



The Associate Educational Fellowship Programme
'Improving professional practice through collaborative enquiry and dialogue'

Reading for November 2nd 2017

The AEF Forum 'By Practitioners for Practitioners'

"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you."
Maya Angelou

The AEF Forum has been created to encourage Fellows to engage in serious reflection on issues and then write up their ideas for the AEF website.

It is a sad fact that most writing and commentary on education today is undertaken by those who - if they were ever engaged in teaching - no longer work in schools, colleges or universities. They are the, journalists, politicians, union officials, think-tank researchers and media pundits who assail us daily with their latest ideas on what schools 'should be doing'. This mainly turns out to be what they were doing when they went to school or their pet subject ('Everyone should learn Latin - it's good for disciplined thinking!').

The Forum aims to redress this imbalance by encouraging practising teachers to develop their own 'voice' and enter the broader educational debate. If we don't, we should not complain when those who shape our local and national policies know little or nothing about the reality of life in the classroom, workshop, laboratory, lecture hall or gym.

The Forum aims to encourage writing that is serious, yet relevant and accessible to those working in education. We invite pieces - commentaries, articles, reviews, critiques, book reviews, idle ponderings - of between 1,000 and 2,000 words (but this is only a guideline not a rule - a real gem might only be 250 words or run to 3,000). In this way we hope to inspire Fellows to consider issues in some depth and produce writing that is more detailed and reflective as a result.

In his book 'In Praise of Slow', Carl Honore writes about the 'cult of speed' that we are all swept up by. It is this that leads us to check our electronic devices every few minutes, fire off twenty emails in half an hour and wake at 5.00 am to check for replies. The Forum aims to be an antidote to this frenetic pace of life. There are no deadlines, there is no hurry and no pressure. Fellows can take their time, develop their ideas slowly, marshal their evidence, build their arguments and draft and re-draft their pieces as many times as it takes to get them to 'feel right'. When fellows are happy with their work they can submit their pieces and then there is a further layer of support.

The Forum is supported by an AEF Peer Review Group, a small band of volunteers (which you are welcome to join) who have offered to proofread and provide feedback on contributions prior to posting on the AEF website. All work submitted remains the intellectual property of contributors and will be copyrighted to them. Only when a Fellow is happy with a piece will it be posted on the

Forum section of the AEFP web site; even then the contributor may ask for it to be taken down at any point.

All contributions should be sent to Anna Bunney - bedfordfellows@gmail.com - who will rotate them around the Peer Review Group. Ultimately we would like to challenge all Fellows to create at least one Forum piece as part of their membership of the group - but this is stimulus not an obligation. For those new to writing or who want to reflect for a while on the basics of the craft before 'diving in', there is a link to some guidelines entitled 'Writing for the AEFP Forum'

Peer Review Group

Vanessa Coleman

Jacq Emkes

Jude Lovely

Cathy Robson

Mike Berrill

Questions:

- 1. What stops us writing for each other?**
- 2. If you were to write about a current educational issue what would it be?**