

How am I contributing to the creation of a happy place with a love of my subjects (creative computing, mathematics and engineering)?

Jack Whitehead, imagining that he is John Reeves.

24 March 2016.

These reflections follow Jack's paper of the 8th March 2016 on

What am I doing? Why am I doing it? How do I explain my educational influence in the context of the creative computing club at St. Stephen's School in Bath?

Jack Whitehead, imagining that he is John Reeves asking, researching and answering these questions.

at:

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/reeves/jwasjr090316opt.pdf>

These reflections also follow John's note of the 23rd March 2016 which included:

On 23 Mar 2016, at 21:19, John Reeves <john@de-velopment.com> wrote:

I always think it's funny how you need to know the answer before you can ask the question.

Emotions are an essential part of both learning and communication.

<http://www.helpguide.org/articles/relationships/nonverbal-communication.htm>

http://www.creducation.org/resources/nonverbal_communication/what_is_nonverbal_communication.html

http://www.creducation.org/resources/nonverbal_communication/communicating_about_our_relationships.html

<http://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/stress-management.htm>

This is something I take for granted and assume I am not very good at.

What I am going to do is to analyse extracts from a video of the computer club at St. Stephens on the 22nd March 2016 that have moved me to question my assumption that I am not very good at the expression of emotions and nonverbal communication and body language, as I focus on my question *How am I contributing to the creation of a happy place with a love of my subjects (creative computing, mathematics and engineering)?*

I do a lot of reading and integrate insights from my readings into the creation of my living-educational-theory as an explanation of my educational influences in my own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations that influence my practice and understandings. Here is an extract

from some recent reading on nonverbal communication and body language from:

<http://www.helpguide.org/articles/relationships/nonverbal-communication.htm>

Types of nonverbal communication and body language

There are many different types of nonverbal communication. Together, the following nonverbal signals and cues communicate your interest and investment in others.

Facial expressions

The human face is extremely expressive, able to express countless emotions without saying a word. And unlike some forms of nonverbal communication, facial expressions are universal. The facial expressions for happiness, sadness, anger, surprise, fear, and disgust are the same across cultures.

Body movements and posture

Consider how your perceptions of people are affected by the way they sit, walk, stand up, or hold their head. The way you move and carry yourself communicates a wealth of information to the world. This type of nonverbal communication includes your posture, bearing, stance, and subtle movements.

Gestures

Gestures are woven into the fabric of our daily lives. We wave, point, beckon, and use our hands when we're arguing or speaking animatedly—expressing ourselves with gestures often without thinking. However, the meaning of gestures can be very different across cultures and regions, so it's important to be careful to avoid misinterpretation.

Eye contact

Since the visual sense is dominant for most people, eye contact is an especially important type of nonverbal communication. The way you look at someone can communicate many things, including interest, affection, hostility, or attraction. Eye contact is also important in maintaining the flow of conversation and for gauging the other person's response.

Touch

We communicate a great deal through touch. Think about the messages given by the following: a weak handshake, a timid tap on the shoulder, a warm bear hug, a reassuring slap on the back, a patronizing pat on the head, or a controlling grip on your arm.

Space

Have you ever felt uncomfortable during a conversation because the other person was standing too close and invading your space? We all have a need for physical space, although that need differs depending on the culture, the situation, and the closeness of the relationship. You can use physical space to communicate many different nonverbal messages, including signals of intimacy and affection, aggression or dominance.

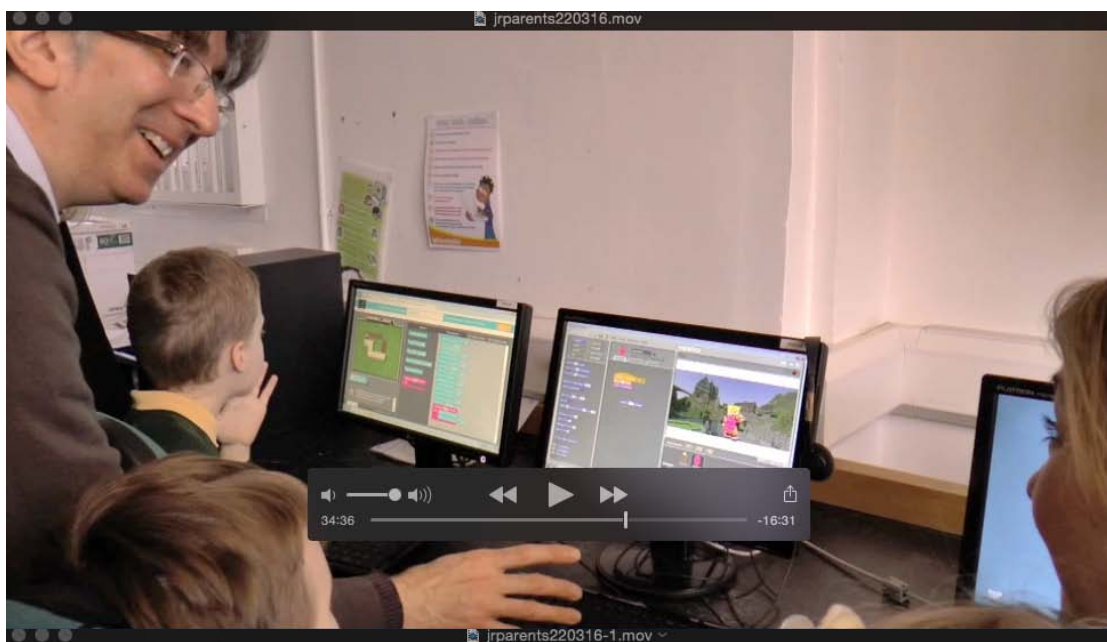
Voice

It's not just what you say, it's *how* you say it. When we speak, other people "read" our voices in addition to listening to our words. Things they pay attention to include your timing and pace, how loud you speak, your tone and inflection, and sounds that convey understanding, such as "ahh"

and “uh-huh.” Think about how someone's tone of voice, for example, can indicate sarcasm, anger, affection, or confidence.

Whilst I recognize the importance of each of these nonverbal signals and cues my analysis of the educational influence of such signals and cues is focused on understanding my lived experience of what I am doing and why I am doing it in my enquiry *How am I contributing to the creation of a happy place with a love of my subjects (creative computing, mathematics and engineering)?*

Here are three images that show me that I am expressing my own happiness in being in the computer club with pupils showing parents what they have made on the 22ⁿ March 2016. The fourth image communicates the happiness of a mother and a child as they are shown what another child has made.





I express my love for my subjects in the computing club by encouraging each child to express their creativity in what they produce. In this event of the 22nd March 2016, the children are showing their parents and others what they have made. The three images below show this individual creativity and the development of their skills in coding.



On 23 Mar 2016, at 21:19, I wrote to Marie Huxtable and Jack Whitehead:

If academic writing is a development task, so be it; the other aspects of living theory are improving my practice, and understanding, widening my influence; equally, it is vital that I generate experimental data, through teaching children.

I would prefer to be excellent at inspiring children and their parents into creative programming, than excellent at writing essays, but as I am writing all day, everyday that is also not something for us to worry about.

Definitely I need to practice, and you need to show me how to do multimedia, but please lift me into the classroom, the children need me and you are my winning team!

You don't get to see me at my engineering work, or at the other venues, but if you see an improvement, it is because of your efforts (and Danielle!), you can't see into the terrible human head to know how true that is.

Today at work I did an amazing thing, with 4 lines of Python code, I fixed a problem that has been plaguing them for 10 years. After weeks of reading 10 years of documentation and source code produced by 100 geniuses, and talking to people to find out what they are trying to do, 4 lines of Python fixed it, we can make beautiful dynamic pictures, and the engineers can work more happily. And my work from before Christmas has been chosen as the company policy! No one will know it was my work.

I spoke to 3 people about teaching computing, got given a laptop to test out for the Comic Con, and one of the engineering managers is bringing his daughter to Digital Makers at the Guild on Saturday.

Tonight I am exhausted, depressed even, that I can't offer any more today and I did so little.

I will try to be careful with other people's dreams,

Best wishes,
John.

From Jack writing as himself! Looking at the visual data on your practice from the videos of computer club I am struck by how you excel at inspiring children and their parents into creative programming. What I'm hoping is that our conversations and responses are helpful in inspiring you to work with us (which you are doing) to spread your educational influence as widely as we can, with the help of y/our explanations of your educational influence.