

Stories of Good Men: Using Stories to Promote Positive Masculinity and Bonds Between Peers in Year 10

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Berwick Grammar School – Growing Good Men




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Lisa Wilkinson/Eurydice Dixon

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Lisa Wilkinson/Eurydice Dixon


“The best way to prevent this crime and keep all people safe isn’t by changing the behaviour of women, but by changing the behaviour of men... parents, instead of telling our girls not to walk through parks, maybe we should be telling our boys not to rape them”



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Lisa Wilkinson/Eurydice Dixon

Margaret Atwood quote:
“Men are afraid that women will laugh at them, women are afraid that men will kill them”



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Jacob sums it up...

“It makes me feel wronged”



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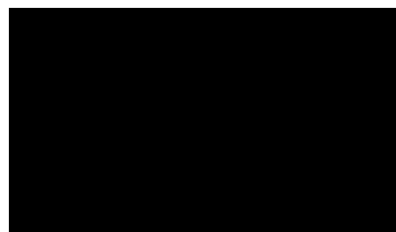
Let's not forget there are challenges to being a man in today's society too!



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The Pressures of Manhood..



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Positive Psychology

Changing our approach from “parking an ambulance at the bottom of a cliff to help those who fall” to “preventing the fall in the first place” (p.280).

This in turn led to the development of Positive Education, which focuses on character strengths, mindsets and resilience....



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So what about a Positive Approach to Masculinity?
Could stories play a role here?



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My Project

Year 10 boys pick two great male role models – one from a fictional text, and one from their real life – and construct stories to tell to their Year 7 Peer Mentees. Thus, they shift the discussion to what great men do, rather than warning younger boys what not to do.



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So what did we do to prepare?

2 Key Steps:

- Explored Masculinity
- Looked at Storytelling as a Medium

The boys also undertook reflection at the end.



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Exploring Masculinity

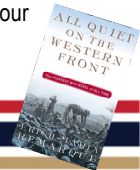
- Looked at currently held ideas
- Looked at Grenville-Cleave's 10 Positive Masculine Traits
- Consulted the VIA Character Strengths
- Tapped into their set text, *All Quiet on the Western Front*



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10 Positive Masculine Traits

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Male Relational Styles | Male Courage and Daring |
| Male Ways of Caring | Group Orientation |
| Generative Fatherhood | Humanitarian Service |
| Male Self-Reliance | Male Use of Humour |
| The Worker/Provider Tradition | Male Heroism |



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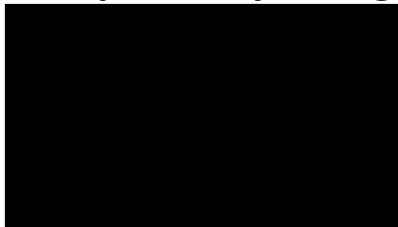
Storytelling

- What makes a good story? (Change and Challenge)
- Why are stories so powerful?
- Engaging your audience
- Preparing and trialling



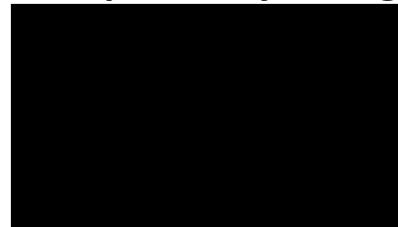
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Sample Storytelling



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Sample Storytelling



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Their Conclusions

- They reconsidered their ideas about the “manly man”
- They broadened their ideas about Good Men
- They acknowledged the good men in their lives
- They critically evaluated how texts portray men
- They came to feel they were role models



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My Conclusions

- Storytelling is a useful medium for character education, and sparked other projects in the school
- Promoting positive role models with young men, and helping them see themselves as positive role models is a powerful thing.
- There was a difference between the attitudes to participants and non-participants



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Questions?



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THANK YOU!

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