



# Where is the White Space?

Steve Hall and Jori Leskelä



Learning Teacher Network Conference, Tallinn 2016



# Introductions



Steve Hall

Learning practitioner

4+12+18+7 years

Water

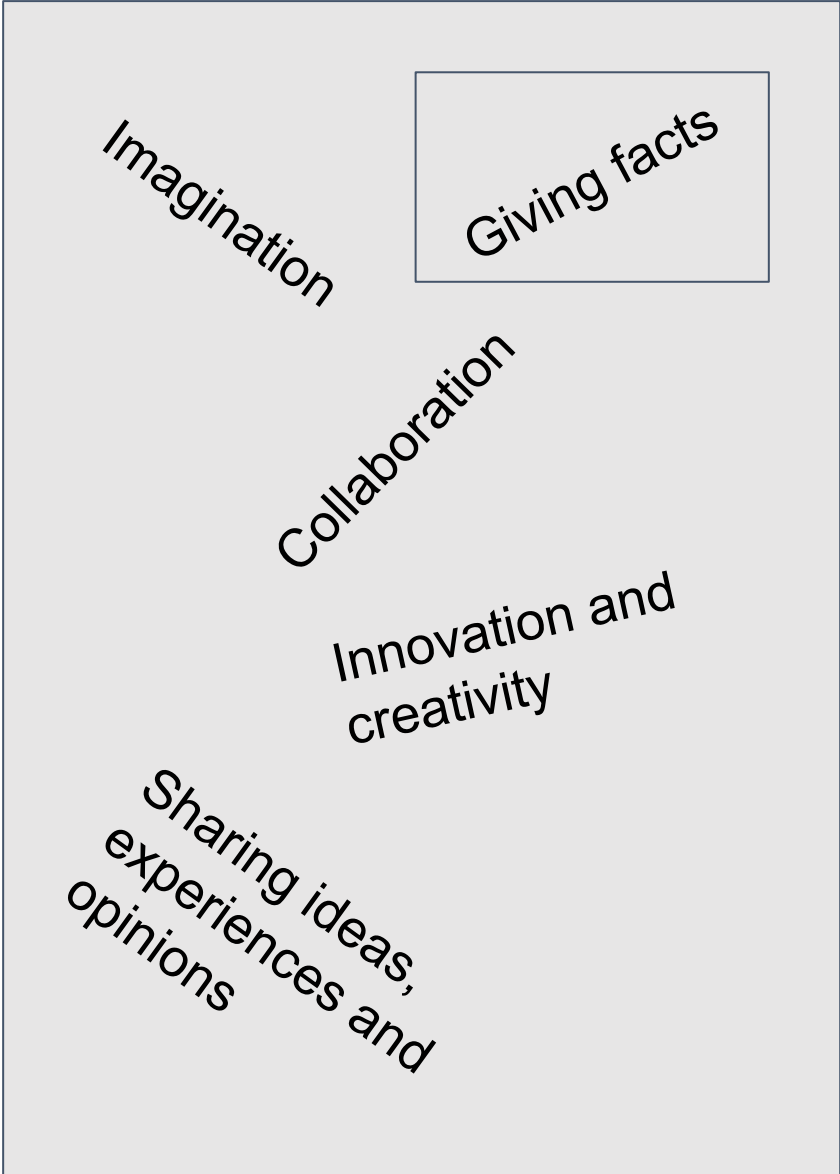


Jori Leskelä

Teacher educator

7+18 +7 years

Sports



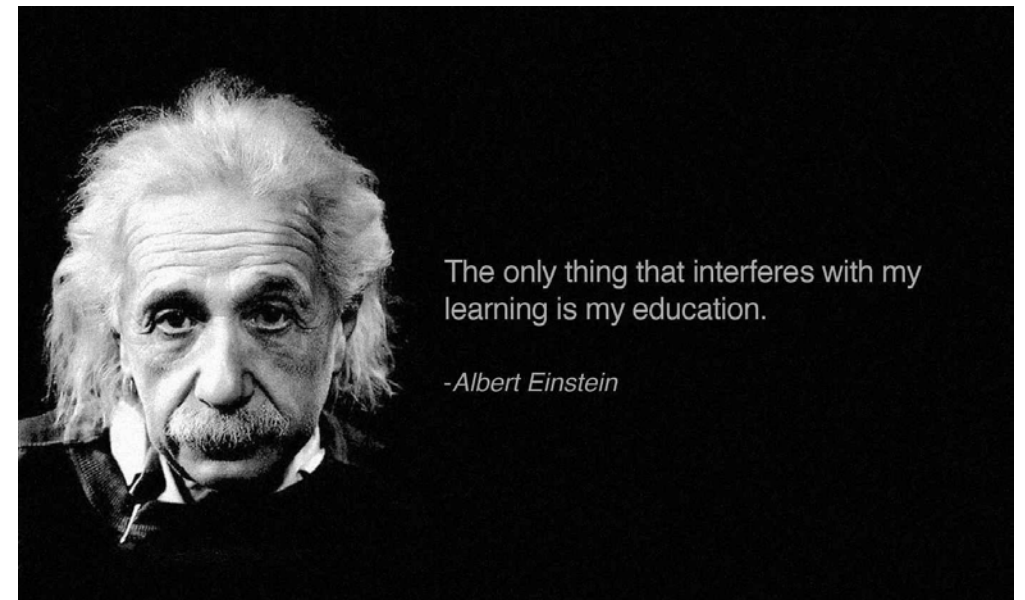
# What is White Space as a concept?

The word 'space' suggests many concepts – in the world of learning and personal development, the term 'space' could mean 'room for growth'



In the world of education, White Space as a concept is about leaving...

'room for thinking',  
'room for creativity',  
'room for learning'.



The only thing that interferes with my learning is my education.

-Albert Einstein



## Activity 1:

Personal reflection:

On a blue post-it briefly write an occasion you\* felt especially restricted, limited, uncomfortable, controlled by others...

On a yellow post-it briefly write an occasion you felt particularly liberated, empowered, imaginative, creative...

\*or, if you wish: ... your students felt ...

When ready, put your post-its on the A3 sheet on your table



Group sharing activity:

# Learning situations

Any occasion consisting of learning, personal growth / development  
or just curiosity to know something new:

... where I have felt especially restricted, limited, uncomfortable,  
controlled by others...

... where I have felt particularly liberated, empowered,  
imaginative, creative...

 Activity 2:

Individually, fill in the gaps:

To \_\_\_ or not \_\_\_ be, \_\_\_\_\_ is the \_\_\_\_\_

## Activity 2:

Original version:

To be or not to be, that is the question

*(from Hamlet by William Shakespeare)*



 Activity 3:

In pairs, complete the following:

I must go down to the sea again

To the lonely sea and the sky

.....

.....



## Activity 3:

Original version

I must go down to the sea again.

To the lonely sea and the sky

And all I ask is a tall ship

And a star to steer her by

*(from Sea Fever by John Masefield)*

 Activity 3:

In pairs, complete the following:

I must go down to the sea again

To the lonely sea and the sky

.....

.....

## Activity 3:

Imaginative option

I must go down to the sea again  
To the lonely sea and the sky  
I left my shoes and socks down there  
I wonder if they're dry



*(an alternative version by Spike Milligan)*

## Activity 4:

Small task for groups of three

“A story through painting”



Does having White Space make your brain work actively and did you feel you were productive?

## Activity 5:

### In pairs

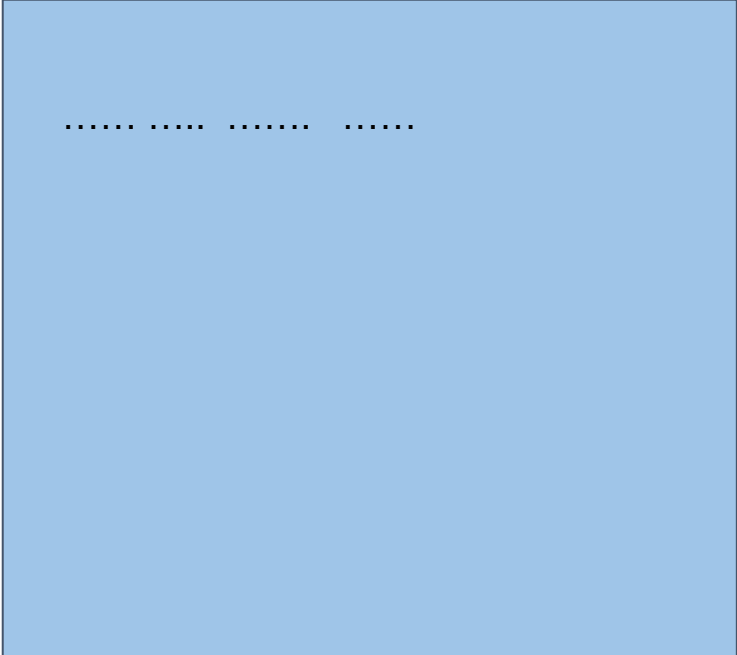
- Choose one of your blue post-its (one of your own) from the A3 sheet on your table
- Using the sheet provided write down ideas for introducing White Space into the situation

 Paired collaborative activity:

# Learning situations with White Space

As a pair choose one of your blue post-its (one of your own) from the A3 sheet on your table

How could you use White Space to help the learner to become more liberated, empowered, imaginative, creative...



*(Above there is an example of a learner being especially restricted, limited, uncomfortable, controlled by others...)*



Conclusion... so far!



no White Space:

Giving facts

Imagination

Collaboration

Innovation and  
creativity

Sharing ideas,  
experiences and  
opinions



What if?

with White Space:

Giving facts

Imagination

Collaboration

Innovation and  
creativity

Sharing ideas,  
experiences and  
opinions



So, finally ...

# Where is the White Space?

Steve Hall and Jori Leskelä

# Where is the White Space?

- additional slides which  
may be of interest .....

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# Where can White Space exist in teaching and learning?

- Pauses in speaking to provide time for processing information and reflecting on its meaning?
- Blank pages for doodles
- Places to go to think and reflect
- Unplanned time for follow-up and follow-through
- Open doors, open minds
- Coaching conversations



# How could you use White Space to make learning more effective?

- recognise the need for imagination
- delay stating learning objectives – leave it as white space until midway through the learning activity
- only plan (initially) for 50% of teaching time
- stop talking
- not too much (not too much confusion, not too long away from your comfortable zone), not too little
- right moment for it



# Why is White Space important and what is its meaning?

Where is the white space

- for teachers and students to test out what students have learned
- for students to engage and find their motivation (space for their own objectives, space to test their competences by facing real life problems)
- for teachers develop themselves, to benchmark other schools, to share ideas with colleagues "developing soul-mates" in their schools, in other schools even in other countries, to try new things and even fail, learn from failure and try again
- for teacher groups, for leaders on various levels
- in student's mind for new understanding, for changing attitude, for considering different kind of opinions (peers' opinions, ...)
- for self reflection
- to ask silly questions?

Where is the white space during lectures

- time for students to think (mulling?)
- test their ideas and understanding through discussion and debate?

Where is the white space to relax?

Where is the space for teachers' authority and autonomy (power) and trust so that they can concentrate on developing, implementing and inquiring themselves the results, the pros and cons, and to continue developing? Usually this process takes years.