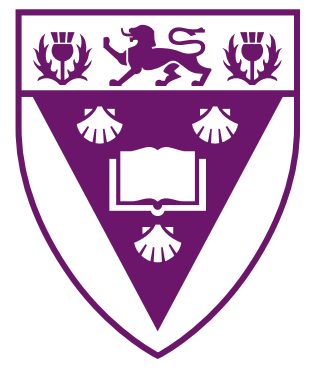


Curating resonant encounters enabling ecological literacy for learners



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Where leaders learn

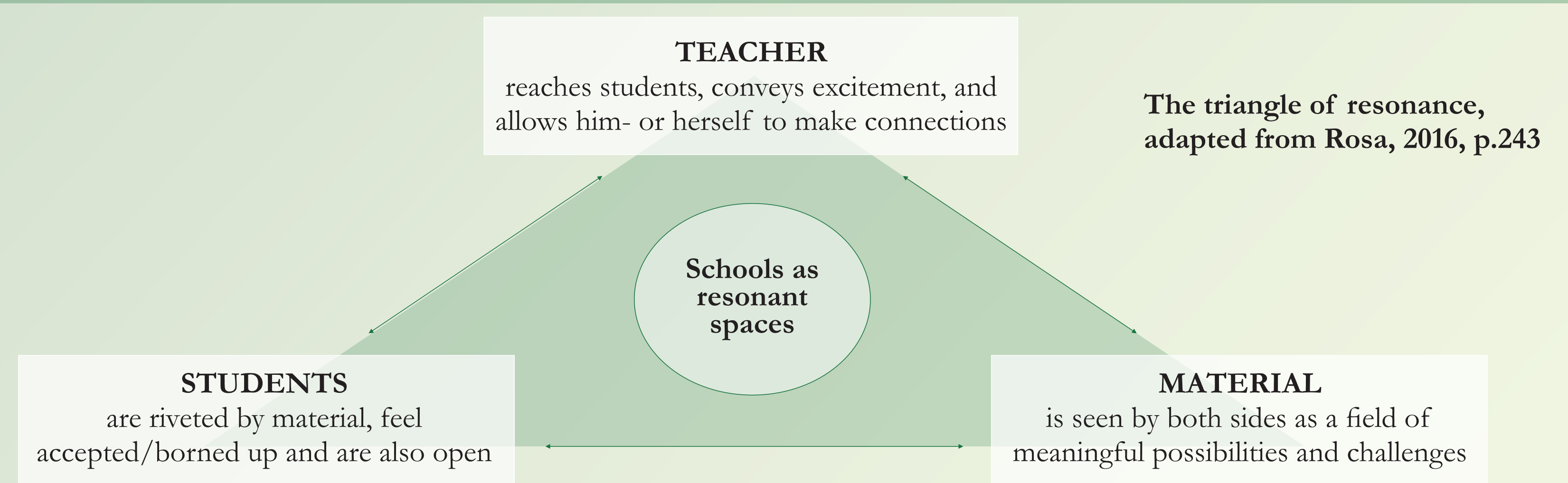
BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Water quality and scarcity is a major concern in Southern Africa and globally especially as the threat of climate change looms closer. Increased flooding and drought in South Africa has exposed the brittle nature of this country's resilience to water challenges. In South Africa where apartheid historically geographically separated its citizens and placed most of the population in environmentally disadvantageous areas, the need for enabling communities to

overcome these burdens cannot be more urgent. This study looks at how fieldwork in environmental education in schools is approached in South Africa. It also examines the elements of ecological literacy and if it is established through resonant activities such as fieldwork practicals and whether learners develop a deeper environmental ethic from these encounters.

RESEARCH PROJECT

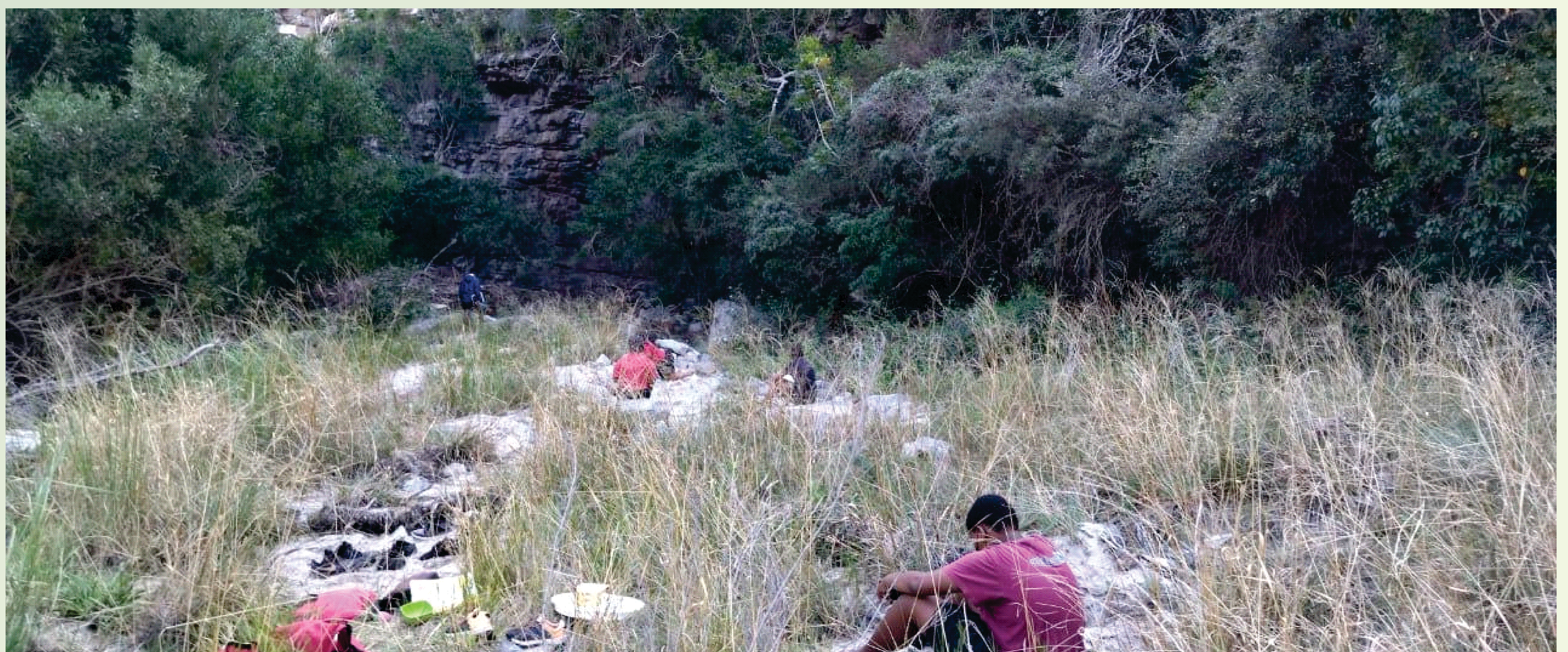
The study is located in primary and secondary schools in South Africa. Presenting an array of data from both historical sources (in which I was an active participant/activist) and generative work gathered primarily for the purposes of this study, I elucidate how resonance building activities can be created by focused fieldwork practical activities.



WHAT DID THIS PROJECT ACHIEVE?

The project highlights numerous benefits to fieldwork and how it appeals to a variety of learning styles and enables students to develop a range of learning skills. It also illustrates how fieldwork facilitates more contact with peers and teachers, provides real world examples instead of the routine textbook explanations, allows students to take responsibility for their own learning, facilitates experiential learning and fosters a respect for the environment. Curiosity and exploration indeed seem to be education's essential character and it truly comes alive when students and teachers alike

are engaged in the field and in the natural world. Fieldwork in environmental education is as much about reconnecting young minds, body, and spirit with the natural world as it is about allowing the space for critical thinking about environmental issues and solutions to emerge. As much as environmental education can talk about nature or show videos that fire the imagination about nature it is also the contact time with the outdoors that is critical. These are the initial findings that have been discovered in this research, alongside forgotten riverbanks and in enchanted gardens.



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