



What is it about Tide ~ and elephants ?

December 2020 - Looking to 2021



**Thank you for your support in 2020.**

**It has been an odd year but we have high hopes for 2021.**

**These few pages wish you all the best for 2021 ... and share a few thoughts about elephants.**

**Work in the last six months has built confidence in the possibility of revitalising a Tide~ network.**

**More importantly it has highlighted the need for it ... the more so in the context the Covid 19 experience and the issues that has amplified ... and the challenges of climate change and the black lives matter cause.**

**The primary driver, as before, will centre on the professional role of teachers, offering 'space' to engage with global issues and ideas for our own learning ... and developing teaching approaches and stimulus to engage learners.**

**We plan to re-establish Membership, build a sustainable 'Network Hub' and develop new ways of working.**

**Teachers in development education**  
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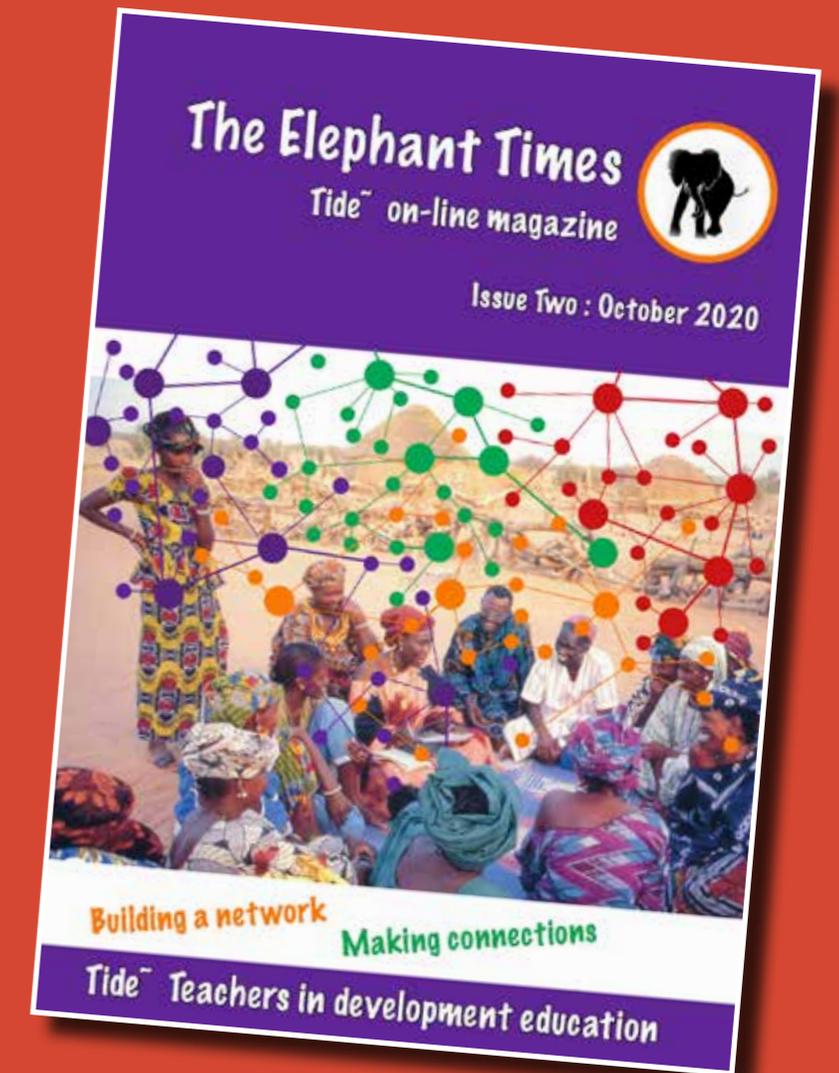
Many DEC/ Tide~ publications are now available to download

[www.tidegloballearning.net](http://www.tidegloballearning.net)

We have produced two issues of the magazine **The Elephant Times** a third is due in January

It is proposed that **ET Publications** will provide the focus for a range of creative work core to Tide~ in 2021

The original jigsaw: a logo for our newsletter in the early 1980's



Elephants are gentle giants, who show great care toward their herd, offspring and elders. They have come to symbolise sensitivity, wisdom, loyalty. They are often “in the room” or even “pink”.

**Elephants** -- real elephants are also involved in the big issues. Think of Côte d’Ivoire, next to the Gold Coast [now Ghana]. Killing elephants for their tusks played its part in the slave trade. Samuel L Jackson’s BBC film: ‘Enslaved’ investigated a few of the 1,000 slave ships that were wrecked. They dived to find out more. They brought a large tusk to the surface as a symbol of the trade.

This year: Covid 19 has had an impact on Eco Tourism and in turn the funding to protect elephants from poaching. In Botswana some 370 elephants died. Investigation concluded that climate change is increasing the incidence of toxic algal blooms in the water holes.



They are in the room -- many of them!

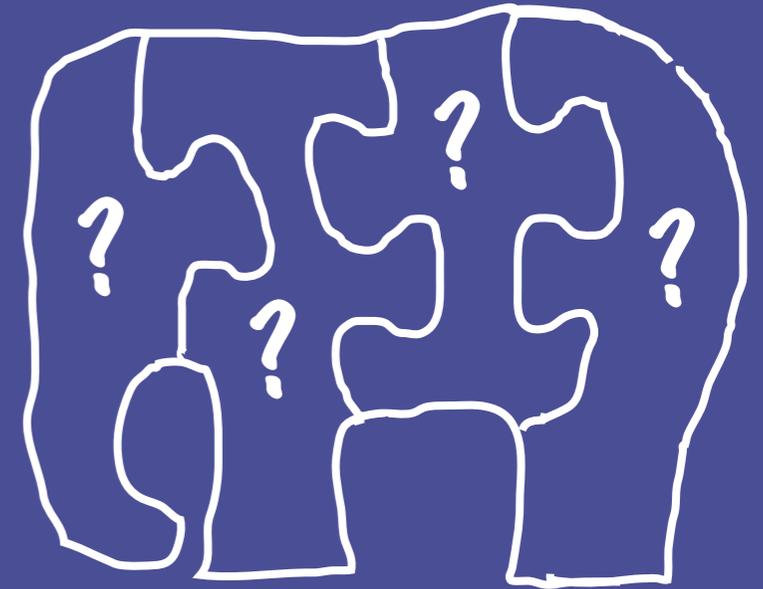
**Connections** -- The original ET idea was about [a fable](#) and making connections. The priority then was connections between areas of curriculum innovation.

Discussion about “**an Elephant for 2021**” generated many thoughts. **In the next few pages we share a few of your ideas.**

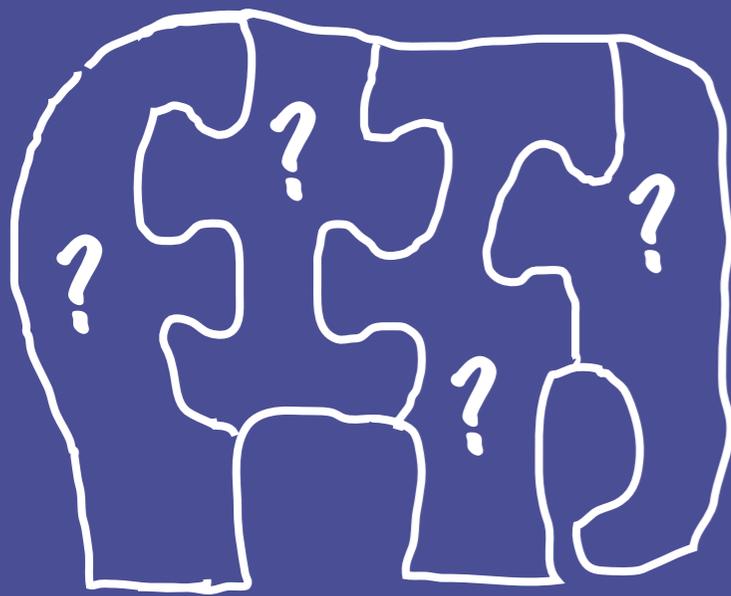
Together they highlight the need to think about our collective disposition:

- ◇ do we as teachers need to take an optimistic role?
- ◇ how do we increase skills in seeking evidence?
- ◇ how do we connect to those that see matters like climate change as fake news?
- ◇ how do we reconnect with the natural world and the cycles of nature?

# What is it about elephants?



## Making connections ...



**Connectedness**

**Risk**

**Morality**

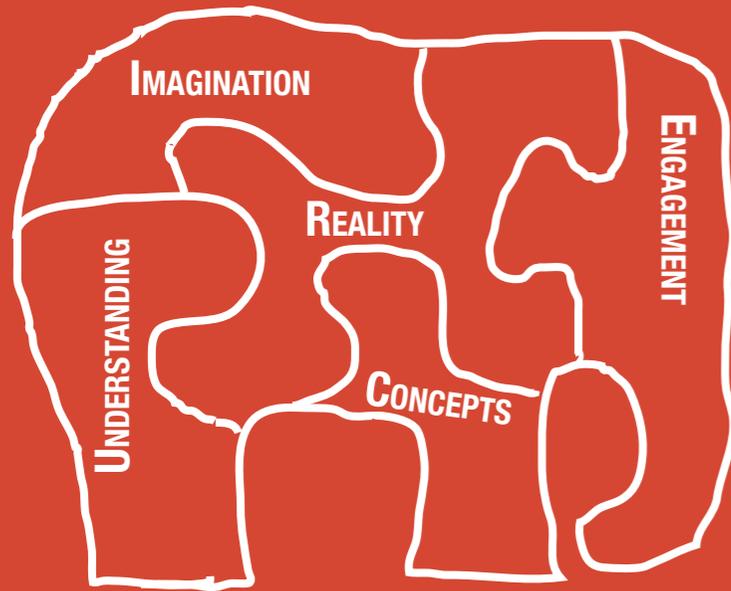
**Uncertainty**

**Connectedness** - as humans we need connections to others. We learn how to connect in our family, our nursery, our school, our community. Some of the things we learn have a positive impact on how we feel and how we develop as human beings. Some don't! I think photos would be excellent as ways to explore this. Discussion points would include identifying with people 'like us', being valued for who we are and not simply what we can do, nature vs nurture, good and evil in everyone ... this could be done in any bit of the curriculum - growth of towns and cities, literature, language ... etc. But also given current times, something on how we connect via technology - what is possible in terms of relationships with and without eye contact, with or without seeing a person.

**Risk** - for me this is the issue of our times. Our politicians are failing abysmally to provide any leadership in terms of how each of us assesses and manages risk - to ourselves, to our loved ones, to our community and to others. This isn't simply about whether or not face masks are required (tho that would be an obvious discussion point) but also things like how is the knowledge arrived at, how is it changing, whose controlling its dissemination, what is fact and what is fake, how do we balance our individual needs, our families' needs with the risks to others? What's a good balance? Who decides? What can each of us do?

**Morality** - this may sound v old fashioned but hopefully it isn't. There's something so amoral about the current gov and about Trump (and others of course) that it feels important for students to consider different possible moral positions about issues they care about. Not to arrive at right or wrong but to arrive at what I think is right and wrong and to be able to justify that. Again, loads of issues that could be used to trigger debate on that - veganism, climate change, environmental protection, but also the wretched exam results nightmare which will impact on all school students in the coming academic year.

**Uncertainty** - another key issue. Learning to live with uncertainty. It's connected to risk and also to Covid. How do we do that? How do we select leaders who do it? How do we avoid leaders who promise certainty, or deny uncertainty? Why do they do that?



Reality

Understanding

Concepts

Imagination

Engagement

As long ago as 1959 C. Wright Mills\* described the sense of powerlessness facing Americans. This sense of powerlessness is, if anything, even worse today.

Our young confront an impersonal, uncertain future where even examination results are unreliable and can be changed overnight. Education is about equipping our young, not only, to live in this world but to make the changes needed to make life sustainable, enjoyable and just.

At the heart of my elephant is **reality**; we live in a world of events and processes that exist independently of our imperfect knowledge. Put simply Covid 19 exists, whether I know about it or not, simply ignore it or even deny it really exists.

To develop an **understanding** of the world we need to use the concepts of diverse disciplines, it is through the application of these **concepts** to the events and other accounts that we see the nature of our world. However, these **concepts** also provide a critique of the world; how is it possible to talk about Human Rights, human dignity or Justice when around 1.5 million children under 5 years old die of diarrhoea every year?

This leads us to the importance of **imagination** in conceptualising a more just, sustainable and pleasant world and the **engagement** needed to bring us closer to this 'green and pleasant land'.

\* W C Wright Mills (1959) The Sociological Imagination New York Oxford University Press

We are increasingly aware of the climate and ecological emergency, its potential impacts, both local and global, and our collective responsibility.

My Elephant jigsaw would have four interconnected pieces ... the 4'R's of **Positive Deep Adaptation**.

This is an approach that has emerged from the work of Professor Jem Bendell starting a conversation on “a creative response to collapse and beyond”.

Watch - [UTube: If it's too late - what now?](#)

Read - [DEEP](#)

## **society ... economy ... environment ... power**

There are some huge international challenges as we emerge from the pandemic crisis. There are at least three other massive and interlinked global crises that we are now also facing:

- ◇ a worldwide environmental crisis, especially ( but not only) due to the growing climate emergency;
- ◇ a global economic crisis, especially post-Covid, with accelerated economic inequalities within and between countries;
- ◇ a rapidly-emerging social and political crisis, with growing nationalism (including ethnic nationalism) in many countries and related attacks on democracy and human rights.

There is also the underlying risk of these crises escalating into military ones.

With thanks to cartoonist: Graeme MacKay  
<https://mackaycartoons.net>

## **Resilience**

What is it that we most value – and how can we keep that?

## **Relinquishment**

What can we give up in order not to make matters worse?

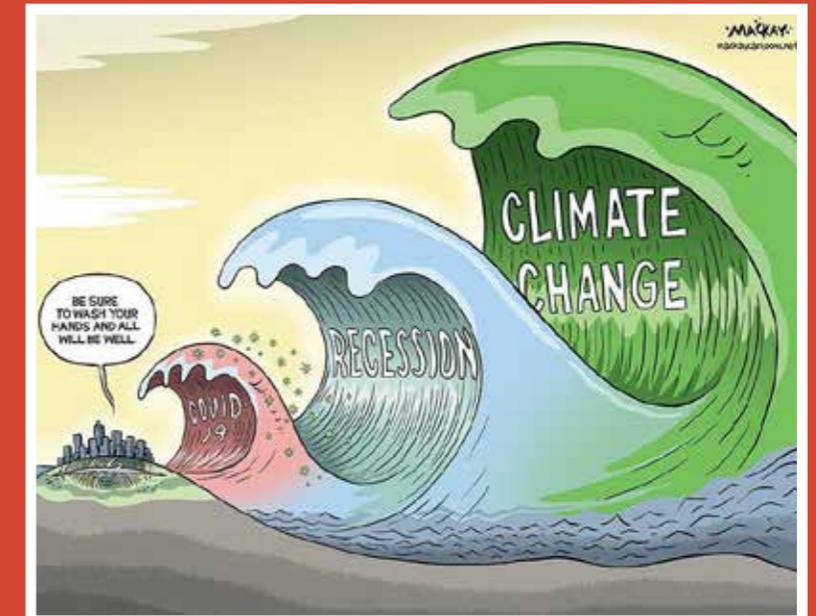
## **Restoration**

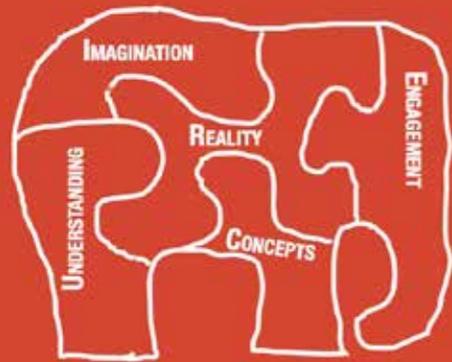
What can we bring back that has been lost?

## **Reconciliation / Reconnection**

What can we do to love, support and make peace with others?

How can we live with love, joy and peace?



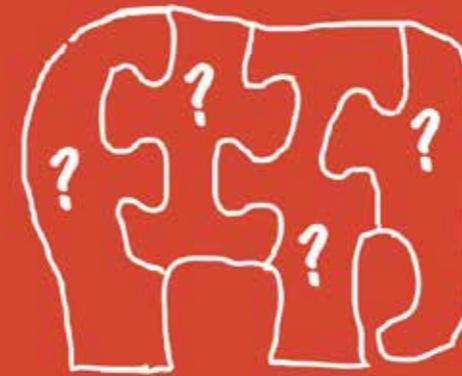


Thank you to those we have quoted in this pamphlet - **you give us a lot to think about.**

How do we engage these realities with a positive disposition?

Can we harness the potential of a creative pessimism?

**The Elephant Times has highlighted the need for new conversations ...**



**A time for new models of global learning?**

This raises core matters - e.g. Mick Waters [\[ET 2-20\]](#) on **“a curriculum that educates”** and Chris Durbin on global citizenship [\[ET 2-18\]](#)

Daniel Stone sets the scene for ET 3 [due in Jan]:

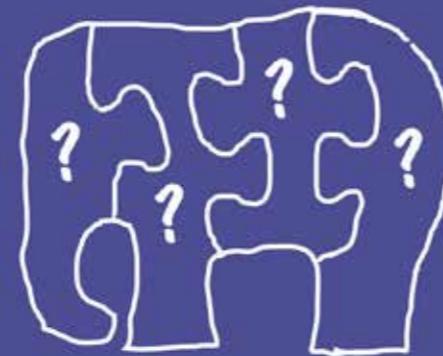
**“We were never asked to reflect on how and why, people were able to dehumanise other people for centuries, and which parts of that psyche are still alive in us today.”**

For example: Rohini Corfield [\[ET 3 due in Jan\]](#) asks about decoding diversity & seeks such a conversation with a focus on Elif Shafak's book ...

**How to stay sane in an age of division**

**“Do not be afraid of complexity**

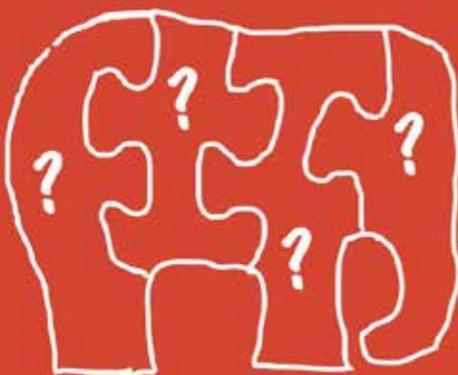
**Be afraid of people who promise an easy short-cut to simplicity”**



**Not a good time to renew a teacher network but ... events in 2020 have highlighted the need**

as Clive Harber & Jeff Serf put it [\[ET 1-22\]](#)

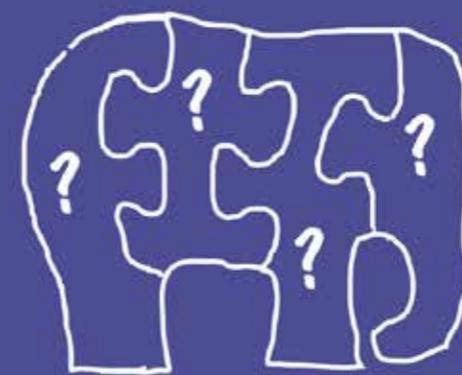
**“to consider afresh the challenges of engaging learners in contemporary controversial issues with appropriate professionalism”**



**Covid 19 ... has highlighted many issues**  
An opportunity to re-think priorities?

Let's talk about it. See Dorit Braun [\[ET 2-14\]](#) and Rita Chowdhury [\[ET 1-8\]](#)

**Covid 19 is a global issue**  
as Colm Regan explained [\[ET 1-10\]](#).  
**So is the vaccine.** See his recent article:  
[Pandemic nationalism is spreading to vaccines](#)



**All the best for 2021**