeatexcavation.com)) He also hopes to work with Age Concern again.

Age Concern are planning more projects like this with more artists and groups from different walks of life.