Scan

the journal for educators

share
transform
connect
inspire

In this issue
using philosophical inquiry
creative approaches to literacy
innovative teaching & learning
sick fiction
science & technology

Scan

showcasing innovation for quality learning

The butterfly feeding on the plant – ssguy/*Shutterstock.com* http://www.shutterstock.com/

contents
Volume 33, Issue 2, 2014

from the editor

Welcome to the second issue of *Scan* 2014.

Are you interested in a fresh approach to teaching creative and critical thinking in your classroom, implementing an exciting whole school approach to literacy, transforming student learning through innovative teaching and learning or finding out about the latest literary phenomenon for young readers? Pause for a moment, be inspired and share the excitement.

The interactive, digital format of *Scan* provides many ways to share. Go to the page of *Scan* you want to share and click on the Share icon on the right of the screen. Email articles to colleagues or embed them in your school's communication dashboard. Don't forget to share your school's login details so colleagues within your institution can access the content. Institutional logins should not be shared beyond your school.

Enjoy *Scan*,

Margaret McEwan
Relieving editor

currents

Enone Melville, Relieving Library Coordinator, NSW Office of Public Schools, is responsible for policy advice and leadership for school libraries and information literacy.
E: *enone.melville@det.nsw.edu.au*

Welcome to the second edition of *Scan* for 2014! I am enjoying the opportunity to work with and support my teaching colleagues while Colleen Foley is taking a well-deserved holiday.

Essential skills

Critical and creative thinking is one of the *seven general capabilities* identified by ACARA as a key skill required for living and working successfully in the 21st century. In this edition of *Scan*, Dr Britta Jensen and Kate Kennedy White examine the importance of developing and extending students' creative and critical thinking skills and explore ways in which this can be achieved in the classroom. Philosophical inquiry, as explored by Jensen and Kennedy White, will help teachers equip students to engage meaningfully with a Guided Inquiry process and develop skills needed in our modern world.

Working together

Teacher librarians often talk about *collaboration* and *planning collaboratively* but how is this achieved and why is it so important? How do we work towards increasing opportunities for collaboration in our schools? The research article, *Innovative teaching and learning*, clearly shows that increasing opportunities for teacher collaboration and designing extended learning activities where teachers work collaboratively across key learning areas, is key to integrating innovative teaching and learning practice in schools.
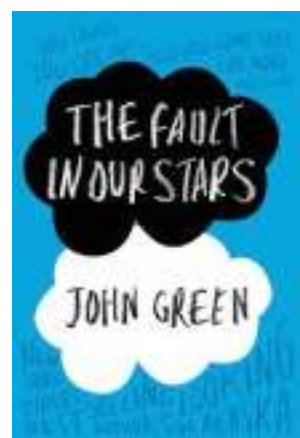
What are our students reading?

Teacher librarians often comment that one of the great joys of their role is being in a position to support and promote wide reading. In this edition of *Scan*, Paul MacDonald writes about a popular, but peculiarly labelled and somewhat controversial genre - sick-lit. Let's not restrict wide reading to the English KLA, but rather think about using this popular genre in areas such as PDHPE to promote discussions about grief and resilience and in Science to discuss developments in health technologies.

What are our staff reading?

Our favourite reads from the office this month are:
Rivers of London by Ben Aaronovitch - *Dr Who* meets *Harry Potter* in a fast paced light crime read

Old path white clouds by Thich Nhat Hanh - A must for those who love historical fiction; a novel about the life of Buddha
The Goldfinch by Donna Tartt - A sweeping saga of drama and suspense; a plot driven page turner

A few right thinking men by Sulari Gentill–A murder mystery, page turner, that takes a fresh look at Australian politics in the 1930s.

Are you using Scootle?

Scootle provides teachers with easy access to high quality digital resources for implementing the Australian curriculum. NSW DEC teachers access *NSW DEC Scootle* via the *Staff portal* using their portal ID and password. The link to *NSW DEC Scootle* is listed under My websites/AC NSW *Scootle*. Non NSW DEC teachers access Scootle via their own jurisdiction or they can register directly with *Scootle*. Resources will continue to be added to the collection and as new NSW syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum are developed the collection will be further enhanced.

Are you using social media?

These channels provide:
- curriculum advice and resources
- support services
- professional learning information
- important events in the school calendar.

find us on facebook
www.facebook.com/ScanJournal

find us on facebook
www.facebook.com/learnDEC

follow us on twitter
https://twitter.com/scanjournal

follow us on twitter
https://twitter.com/learnDEC

Exploring *Scan's* **online edition**

Zoom

Click once on the page to zoom in.
Click again to zoom out.
Experiencing fuzzy text? Ensure
your browser settings are set to
100% zoom.

●	100%
	75%
	50%
	Custom...

Engage

with multimedia and
social content, including
embedded videos, future
image galleries and
Twitter feeds

Navigate
through sections

Search

the current issue or the
Scan archive

Turn

through the pages

Contents

Navigate through contents
from any page

Scan

Contents   Editorial   Currents   Learning & teaching   **Research**   Curriculum support   Share this   Resource reviews

building a school based
professional
learning network

Beryl Morris is currently a Master of Education (Teacher Librarianship) student at Charles Sturt University. She is the teacher librarian at Christian FUSreach College, Toowoomba, Queensland in K–12 library.

Lyn Hay is a lecturer with the School of Information Studies and Flexible Learning Institute Teaching Fellow at Charles Sturt University. She works from the Canberra campus, ACT.

Social networking has the potential
to provide educators with
professional learning tools
and resources that are timely,
tailored and support the
development and refinement
of Web 2.0 knowledge
and skills.

Introduction: a case study
in social networking

Participating in anytime and anywhere
connections increases educator capacity
to experience the impact of networked
learning in personal, educational and,
eventually, classroom contexts.

In a 21st century school, the teacher librarian
can lead from the middle as a visionary leader
of information (Winzenried, 2010), technology
innovation (Johnson 2012), and involvement in
professional learning communities (Kiefer 2008).

A case study on the leadership role of the teacher
librarian by Underwood (2003) concluded that
an effective teacher librarian can be the hub
of the school ... [and] can lead from the middle
through technology expertise (p. ii). This finding
was supported by Long's (2007) study that
found teacher librarians who have a preference
for transformational leadership were performing
as educational and technological leaders in
their school through curriculum and instruction.
Leadership is about collegiality, cooperation,
partnering, respect for all, and mutual support
(Beisle, 2005, p.8), and teacher librarians can work
with teachers in this way to support technology
innovation and integration, for both professional
learning needs of teachers and digital literacy
needs of students.

*... teacher librarians who have a
preference for transformational leadership
were performing as educational and
technological leaders ...*

**Love reading in print?
Download**

a fully printable alternative
as a PDF

or

Print pages directly from
the screen

Tip: remember to check
your print settings
(eg. landscape, colour)

Share

your favourite articles
easily with colleagues!

Email

specific articles to colleagues
within your subscribed
institution for improved
access and sharing.

PAGE 24

PAGE 25

Scan Volume 31, May 2012   24

Browse

through all pages in the issue

Archives
Browse past issues

Changing your username or password

To change your user name, please contact editor

editor.scan@det.nsw.edu.au

You are strongly encouraged to change your password
promptly, to protect the security of your account.
Please safely record your login. Forgotten passwords
can be retrieved by emailing support@realview.com.au

For more tips, click here to
view *Scan's* video taster.

The case for philosophical inquiry
in K-12 classrooms

Do animals love each other?

Tackling the big questions in Stage 1

Dr Britta Jensen is a linguist, philosopher, and educator with experience teaching at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. She has expertise in philosophy of language, syntax, linguistics, logic, and language acquisition. Britta's doctorate is from the University of Oxford (2003), and she has worked in cognitive science, linguistics and education in Australia since 2006.

Kate Kennedy White is a dedicated philosophy teacher in a public primary school and an accredited teacher trainer in *Philosophy with Children* methodology. She is an Executive Member for the Federation of Australasian Philosophy in Schools Association (FAPSA) and the Founding Director of *Kinderphilosophy*. She has studied philosophic inquiry techniques in Australia, France and the United States.

The terms inquiry and critical thinking appear in syllabus documents throughout the country. *The Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority* (ACARA) identifies creative and critical thinking as one of seven cross-curricular (K – 12) general capabilities. As such, creative and critical thinking (CCT) is recognized as part of an essential skill set needed for living and working successfully in the 21st century. According to ACARA, the development of students' thinking tools is as important as content delivery. However, ACARA does not endorse any particular methodology or offer suggestions as to how to teach CCT or how to promote thinking tools. There is growing support for the use of philosophy in the classroom to achieve these ends. After all, philosophical inquiry lends itself to the careful examination of abstract topics, including the study of meaning and logical reasoning. Philosophy for children has an enviable track record for promoting higher order thinking in children. This is a tried-and-true methodology that has been implemented
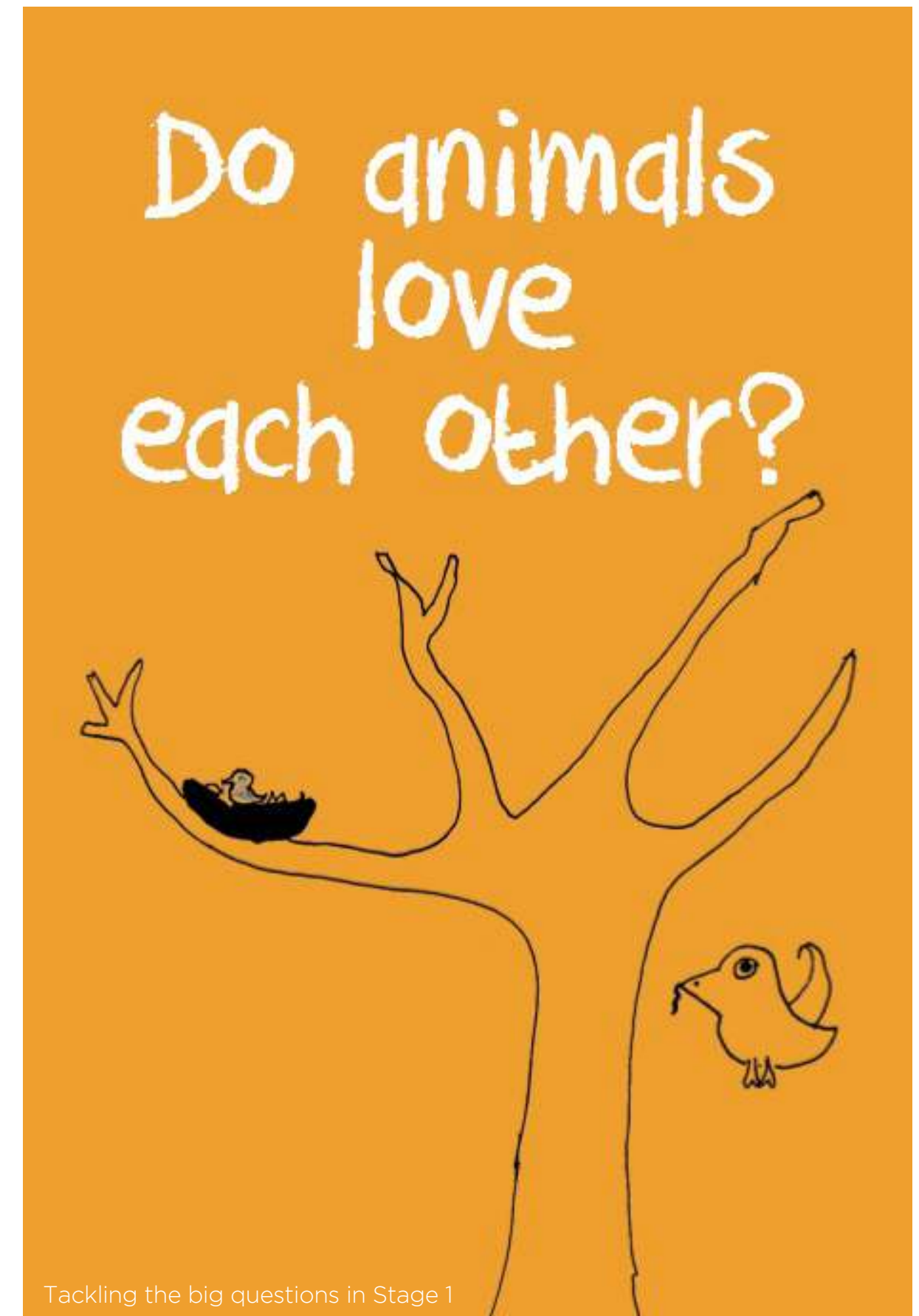
across all ages, across all key learning areas (KLAs), and in several countries. Furthermore, using the strategies of philosophic inquiry promotes collaborative classroom dialogue and contributes to ethical understanding as well. Interestingly, there is also some correlation between pedagogical strategies used in philosophical inquiry and those identified by Hattie as having a significant impact on student achievement (>0.4 effect size).These include meta-cognitive strategies (0.69), self-verbalisation and self-questioning (0.64), problem solving teaching (0.61) and cooperative learning (0.54).

> *...philosophy involves converting the classroom into a community of cooperative inquiry, where all are democratically entitled to be heard, where each learns from the other, and where the spoken dialogue among the members of the class, when internalized and rendered an inner forum in the mind of each participant, is the basis of the process known as thinking.*
>
> Matthew Lipman, *Philosophy Goes to School*

We would like to share our experience using philosophical inquiry with Australian primary and secondary students and illustrate how using philosophical methods in the classroom straightforwardly supports students' development of CCT.

Thinking skills should be explicitly taught and practiced

Just as we learn to speak and read, we also learn to think. Speaking and reading are explicitly scaffolded and nurtured in the classroom and we ought to dedicate time to nurturing thinking tools as well. In doing so, learners become self-critical and aware of prejudices and assumptions.

In order to engage with philosophical inquiry, learners must be able to formulate and engage with interesting (divergent) questions. Being able to pose and critically examine questions is a complex task and requires several discrete skills. What are these thinking skills? Here is a short (non-exhaustive) list:

- discriminate between types of questions
- compose conceptual (divergent) questions
- give reasons (to justify)
- make distinctions, suggestions and inferences
- define concepts and test their definitions
- hypothesise
- examine generalisations
- identify (underlying) assumptions
- use examples and counterexamples
- create and test criteria.

Through explicit introduction and

subsequent practice, students become familiar with and eventually use the metalanguage of thought. For instance, they demonstrate skills in classifying types of questions using the *Question Quadrant* and identifying the *big questions*. They use metalanguage to reflect on their thinking moves, and they become aware of the moves of their peers. As a consequence, they become more rigorous in their thinking and display awareness of prejudices, generalisations and assumptions when presenting an argument. In short, they begin to think about their thinking. As teachers, we should take care in developing the language of thought in our classrooms, just as we explicitly teach grammatical metalanguage to our English students.

What is the link between critical inquiry and philosophy?

Arguably, the best way to promote students' knowledge, understanding and skills relating to critical thinking is to draw upon the tools and methodology of philosophy. There is a long-standing connection between philosophy and thinking. In recent history, philosophers and educators such as John Dewey, Matthew Lipman and Philip Cam have adapted philosophical methods and thinking strategies for engaging school children (Cam, 2006). This interactive methodology, known as a *community of*

inquiry, (COI) has been readily taken up in many corners of the globe, including schools in the United States, Britain, Europe, Turkey, South America, Asia and Australia, among others. Where it has been implemented, inquiry has proven to be a valuable and versatile methodology for implementing dialogic and reflective classroom talk, thereby explicitly meeting the criteria for syllabus outcomes across a range of stages and KLAs, for example, the outcomes relating to *Reflecting on learning* in Objective E of the *English K–10 syllabus.*

Successful engagement with inquiry not only yields desirable academic outcomes but it also results in positive community-building effects including an increase in respect and tolerance (Education Queensland, 2007; Jensen, 2013; D'Olimpio, 2014).

Cam and colleagues have successfully implemented philosophy lessons for primary students using inquiry methods throughout Australasia. *The Federation of Australasian Philosophy in Schools Association* (FAPSA) oversees teacher training in philosophic inquiry and community of inquiry methodology. Some public primary schools in Sydney now have philosophy-trained specialist teachers who engage students on a weekly basis using communities of inquiry. Lessons typically begin with the

presentation of a stimulus, for instance a picture book, a passage of text, or a short clip. Children are prompted to volunteer what they found puzzling or interesting about the stimulus. From this a whole class discussion ensues relating to the great themes of literature and life: *What is fair? How should we treat one another? What is equality? Are words as powerful as action?* etc. Children learn how to question, how to examine a question, how to contribute to a discussion, how to refine ideas in accordance with new information, and how to reason. Importantly, children also learn how to respectfully disagree because the focus is explicitly on taking issue with a claim rather than taking issue with a *person*.

Philosophy in English lessons

Some samples of classroom dialogue and individual written work by students in philosophy-driven English lessons with Stages 1, 2, and 4 is showcased below. It is impressive that even students as young as Stage 1 can capably use thinking tools and the metalanguage of thought.

> *It is impressive that even students as young as Stage 1 can capably use thinking tools and the metalanguage of thought.*

Child's comment	Thinking move
Do animals love each other? I don't think so. On TV I saw a snake squeezing a crocodile so he didn't love him.	Question posed.Specific example put forth to support a statement of opinion
I disagree. I've seen elephants holding trunks.	Expression of disagreement with supporting reason
But do animals even know what love is?	Questioning the concept
Well love is something you feel in your heart; it's a feeling.	Establishing a criterion
So if love is a feeling, my dog has feelings. I know when he's happy.	Making an inference
Well humans are animals and we know what love is.	Categorisation
But some humans don't love each other. The Twits didn't love each other	Counterexample
Are there different kinds of love?	Clarification and classification of concept
Like can you love a thing? I love ice cream and I love my teddy.	Expanding the concept
But a teddy can't love you back	Making a suggestion, building a new criterion
Can you love someone who doesn't love you?	Further questioning
Well I love Mia but she doesn't love me.	Example
I don't think animals love each other. I think they just like each other.	Returning to the original question
Is there a difference between love and like?	[Teacher prompt]
I think they are different. My Mother sometimes says I don't like you when you're naughty but I do love you.	Offering an example to make a distinction

Dialogue: do animals love each other?
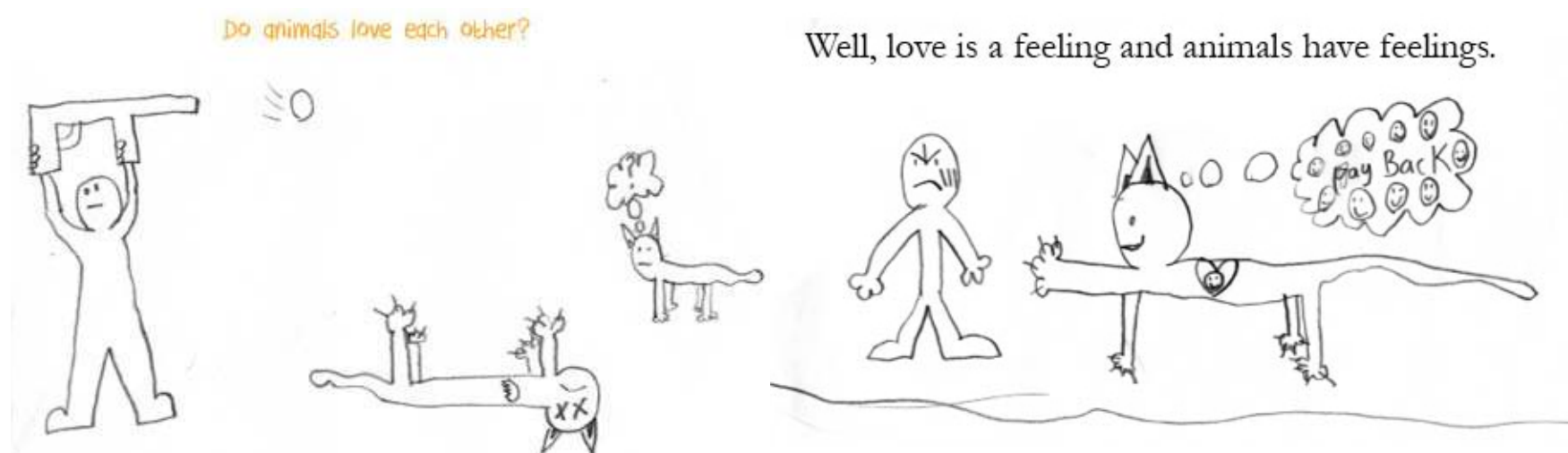
Questioning the concept: do animals have human feelings?

Reflection texts from Stage 1: types of love

Philosophy in a Stage 1 English class

In response to a visual text depicting a mother and baby panda, a student asked, the question: *do animals love each other*? This particular class had been engaged on a weekly basis with philosophy since starting school and were accustomed to the rigour of a *community of inquiry* (COI). They spontaneously started a dialogue (EN1-1A) using a range of interactive pedagogical strategies.

An unedited part of that dialogue is shown in the first column of the table above. The thinking moves automatically applied by the students in the right column have been identified.

Working within a COI, these students were practicing interaction skills and noting how their own communication adjusted to different situations (EN1-1A). They responded to a visual text about a familiar aspect of their world, shared their own experiences (EN1-11D) and discussed aspects of their own and others' learning (EN1-12E).

The lesson ended with each child drawing or writing a personal reflection (EN1-10C) on the question. This was made into a class book. The poster remains in the classroom and the dialogue has never stopped. It is clear from this example that philosophical inquiry provides an excellent opportunity for students to engage in rich learning that integrates a variety of syllabus content, modes and skills.

Philosophy in a Stage 2 English class
The class novel for the term was *The miraculous journey of Edward Tulane* by Kate DiCamillo, a story about a china rabbit who was loved and lost for many years. Year 3 had been practicing philosophic inquiry for three years and by now automatically used the learnt skills to ask open ended questions and to map the shared dialogue when exploring abstract concepts. On this particular day, the students were writing a reflection on the novel. Jackson (name changed) was described as a student

who found difficulty concentrating and completing tasks, yet this day he was so deeply absorbed in his writing that he continued despite a lesson change. Later, he asked if he could share his reflection with the class. This is it.

Reflecting on lost love: how children see it

Do you know what love is? Well, if you don't then this is a story that will tell you something about it. Is there such a thing as lost love? Can you lose love if one person stops loving you?

At one point in the story a poor man was offered food in exchange for the china rabbit but the poor man refused. The rabbit realised that the poor man loved him so much that he was worth more than food.

How much is love worth? Would you choose a family member over someone you loved from another country?

I can't tell you what love is but I can show you.

Jackson, age 8

click to enlarge
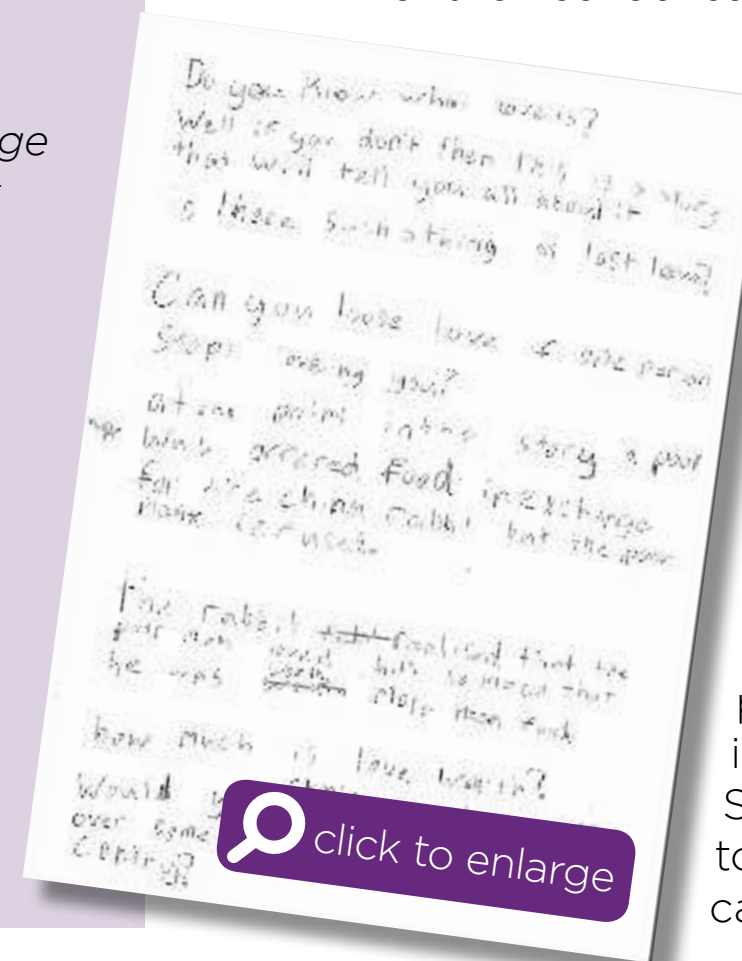
Using a COI within the English classroom not only promotes dialogic, interactive classroom talk, it also provides a forum for students to collaborate in an imaginative, creative, and interpretive manner when responding to and composing texts (EN2-10C). Within the collaborative and reflective community of inquiry, students explored viewpoints of the world similar to and different from their own (EN2-11D).

Philosophy in a Stage 4 English class
In certain respects, Stage 4 is comparable to Stage 1 in that the majority of students at the beginning of their school career have not encountered philosophy in the classroom. Most students in this particular Year 7 class had no prior experience with philosophy or philosophical inquiry. Scaffolding the tools of thought can yield fruitful

results even after one term.

In a term-long unit on heroes, Year 7 began with the *Oxford English dictionary* definition for *hero*. First, we *problematised the definition*. Did it cover all examples? Did it include all heroes? Did it *exclusively identify* all heroes? *What about women?* We identified and revised a set of characteristics are common to all heroes (establishing and testing criteria). Throughout the ten-week unit, alongside reading and viewing texts, which explored the lives (and journeys) of various real and fictitious heroes, students revisited and refined their personal definition for *hero*. Literature lessons were interwoven with Harvard University's Visible thinking routines such as *See-think-wonder* to hone students' understanding of description and implication (Harvard, 2014). This series of lessons promoted students' creative and critical thinking about ideas and arguments in response to texts (EN4-5C) and within these lessons, students explored connections between and among texts (EN46-C).

In their final projects, students showed great creativity and insight as a result of the ongoing explicit engagement with philosophical inquiry, including establishing and testing the definition of *hero* throughout a term. For instance, several students chose to create a

hero themed board game as a demonstration of their understanding of the concept of heroes. A game board and a selection of some of the insightful question cards the students made are illustrated below.

Typically, it is the teachers who generate divergent questions of this type. With just one term of philosophical inquiry, students themselves were beginning to pose insightful questions such as these and debate the possible answers. Any one of the questions above could lead to a robust and lively philosophical discussion.

Enriching student learning across the curriculum

Philosophical methodology lends itself to implementing the English curriculum, but philosophic inquiry can be used in any discipline (Kennedy White, 2013). For instance, it can stimulate students to *think mathematically*, as working within a community of inquiry provides the time to stand back, re-examine and challenge the habitual understanding of a mathematical concept (e.g., number, time, etc). Equally, the tools and practice of philosophic inquiry can support history and science. Rigorous exploration of history demands that students ask relevant questions, critically analyse and interpret sources, and develop and substantiate interpretations. The discourse in a science classroom is markedly enhanced when students use the tools of philosophic inquiry to collaboratively challenge themselves to identify questions and draw conclusions. See the *Values and attitudes* area of Science K–10 and the text by Tim Sprod, (see references and further reading), which provides more detail on using inquiry to enrich the teaching of science in the middle years.
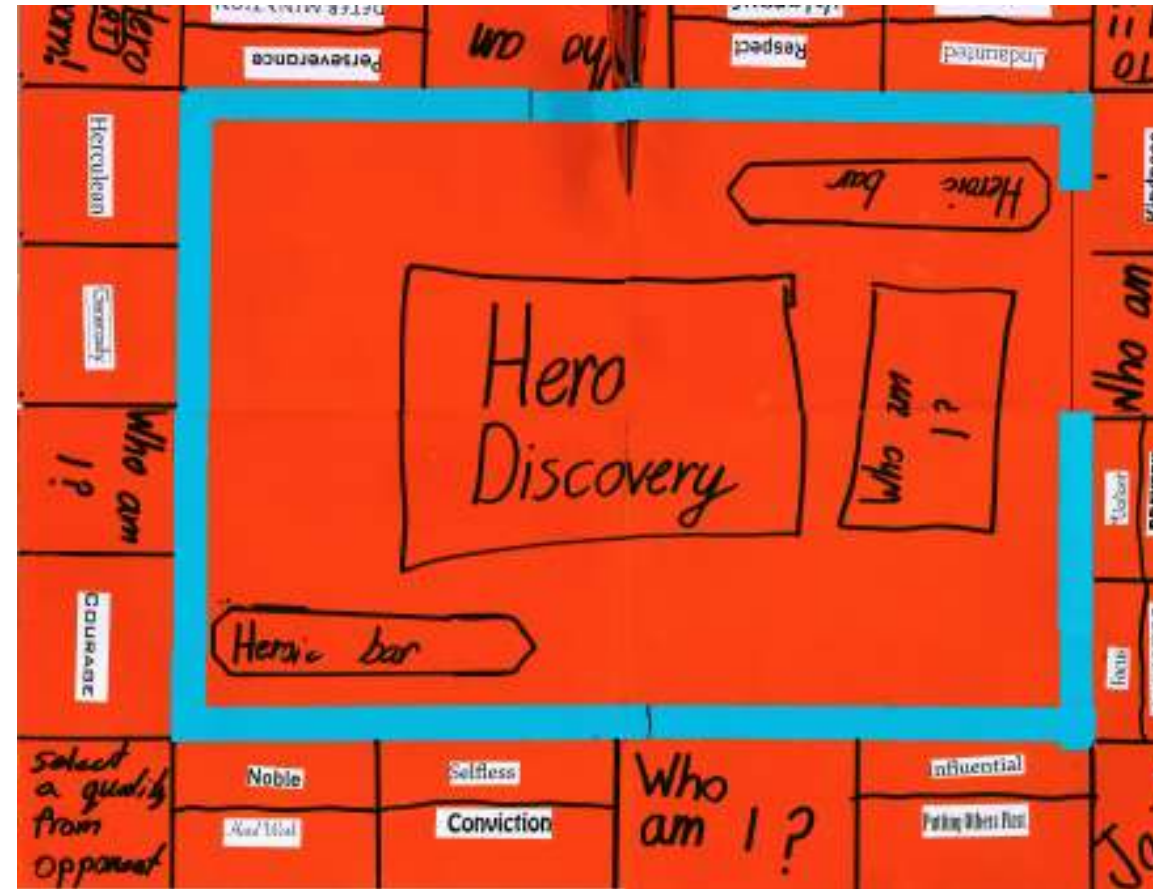
Big questions in Stage 4: What is a hero?

What do heroes and villains have in common?

Can a villain do heroic things? Explain your answer.

How does a villain contribute into the acts of a superhero?

Do heroes ever let you down?
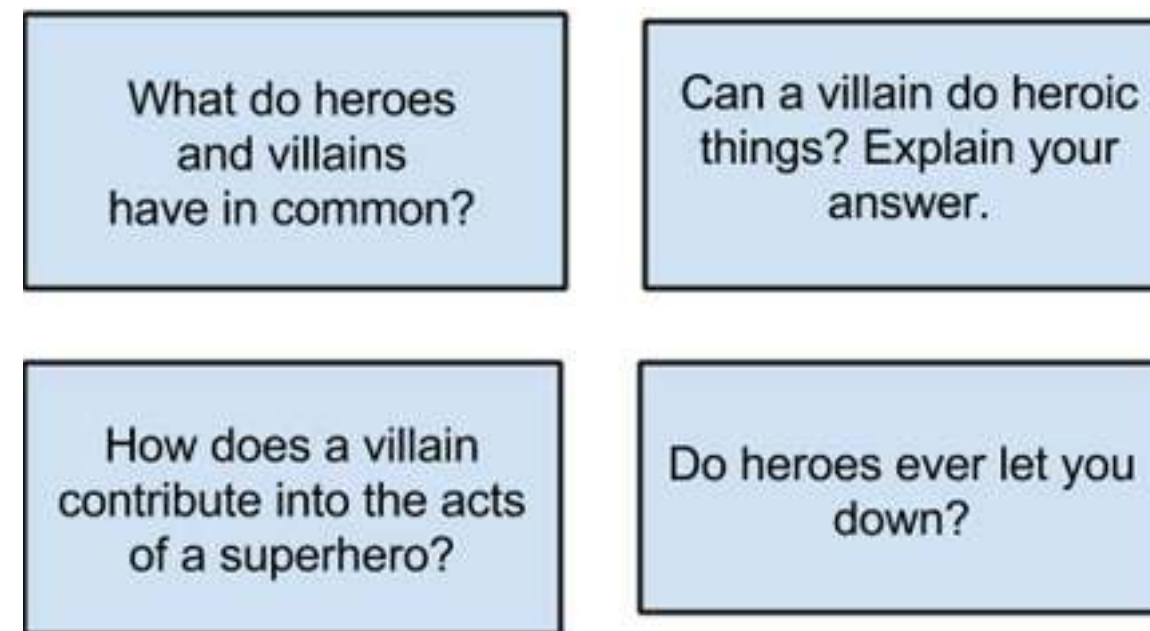
Within the library context, philosophical inquiry equips students for meaningful engagement with Guided Inquiry because thinking tools are prerequisite to the path toward information fluency. The beginning of the process of research within *Guided Inquiry* is to *establish and define the research topic or question*. For students of philosophy, this is familiar territory. According to Carron and Choi (2013), expectations for secondary students include capabilities to:

- express big ideas in relation to their inquiry (Stage 4)
- develop and refine research topic, problem or question independently (Stage 5)
- investigate problems or questions for which there are multiple answers or no best answer (Stage 6)

Students with training in thinking tools, via philosophical inquiry, can confidently engage with these research challenges.

At present, some Australian schools include philosophical inquiry in select KLAs or with select populations (such as gifted and talented students.) Imagine the conceptual advances (and the increase in CCT) that would ensue when a *whole school* takes on board philosophical inquiry across all KLAs. Indeed there are success stories of this type in Australia (Mergler, Curtis, & Spooner-Lane, 2009; Buranda State School, 2014).Buranda is living proof of the vision expressed in Cam (2010) that philosophical inquiry could become the *connective tissue that would enable the different parts of the curriculum to form a more effective whole*.

Given the cross-curricular utility of philosophical methods, and the emphasis on CCT across all subject

areas, it would make sense to include training in philosophical inquiry, (including communities of inquiry) in pre-service teacher education. Queensland University of Technology has spearheaded this initiative (Mergler et al., 2009). Experienced teachers may also seek training in philosophical methods as part of their ongoing professional development. Information about FAPSA approved and New South Wales Institute of Teachers (NSWIT) accredited workshops and courses can be found through *KinderPhilosophy*.

Engagement with philosophy encourages children to become lifelong inquirers.

References and further reading
Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) 2014 *Critical and creative thinking across the curriculum*, accessed 5 April 2014.

Buranda State School, 2014, *'Philosophy in school'*, *Buranda State School* accessed 27 April 2014.

Cam, P. 2006, 'Philosophy and the school curriculum: some general remarks', *Critical and creative thinking*, Vol. 14, No 1, pp. 35-51.

Cam, P. (2010). 'Philosophy for a thinking curriculum' *Philosophy in schools NSW*, accessed 1 June 2013.

Carron, A. & Choi, C. 2013, *Information fluency framework*, unpublished internal document, Newington College.

D'Olimpio, L., 2014, *'Why children should study philosophy'*, The *conversation*, accessed 9 April 2014.

Education Queensland, 2007, *'Philosophy' Schools+parents*: Issue 1, accessed 4 June 2013

Harvard School of Education, 2014, *'See think wonder'*, *Visible thinking*, accessed 20 April 2014.

Jensen, B. 2013, *21st century teachers should promote thoughtful dialogue: we should establish and sustain communities of inquiry*. Poster presented at Department of Education Knowledge Fair, Macquarie University.

Kennedy White, K. 2013, *How to embed philosophy into the crowded curriculum.* Talk presented at the Australasian Conference on Philosophy for Children, Sydney and International Conference of Philosophy in Schools, South Africa.

Lipman, M., Sharp, M., & Oscanyan, F. 1980, *Philosophy in the classroom*, Temple University Press, Philadelphia.

Mergler, A.G., Curtis, E.M., & Spooner-Lane, R.S. 2009, 'Teacher educators embrace philosophy: reflections on a new way of looking at preparing pre-service teachers'. *The Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 34(5), pp. 1-14.

Primary English Teaching Association Australia (PETAA) 2013,*Interactive pedagogical strategies* PETAA, accessed 2 May 2014.

Scholl, R. 2009, *The question quadrant: a stimulus for a negotiated curriculum*, accessed 2 May 2014.

Sprod, T. 2011, *Discussions in Science: promoting conceptual understanding in the middle school years*. ACER Press, Camberwell.

Waack, S. 2014, *'Hattie ranking: influences and effect sizes related to student achievement'*, *Visible Learning*, accessed 5 May 2014.

Texting lOl:
a new approach to improving literacy

Tracy Dawson is teacher librarian at Parkes High School in regional New South Wales. In her article she shares the excitement of coordinating a creative whole school approach to improving engagement and achievement in literacy and showcases the transformative impact of cross-curricular collaboration on student learning.

Background

In May 2013, Parkes High School was granted over $200 000 from the *Improving Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership program* (ILNNP). The new principal Sandra Carter used the grant to instigate a focus on improving engagement and achievement in literacy for students in Stage 4. With her trademark determination, optimism and can-do attitude, Sandra proposed two innovative programs to engage students and staff in reading and writing. Believing in the inseparable connection between reading and writing, she approached me to plan and implement cross-curricular, creative writing programs, encompassing *Quality Teaching*, especially the elements of connectedness and higher order thinking. I called it Texting lOl, a play on the stereotypical title for introductory courses and the popular acronym for Laugh

The Mona Who?: Parkes High School students play cross curricular literacy games.

Out Loud, a nod to the concept of play in learning.

[The Literacy continuum](#) was used to develop a learning framework focusing on the creative aspects of Reading texts, Comprehension and Aspects of writing in clusters 13 and 14. These are listed below:

- selects suitable reading pathways to engage with new content
- explores, analyses and responds to ideas in imaginative, informative and persuasive texts
- identifies and infers the meaning of imagery and symbolism in spoken, written, visual and multimodal texts
- draws on widening personal and textual experience and knowledge to make meaning of texts
- creates well-structured and sequenced texts for imaginative, informative and persuasive purposes
- creates texts with appropriate design, layout and graphics
- creates and manipulates texts that integrate different modes
- tailors writing in response to audience, purpose and context.

Sandra also engaged the services of a reader-in-residence, UK writer and educator [Dr Matt Finch,](#) for six months.

Matt's experiences and his impact on the students at Parkes High School will be explored in another *Scan article to be published later in the year.*

> We need to build our students capacity to read and understand text and to actively expose them to a variety of texts types so they can write with deeper understanding not only of the content but also of the process.
>
> **Sandra Carter – Principal   Parkes High School**

As a way of measuring student progress, [Progressive achievement tests in reading](#) (PAT-R) were administered, to provide some baseline quantitative student data. A separate whole-school sustained reading program, delivered regularly and embedded in curriculum, was implemented to meet the literacy continuum outcome,*reads for sustained periods (30+ minutes) and maintains meaning in longer texts or across a variety of texts on a single topic over time*. Sustained reading began in Term 4, 2013 on different days in allocated periods. Reading of subject appropriate material occurred for the first 30 minutes of the lesson, followed up by quick comprehension activities.

Texting l0l

I became the teacher librarian at Parkes High in 2010, after completing a Masters of Education in Teacher Librarianship at Charles Sturt University. Sandra's proposal that I develop a creative program to address the reading and writing deficits in our school fitted perfectly into my vision for improving learning at Parkes High School. However, this initiative for improving literacy via immersive play activities, provided a unique opportunity for me as teacher librarian to use my skills to lead and coordinate an innovative whole school curriculum project.

The proposal was to relieve me two days per week for the remainder of Term 2 and into Term 3 to plan projects and events and deliver them during Terms 3 and 4. I researched new ideas about reading and literacy and was inspired by websites like [Write a book in a day](#) and [Six word stories](#); resources like [The literacy shed](#) and learning approaches such as [8ways](#), [archetypal learning spaces](#) and gaming and [gamification](#). Not long after I began the work, I attended the annual [Syba Academy seminar](#), which in 2013 focused on using Web 2.0 with the Guided Inquiry process. A graphic organiser produced by Lyn Hay and Dr Ross Todd, outlining stages of inquiry became the default structure for scaffolding the organised activities.

I began with the idea of using three different approaches for delivering Texting l0l: in the classroom, in school workshops and out of school excursions or workshops. Next, all teaching staff was informed about the program via an email explaining its origins and connections to the [Literacy continuum](#).

I attached the matrix with the random ideas I had and asked colleagues to add their own ideas, visiting each faculty staff meeting over several weeks to explain the program more fully and answer questions. This face to face discussion was very productive in terms of generating ideas. It also provided an opportunity to stress to teachers that the program would not necessarily mean more work for them; that's what I was for. From these consultations I developed a list of ideas from most key learning areas (KLAs), mapped outcomes from Stage 4 syllabuses and developed relationships with the teachers who were enthusiastic and willing to help.

At this point the process began to seem overwhelming, and it was hard to get started actually doing anything. So I bit the bullet with a game called *The word*, and the next events followed from there.

The word

This is a game written with our literacy mentor, numeracy mentor and Technical Services Officer that encourages students to work collaboratively to

develop their own inquiry questions across a range of KLAs. Teachers of Stage 4 gave their classes curriculum-related clues where the answer was a letter. All the letters made *The word* –

DIVISION. Students, in groups, created a question for all of their subjects to which the answer was DIVISION. The word division was chosen because it could be used in all subjects, obviously

in Mathematics; in Human Society and its Environment (HSIE) as in social division and in Science as in cell division. Students wrote their questions on a prepared sheet, handed them in and the best correct questions won a prize. In 2014 we hope to play the game again, perhaps with *The number* instead, using feedback from staff about the practicalities of the game. Some of the Stage 4 syllabus outcomes met by *The word* are outlined in the table on the left.

The Renaissance game

Inspired by suggestions from a Visual Arts teacher and a Technological and Applied Studies (TAS) teacher, this cross-curricular game for Stage 4 combined a CSI-type crime and a quest, modelled on the idea of the television show *The amazing race*. It was played in three levels.

Level 1

The Year 9 Drama class performed prompts in the quad at lunchtime, introducing our time traveller, Leo (based on inventor and artist Leonardo da Vinci) and students were invited to guess the time period–the Renaissance. Leo had travelled to 2013 and wanted to stay. Those who guessed correctly won a canteen voucher.

STAGE 4 SYLLABUS OUTCOMES FOR *THE WORD* GAME	
English K – 10	*EN4-9E* A student: uses, reflects on and assesses their individual and collaborative skills for learning
Mathematics K – 10	*MA4-1WM* A student: communicates and connects mathematical ideas using appropriate terminology, diagrams and symbols *MA4-2WM* A student: applies appropriate mathematical techniques to solve problems *MA4-3WM* A student: recognises and explains mathematical relationships *MA4-4NA* A student: compares, orders and calculates with integers, applying a range of strategies to aid computation
Science K – 10	*SC4-4WS* A student: identifies questions and problems that can be tested or researched and makes predictions base on scientific knowledge *SC4-5WS* A student: collaboratively and individually produces a plan to investigate questions and problems *SC4-14LW* A student: relates the structure and function of living things to their classification, survival and reproduction *SC4-15LW* A student: explains how new biological evidence changes people's understanding of the world
Geography Years 7 – 10	A student: 4.8 describes the interrelationships between people and environments 4.9 describes differences in life opportunities throughout the world

The Mona Who? Parkes High School students play cross curricular literacy games

> *... this type of cross-curricular activity could be adapted for a different historical period or to emphasise different sets of learning skills in Geography, Science, Languages or Creative Arts. The possibilities are endless.*

Student invitation for *The Renaissance game*

Level 2

Material I prepared was read during our sustained reading program giving information about the Renaissance (relevant to a range of KLAs), showing how the incredible changes of this period were similar to current innovations. Students then wrote an SMS or *Facebook* message persuading Leo to return to the Renaissance. Messages were written on templates of SMS and *Facebook* message screens printed on A4 paper and handed in for the second prize.

Level 3

Students had indeed persuaded Leo to return home, where he was busy telling people how amazing 2013 was. In class, students were shown how to download and use a QR code reader app. With

information, including images, from QR codes and a quick lesson about *Twitter,* they composed a tweet from Leo, who amazingly, had invented a way to tweet to the future, beginning a conversation about the similarity of certain events in both ages. Tweets, on an A3 template with hand drawn images attached, were handed in and judged for a major prize. Some of the Stage 4 outcomes covered

SMS template used by students
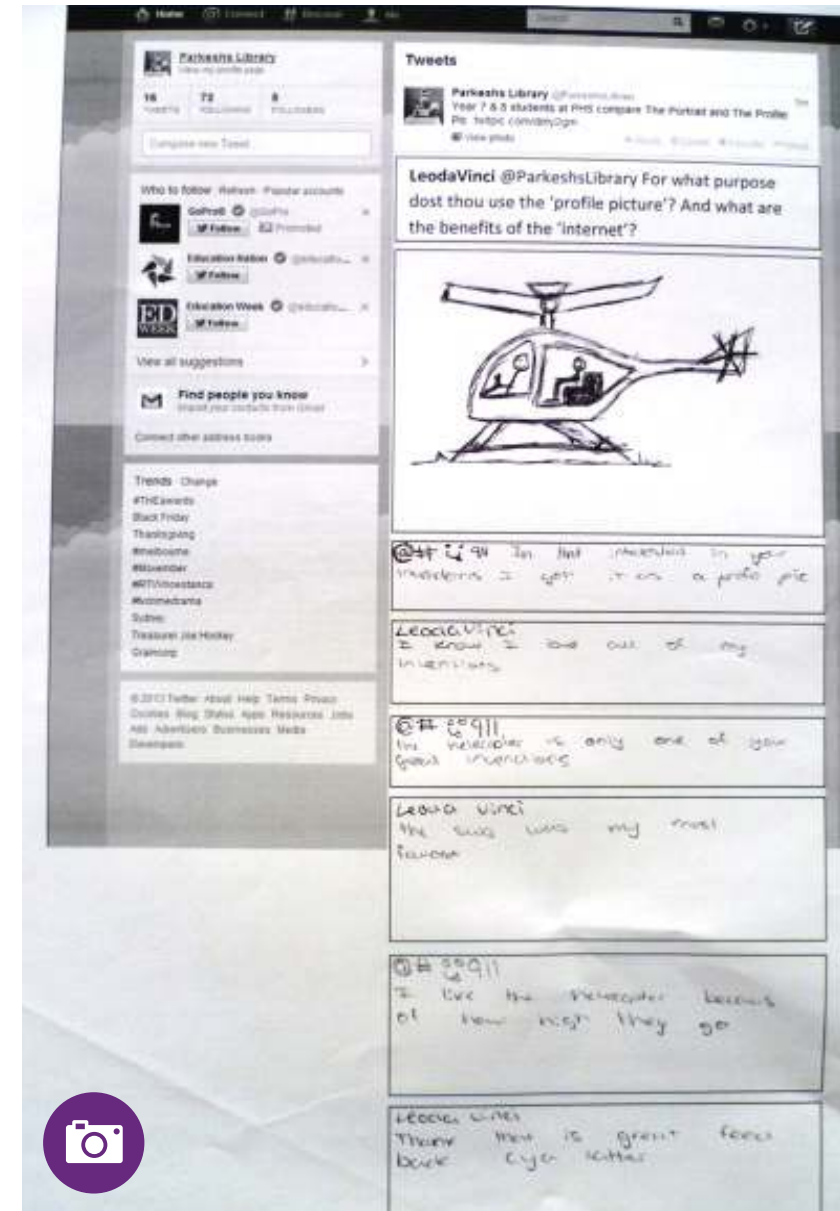
Twitter template used by students

by *The Renaissance game* are detailed below and it is easy to see how this type of cross-curricular activity could be adapted for a different historical period or to emphasise different sets of learning skills in Geography, Science, Languages or Creative Arts. The possibilities are endless.

Café Library

This initiative began in Term 3, from an idea by Jennifer Dengate at Glenmore Park High (pers comm. 2013). Every Thursday at lunchtimes the library is only open to students and teachers who want to read quietly. They can buy a hot drink and eat lunch. Students have been overheard to say how lovely it is just to sit and read in the quiet. No computers or games are allowed as a way of valuing reading and readers. The opening audience was about 20, and although numbers have waxed and waned, there are currently 25-30 regulars.

Yummy. Love it. It's a great idea!
Maddie, Yr 9

Students enjoying the peaceful atmosphere in *Café Library* at Parkes High School

STAGE 4 SYLLABUS OUTCOMES
FOR LEVELS 2 AND 3 OF *THE RENAISSANCE GAME*

English K – 10	**EN4-2A** A student: effectively uses a widening range of processes, skills, strategies and knowledge for responding to and composing texts in different media and technologies **EN4-3B** A student: uses and describes language forms, features and structures of texts appropriate to a range of purposes, audiences and contexts **EN4-4B** A student: makes effective language choices to creatively shape meaning with accuracy, clarity and coherence **EN4-5C** A student: thinks imaginatively, creatively, interpretively and critically about information, ideas and arguments to respond to and compose texts **EN4-7D** A student: thinks imaginatively, creatively, interpretively and critically about information, ideas and arguments to respond to and compose texts
History K – 10: Depth Study 4 The Western and Islamic World: Topic 4d: Renaissance Italy (c. AD 1400 – c. 1600)	**HT4-3** A student:describes and assesses the motives and actions of past individuals and groups in the context of past societies **HT4-5** A student: identifies the meaning, purpose and context of historical sources **HT4-7** A student: identifies and describes different contexts, perspectives and interpretations of the past **HT4-8** A student: locates, selects and organises information from sources to develop an historical inquiry **HT4-9** A student: uses a range of historical terms and concepts when communicating an understanding of the past **HT4-10** A student: selects and uses appropriate oral, written, visual and digital forms to communicate about the past
Technology (Mandatory) 7 – 10	4.1.3 identifies the roles of designers and their contribution to the improvement of the quality of life 4.2.1 generates and communicates creative design ideas and solutions 4.4.1 explains the impact of innovation and emerging technologies on society and the environment
Visual Arts 7 – 10	4.1 uses a range of strategies to explore different artmaking conventions and procedures to make artworks 4.8 explores the function of and relationships between the artist –artwork – world –audience

Welcome to *Café Library* at Parkes High School

Responses to all events from staff and students were overwhelmingly positive.

The Symbolism excursion

Developed for Gifted and Talented Students (GATS) with our GATS coordinator, this was a whole day, cross-curricular creative experience. At the local cemetery students explored different symbols, thinking about symbols they could find in nature. They used their phones to record their ideas and observations.

Back in the library Ricky Martin, a local Wiradjuri man, talked about Aboriginal symbols and how to use them to create a lifeline. Students were shown symbols from all KLAs, like flags, scientific and mathematical symbols and ancient languages.

In small groups, using all the information they had collected during the day, they created a *Photopeach* or *Animoto* presentation, and created a *Dictionary of symbols*, published on our website.

Evaluation

Putting Texting 101 together was far more time consuming than anticipated. Observations include:

- staff wanted an explicit explanation about what was happening and why
- face-to-face interaction with staff was more effective in gaining support than email requests
- giving stakeholders a choice can work against participation in non-routine opportunities. During school hours,

events are more successful if it is assumed that the targeted students, and their teachers, WILL attend

- permission protocols should be on an opt-out basis
- targeting enthusiastic staff is essential for collaboration
- whole-school events are hardest to pull off, but seemed to be more supported than having the teacher librarian in the classroom.
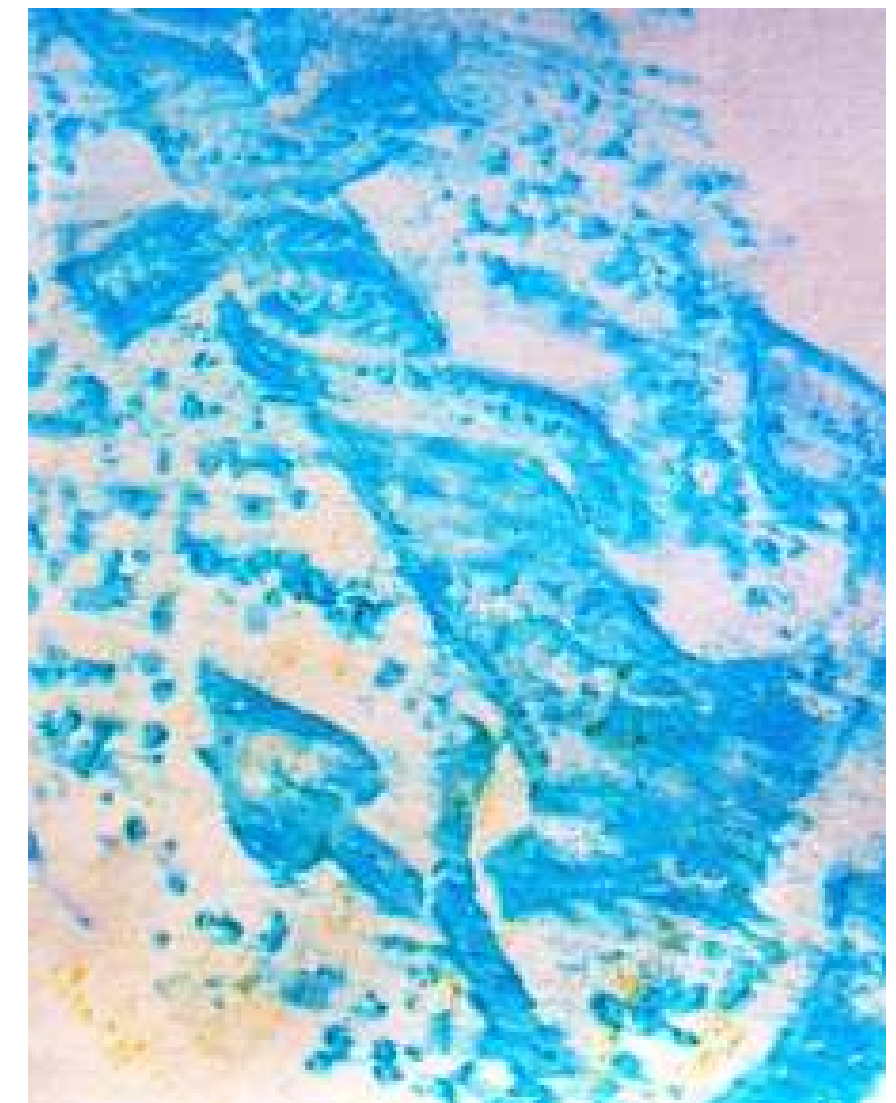
Constructing symbols: materials and examples

Responses to all events from staff and students were overwhelmingly positive. The activities we did with students with a range of abilities created interest and were great preparation for the high engagement activities organised by our reader in residence, which you will read about in a follow up article. This article will also evaluate the initial impact of the program using a range of quantitative and qualitative measures, although it will be some time before the full impact of the program can be seen. The challenge now is to maintain this program and the level of excitement it has created in our school.

References and further reading

Aboriginal Knowledge and Practice Centre, 2013, 8 Aboriginal ways of learning, 8-ways, accessed 7 April 2014.

Berg, P. 2014, Six word stories accessed 8 April 2014.

Bertoli, B. 2012, 'How one teacher turned sixth grade into an MMO', Kotaku Australia, accessed 8 April 2014.

Birrel, N. 2010 'GAME ON! for role play', Australian Teacher Magazine, accessed 4 September 2013.

Finch, M. 2012, 'About Matt', Books and adventures, accessed 8 April 2014.

Finch, M.2013, 'Show me the awesome: immersive play in the 21st century library', Books and Adventures, accessed 9 April 2014.

Hewes, B. 2012, 'Using archetypes to match learning spaces with physical and digital spaces', Bianca Hewes, accessed April 8 2014.

Kane, P.2014, The play ethic, accessed 8 April 2014.

Katherine Susannah Pritchard Writers' Centre. 2014, 'Write-a-book-in-a-day,' Write-a-Book-In-A-Day, accessed 8 April 2014.

Kroski, E.2013, 'A librarian's guide to makerspaces: 16 resources'. OEDB.org, accessed 8 April 2014.

NSW Department of Education and Communities, 2013, NSW Department of Education and Communities: Literacy, accessed 8 April 2014.

Redgie, R. 2014, The literacy shed, accessed 8 April 2014.

Spaces for Knowledge Generation Project Team, 2013, Spaces for knowledge generation, accessed 8 April 2014.

Syba Academy, 2013, Syba Academy, accessed 9 April 2014.

Thornberg, D.R. 2004, 'Campfires in cyberspace: primordial metaphors for learning in the 21st century', International Journal of Instructional Technology & Distance Education, accessed 8 April 2014

Vukovic, R. 2013, 'Being game to be engaging pays off', Australian Teacher Magazine, accessed 4 September 2013.

SMITH Magazine, 2014, 'Six-word memoirs of the day', SMITHTEENS, accessed 8 April 2014

Innovative teaching and learning:
from research to practice.
Part one

Outside the box ©iStockphoto.com/j_eitzen

Authors: Dr Kylie Shaw, Dr Kathryn Holmes, Greg Preston, Max Smith and Emeritus Professor Sid Bourke

Dr Kylie Shaw is lead author of the qualitative report for ITL Research Australia. She has developed an international reputation for presenting and consulting on innovative approaches to teaching and learning and 21C learning design. Kylie is the Program Convenor of Primary Education at The University of Newcastle.

Dr Kathryn Holmes is the Deputy Head of School for Research in the School of Education at the University of Newcastle. Her research is focused in the areas of educational technology, mathematics education and school reform.

Greg Preston is a Lecturer in eLearning and ICT at the University of Newcastle. He has a strong reputation for teaching and research in the area of online learning and the use of the Internet in educational settings.

Max Smith's research interests include pedagogy and assessment in schools; start-to-life; longitudinal study designs; and, data linkage in education and public health. He has been professor in Education at the University of Newcastle for the past three years.

Emeritus Professor Sid Bourke has a research background in innovative teaching and learning with a focus on mathematics education. He also has a strong interest in assessment from early childhood education through to postgraduate studies and most recently the assessment of PhD theses.

Background

This report focuses on research data collected through a study on *Innovative teaching and learning* (ITL). Australia joined the global ITL research project in 2011, sponsored by the NSW Department of Education and Communities (NSW DEC) and Microsoft Partners in Learning (PiL) Australia.

The study was instigated by the need to rethink how and why learning occurs in schools in response to the shifts in social and economic domains of future work and schooling (Langworthy, Shear & Means, 2010). The global study was conducted in seven countries: Australia, England, Finland, Indonesia, Mexico, Russia and Senegal. This article is centered on the Australian study and is the first of a series of two. The study is based in NSW Department of Education and Communities (NSW DEC) schools, from three different geographical regions. This first article provides an overview of learning practices, including use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) by teachers and students. The supports for and impediments to innovation are explored in terms of systemic and school-based vision, the impact of leadership, instructional methods and school context. The importance of individual teacher dimensions is illuminated through interview analysis and task exposition. The second article, which will be published in Issue 3, 2014 of Scan, looks more closely at one school where innovative educational activity is significantly greater than the average across the NSW study. This case study provides useful insights into how innovative teaching and learning can be implemented in schools.

Context for the study

ITL research builds upon the learning on education transformation from leading international research and literature including the *Second information technology in education study 2006* (Law, Pelgrum, & Plomp, 2006), *The programme for international student assessment* (PISA), *Frameworks for 21st-century learning* (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2004a,b); and research on specific constructs related to teaching practices that are associated with positive student outcomes (e.g., Bryk, Camburn, & Louis, 1999; Groff & Mouza, 2008). These inputs contributed to the logic model shown below.

Logic model for creating positive student outcomes
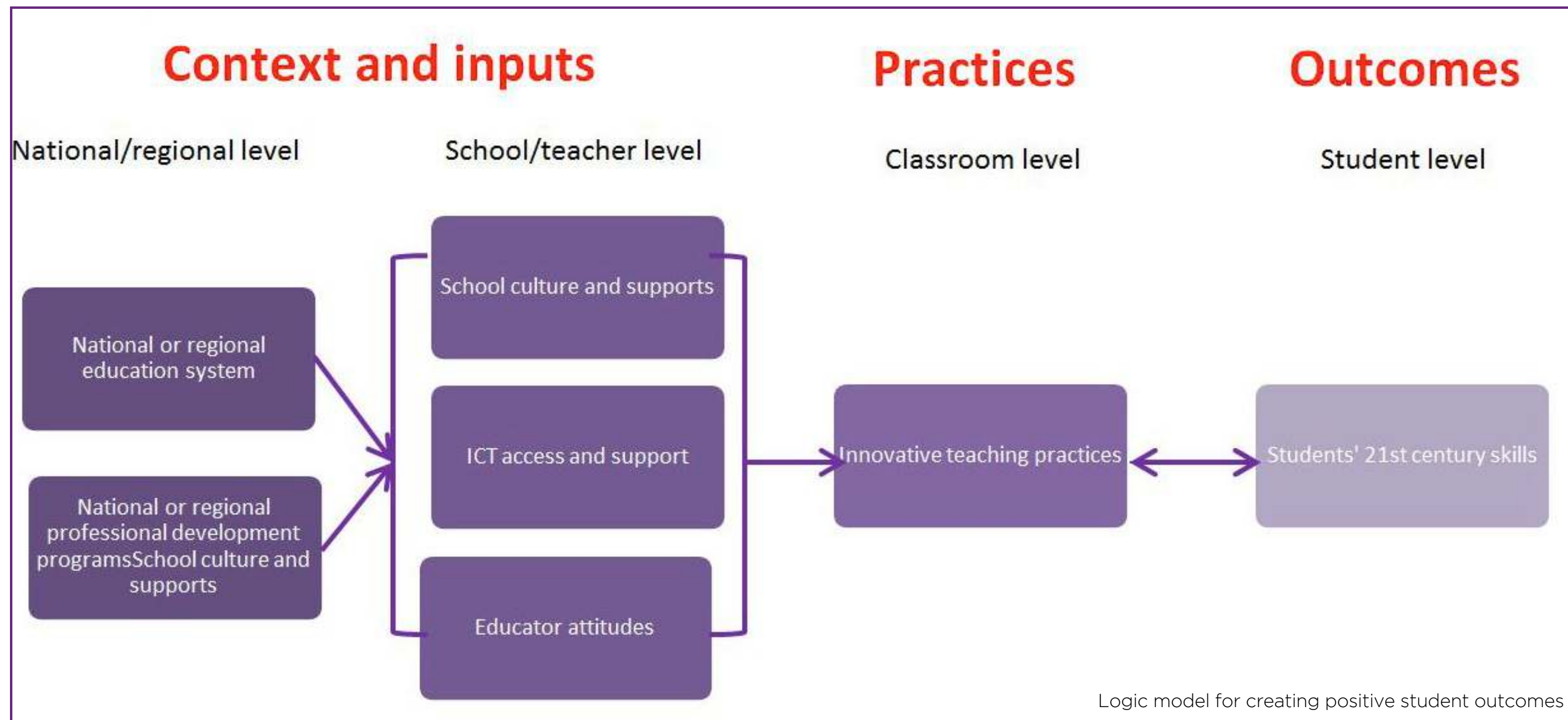
For purposes of this study, 21st century learning skills are defined as the following set of skills: knowledge building, problem-solving and innovation, skilled communication and collaboration, self-regulation and use of technology for learning.

These skills are defined more explicitly and in relation to the research methods in the ITL research design document and the learning activities and student work (LASW) coding guides, both available at *ITL research–LEAP 21.*

Innovative teaching refers to three categories of practice:

- student-centred pedagogies
- extending learning beyond the classroom to include knowledge building and problem solving in today's world
- ICT integration in ways that support learning goals, not as a goal in itself.

> *The latest ITL research is the clearest conceptual and empirical example...of how technology and pedagogy can be effectively integrated.*
> Fullan, 2011

The *global study* found that:

- Innovative teaching does support

the development of 21st century skills in students.

- Student opportunities to develop these skills are scarce and uneven in all countries.
- ICT use by students in their learning is not widespread.
- Innovative teaching is more likely to flourish where there is teacher collaboration, active and direct engagement of teachers in professional development and a school culture that offers a common vision of innovation and consistent support for teachers.
- Pockets of innovation were observed but a coherent and integrated set of conditions to support the adoption of innovative teaching is not found in most schools and in all of the school systems in the study.

> *While innovation is not yet commonplace in most settings, seeds are being sown.*
> Shear, Gallagher & Patel, 2011

Methodological approach

The research data for this project was collected in two distinct but interrelated

phases: quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative data was collected via two electronic surveys. These surveys were designed to gain information on the views of both teaching staff and school leaders on various aspects of their school, its activities, and innovative teaching structures and practices. Each survey addressed issues such as the frequency of various classroom activities, school-based support structures and limitations, school resourcing, and respondent demographic information. The surveys were analyzed in line with the global study requirements and various insights were gained using descriptive and inferential statistics. Additionally, a range of indices were developed and calculated to assist with the comparison of teacher, school, and regional data. Useful data were obtained for 683 teaching staff, from 22 NSW Public secondary schools, with school leader data also collected from each of these institutions.

The second phase of the project consisted of the collection and collation of various qualitative items related to the same issues explored in the survey data. Again, there were two stages to this phase. Initially, site visits were conducted at 5 of the 22 originally surveyed schools, during which the researchers conducted focus interviews with staff, school leaders and students. During follow up activities and visits,

samples of educational tasks and students' responses to these tasks were also collected and analysed. The interviews were transcribed and analysed thematically, and the staff and student work samples were coded on the *21st century learning skill dimensions such as use of ICT, knowledge building and collaboration.*

A more detailed explanation of the research methodology of the project is available through the *SORTI* website.

Phase one: teacher and school leader surveys

Innovative teaching and practice index (ITP index)

Phase one investigates the school and teacher level factors that are most strongly related to innovative teacher practices (ITPs). A sample of Australian secondary teachers (n = 683) completed online surveys about current practices and beliefs. The teacher responses enabled the calculation of an ITP index for each teacher, which was used as the response variable in a multilevel regression with various explanatory variables. These variables included, characteristics such as:

- age, gender and experiences of teachers including amount of professional development
- size, region and demographic data

of schools

- other characteristics developed from school leader responses (see Holmes et al, 2013).

Responses to the teacher survey were used to develop an *innovative teaching practice index* (ITP) for each teacher in the sample. The ITP is an indication of the degree to which teachers incorporate each of the following three components:

- student centred pedagogies including knowledge building, self-regulation and assessment, small group work and personalized and individualized learning
- extension of learning beyond the classroom including extended classroom community, global awareness and cultural understanding
- ICT integrated into teaching and learning including teacher and student ICT use.

Teacher age, frequency of teacher use of extended learning activities and frequency of collaboration were the variables most strongly related to the ITP score. The number of computers available for student use was also important. Some of these results are expanded on below. Several other factors were found to be related to ITP including the frequency of use of extended learning activities and teacher collaboration. These findings have the potential to inform school leaders about how best to foster teacher change and innovation.

Key findings: phase one

Teacher age and innovative teaching
Younger teachers scored significantly higher than older teachers on the ITP index, indicating that
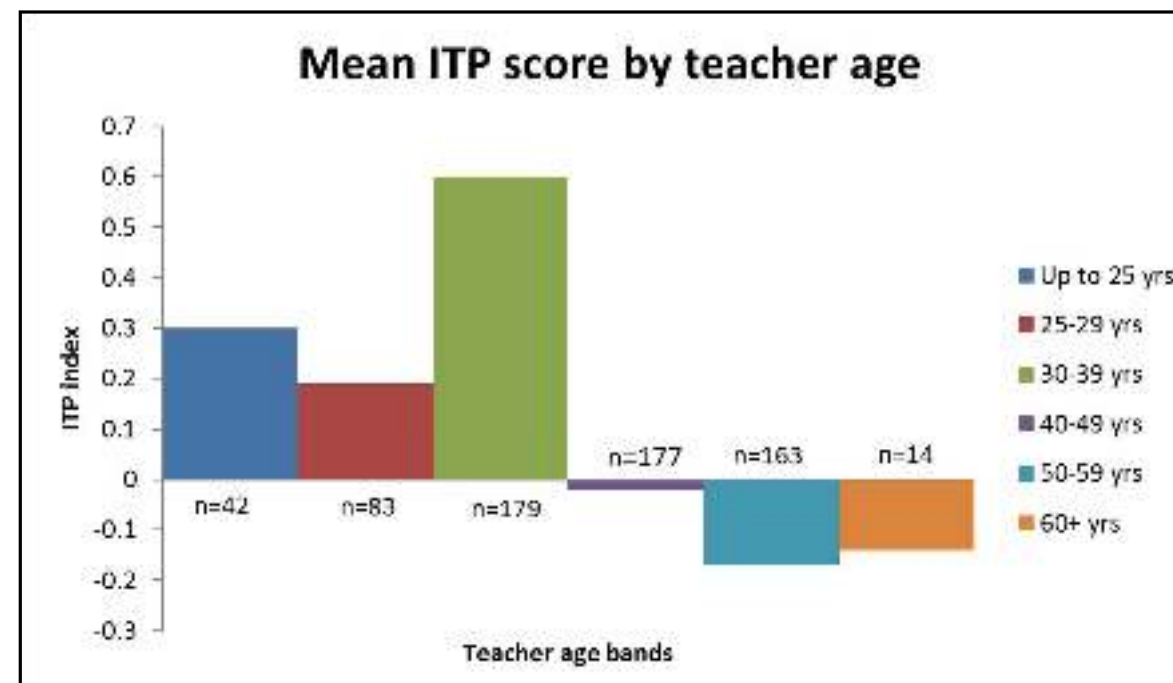
Figure 1: Mean ITP index score by teacher age
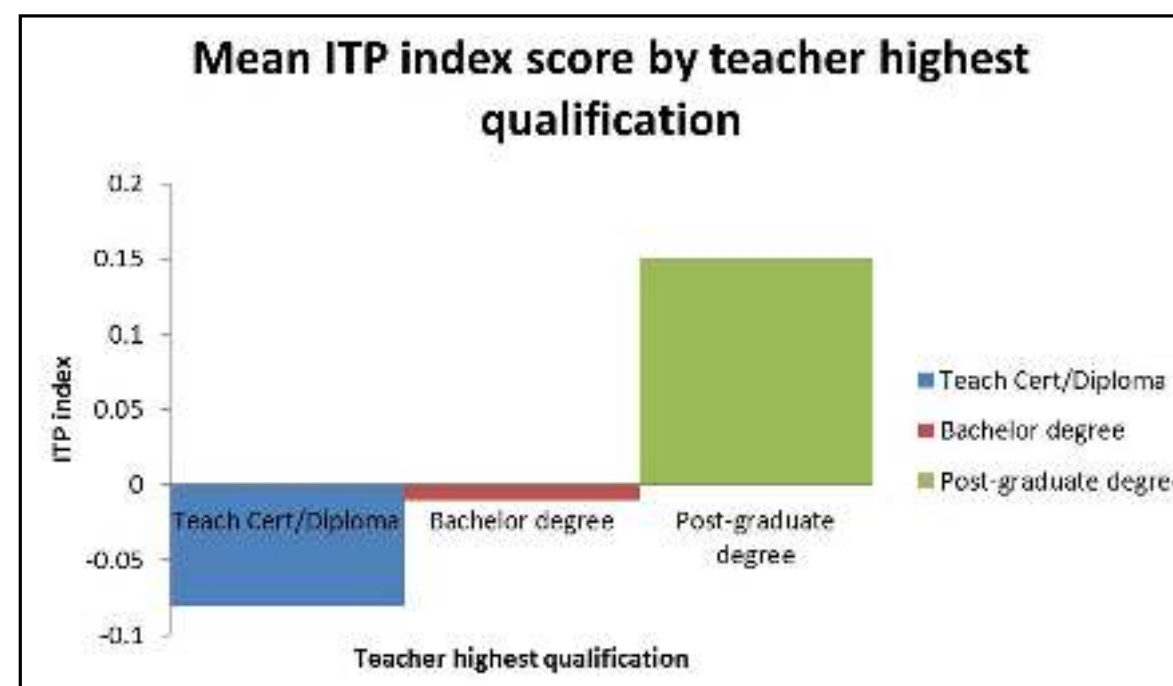
Figure 2: Mean ITP index score by teacher highest qualification

younger, less experienced teachers were more likely to engage in student-centred pedagogies which integrated ICT and extended learning beyond the classroom (see Figure 1).

Teacher qualifications and innovative teaching
Teachers' educational qualifications were also significantly related to their scores on the ITP index. Teachers with qualifications beyond a bachelor's degree scored much higher on the ITP index (see Figure 2).

Professional culture in schools—collaboration
The teachers were asked about the degree to which teachers in their school share common goals and held similar views about teaching and learning. This factor was found to be unrelated to the ITP index score for each teacher.
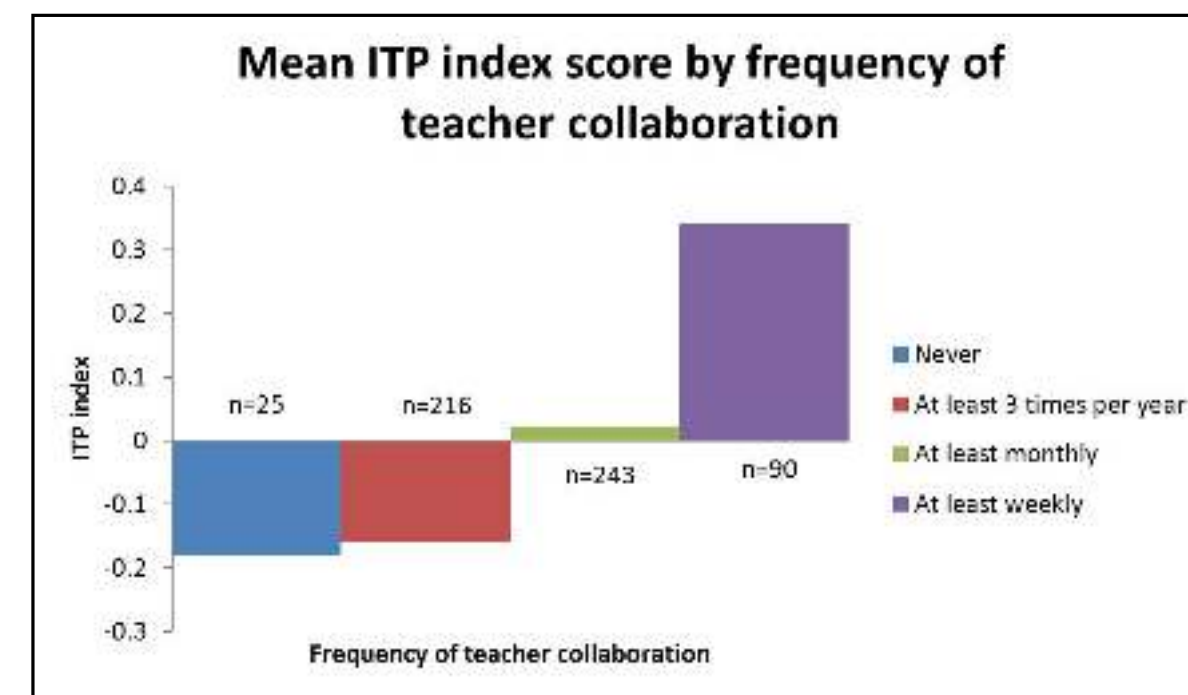
Figure 3: Mean ITP index score by frequency of teacher collaboration

In contrast, the frequency with which teachers reported that they collaborate with each other was found to have a small but significant relationship with the ITP index. As shown in Figure 3, teachers who said they collaborated at least weekly had by far the highest ITP score.

Extended learning tasks

The teachers were also asked the percentage of the target class time the students were working on a question or an investigation for one week or longer. Although the trend was not entirely uniform, as can be seen in Figure 4, teachers who tended to use extended learning tasks more often had higher ITP scores. The suggestion is that using this approach too much of the time (i.e., more than 75% of the time) was not optimal.
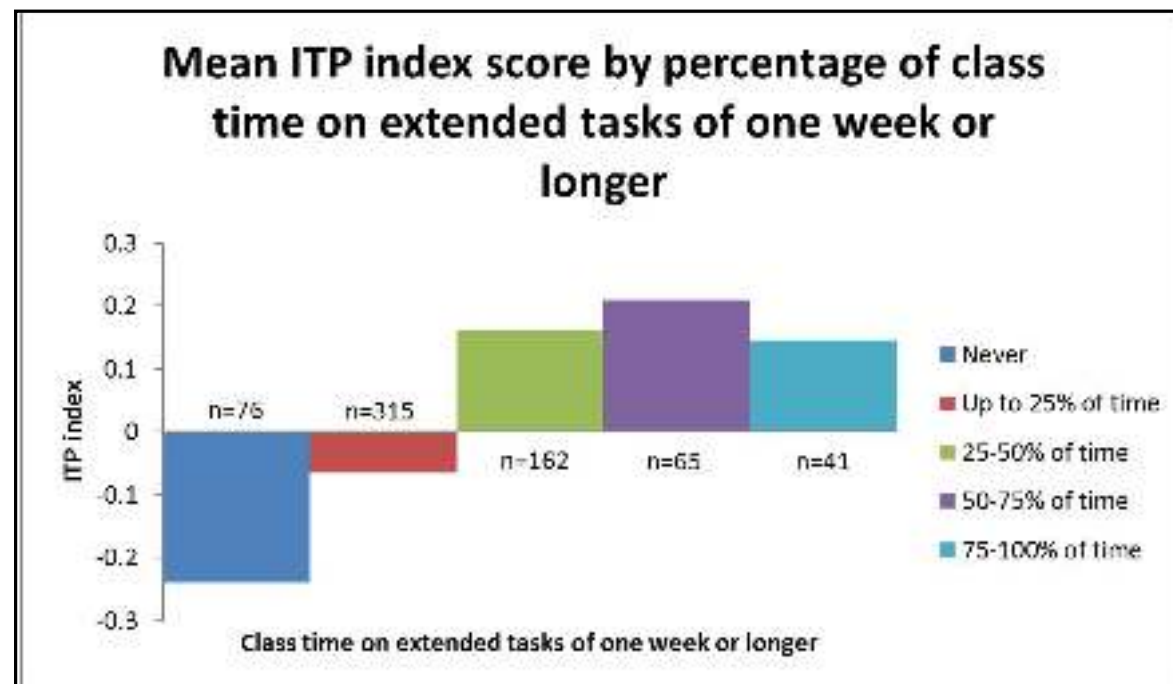
Figure 4: Mean ITP index score by percentage of class time on extended tasks of one week or longer

Barriers to ICT integration

The teachers were asked for their responses to 12 potential barriers to using ICT with their target class. When taken overall, the relationship with ITP index was complex, as shown in Figure 5. The teachers who indicated there were no barriers had the highest mean ITP index score, followed by those who saw significant barriers. A possible explanation is that the teachers who did not see barriers did not feel the need for computers and other ICT for innovative teaching.
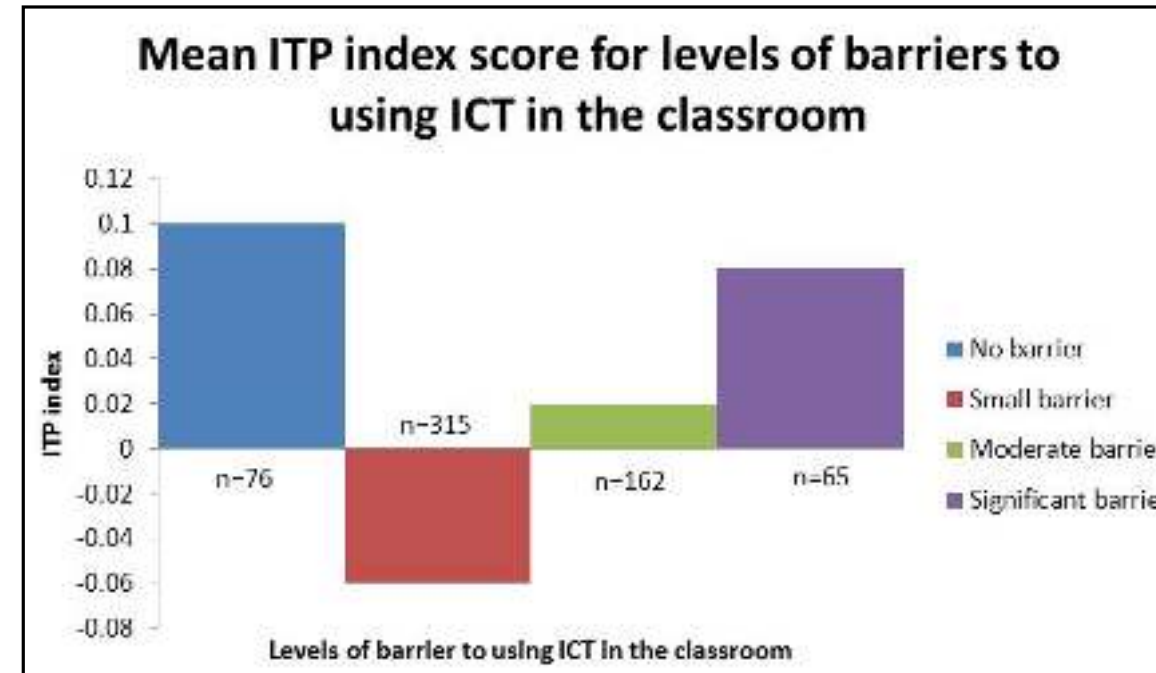
Figure 5: Mean ITP index score for levels of barriers to using ICT in the classroom

Taken separately, the most significant of the 12 barriers to ICT integration in the classroom was not enough computers for student use. The four barriers most often seen by teachers were, in descending order:

- not enough computers for student use (25%)
- not enough time to plan for ICT integration (20%)
- not enough professional development involving ICT (10%)
- difficulty with to access computers in labs (7%).

The teachers who responded that not enough computers for students was the most significant barrier had, on average, 6.3 computers in their classroom and those who said not enough time to plan had, on average, 17.7 computers. It appears that the availability of computing hardware is a significant

barrier but when that barrier is removed, teachers do begin to focus on the importance of seeking out professional development opportunities with regard to ICT use.

Professional development

Teachers were asked about the types of professional development that they had undertaken in the last 2 years. Their responses were examined in relation to their scores on the ITP index. In general, teachers who had participated in any type of professional development in the past two years scored higher on the ITP than those that did not, but specifically,

- Teachers who had undertaken a degree (either undergraduate or postgraduate) in the past two years scored significantly higher on the ITP Index than those that had not.
- Teachers who had undertaken observation visits to other schools in the past two years scored significantly higher on the ITP than those that had not.

The most common forms of professional development that the teachers had undertaken were lectures and demonstrations, while the least common forms were one-on-one mentoring and observations of lessons.

Most of the teachers (73%) had undertaken professional development in ICT use for teaching and learning in the last two years. One third of the teachers wished to participate in more professional development, however, most of these said there was no professional development to match their needs, or that it was too expensive.

Research indicates that professional development is more effective if it is taken over an extended time period. In this study we found that 60% of professional development opportunities were for short durations (< 1 week), with only 12% of teachers undertaking activities that lasted for more than 1 month.

> *An abundance of research establishes that changes in behaviour precede changes in the assumptions, beliefs, expectations and habits that constitute the culture of an organisation.*
>
> DuFour & DuFour, 2010

Phase two: site visits to innovative schools

Five schools were selected to participate in phase two of the study. Four of the five schools had a higher than average ITP index score (shown as greater than zero) and one school had an ITP index score almost exactly on the overall mean (School D). The *site visit schools* were visited by the research team to collect detailed data about the school, teachers' classroom practice, the learning activities that were created for students and the resulting student work. Comparative data on the five case study schools are presented in Table 1.

The ITL research team conducted site studies with the five innovative schools which participated in phase 1 of the study — three sites in Sydney and two in the Hunter regions. The schools which participated in site visits met a 60% response rate target for teacher surveys and 100% response rate target for school leader surveys. They were also identified as *innovative* by a panel consisting of staff from the Department and the

	School A 7-12	School B 7-10	School C 7-12	School D 7-12	School E 7-12
Total Enrolments	790	1021	732	867	1124
FTE Teaching Staff	60.7	73.9	59.3	63.5	81.4
ICSEA value	971	950	937	956	963
Indigenous students	5%	9%	2%	10%	7%
LOTE students	13%	10%	71%	2%	26%
Student attendance rate	90%	87%	88%	88%	88%
Mean School ITP Index zscores (Total sample mean = 0)	0.77	0.48	0.50	-0.08	0.78

Table 1: Case study schools descriptive data (from *My School* website – 19 March 2013)

ITL research team, based on preliminary data.

The site visits to schools involved interviews with school leaders and teacher case studies. The teacher case studies focused on teachers of Science and humanities in Years 7-10. Teachers involved in the study participated in an interview about their target class and a class observation. There were also focus groups of students from the target classes.

What did school leaders say?

School leaders of innovative schools in the study shared an awareness of the importance of 21st century learning. On the whole, school leaders in *innovative* schools had a collaborative approach to school planning. Professional development was approached in ways where teachers shared innovative teaching and learning practices with faculty members and also at whole school meetings. At one school, staff rooms had been redeveloped so that all teachers shared the same space. The school leader reported a shared approach to curriculum and an increase in communication about student welfare.

All school leaders discussed the challenges of embedding 21st century learning within the school community whilst also meeting school community expectations of ensuring high results in national *(National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy)* and state *(Higher School Certificate)*

testing. A number of school leaders talked of a community decision to focus on 21st century skills.

> *We have a sustained focus on teaching and learning which involves innovative tailored opportunities to engage students in learning.*
>
> **School Leader**

Some communities benefited from extending learning outside the classroom and by exploring opportunities for learning activities to link to community, especially in the Sydney region.

What did teachers say?

Teachers selected to participate in the case study in the innovative schools selected a target class to be in the study. The target classes selected were mainly from Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 classes. Two discipline areas were selected for the case studies—Science and humanities. Four staff members from each discipline participated in the study. The classes nominated covered a range of abilities—from GAT classes, to mixed ability to those focused on life skills. Each teacher was interviewed and participated in a class observation by the researchers. Teachers reinforced the tensions felt by

schools in how to engage students in 21st century learning whilst also ensuring they were prepared for assessments and tests.

> *I am sorry that you didn't see an innovative lesson today, we have exams tomorrow and I needed to do revision*
>
> **Teacher**

Most of the teachers nominated as innovative were younger staff members and in some cases they were not permanent staff members. There was a perception in the schools visited that younger staff, because they were more used to using computers and devices, would be more innovative in their approach to teaching. As innovative teaching involves using ICT to build knowledge, this was not always the case. Researchers found that many of the younger staff observed using Web 2.0 tools in the classroom were using them mainly for lower order learning activities, such as revising for tests or researching information that could be done using a school library.

The use of technology was questioned when it was used for the *sake of it*, and the purpose of the activity was simply replicated in regular classroom activities:

> *With the senior students, they had already been using Edmodo as a mode of really communicating with their teacher and getting some feedback …we were having ongoing conversations and feedback. While that was a really valuable and valid experience, I just found the conversations were very similar to the conversations we were having in the classroom, anyway*
>
> *Teacher*

There were also some problems experienced at the schools given that there is a strict internet protocol in place which blocks students from accessing a range of sites including social media and any sites with flagged key words. This causes frustration for the students when they want to access information, but also for the teacher as although they have access from their teacher login, the student login for their school laptop can block the site. One teacher said:

> *The whole blocking I guess for me is my barrier. When I find something online I think… this is fantastic. I give it to my students… Blocked, blocked, blocked!*
>
> *Teacher*

The teachers interviewed across the site visit schools predominantly agreed that lessons should be student centred and had an understanding of what this should look like, as the schools had been involved in initiatives based on the *Quality Teaching* framework, a focus in NSW Department of Education and Communities schools for the past nine years. Schools involved in the study were at different levels in terms of engaging in the *Quality Teaching* framework. However, there was also discussion by many of the teachers about how it is easier to discuss in theory than to put into practice, particularly in those classes with challenging behaviours or learning difficulties:

> *The vision of student-centred pedagogies doesn't necessarily align with the current reality for many teachers. Though I believe that the majority of teachers would agree with the vision goals but there's a gap between the vision goals, and what reality is.*
>
> *Teacher*

What did students say?

Student focus groups comprised of students from Years 7 – 10 talked about innovative teaching and learning (ITL) in their schools. Each student focus

group had approximately 10 students participating. Within each school, students were divided into focus groups, dependent on year group and their access to technology. All Years 9 and 10 students in NSW high schools have laptops whereas the younger students in Years 7 and 8 only have access to shared ICT in classrooms. Most students in Years 9 and 10 appreciated the opportunity to have laptops, but there were some inconsistencies across schools in how learning was integrated with the laptop program. In schools where all teachers *bought in*, students were

generally happy because they could do most of their learning on the laptop.

Students in schools using software and tools such as *OneNote and Edmodo*, to organise class learning across KLAs, reported a positive experience with laptops. Where there was no consistent approach, students were dissatisfied. They found there were too many passwords to remember for different Web 2.0 tools and some preferred to use pen and paper to a laptop.

Students on the whole did not feel that they had opportunities to engage in learning beyond the classroom.

Across the five sites students reported using technology at school, but there was uneven use across subject areas within a school, with Mathematics identified as the subject with the least amount of technology. There was considerable consistency across four of the school sites, as reported by the student focus groups, but at one other school the students described multiple 21st century learning experiences (see figure 6).

The students described how they had undertaken an interdisciplinary project involving HSIE, English, Science and Mathematics. They were also involved in projects that extended beyond the classroom in the form of a podcast production incorporating interviews with local community members, and in collaborative activities involving peer and self-assessment. In terms of using technology, students in this school were active in building individual websites although they reported a lot of student collaboration as part of the process. The student focus group members reported making films which were critiqued by their peers before uploading to *YouTube* and creating brochures in several different subjects. They liked the opportunity to be creative and to use different forms of language, for example, persuasive text. In Mathematics, the students in this innovative school learnt about trigonometry. One of the students explained the lesson:

This student recounted how their teacher allowed the students to create their own challenging problems to solve.
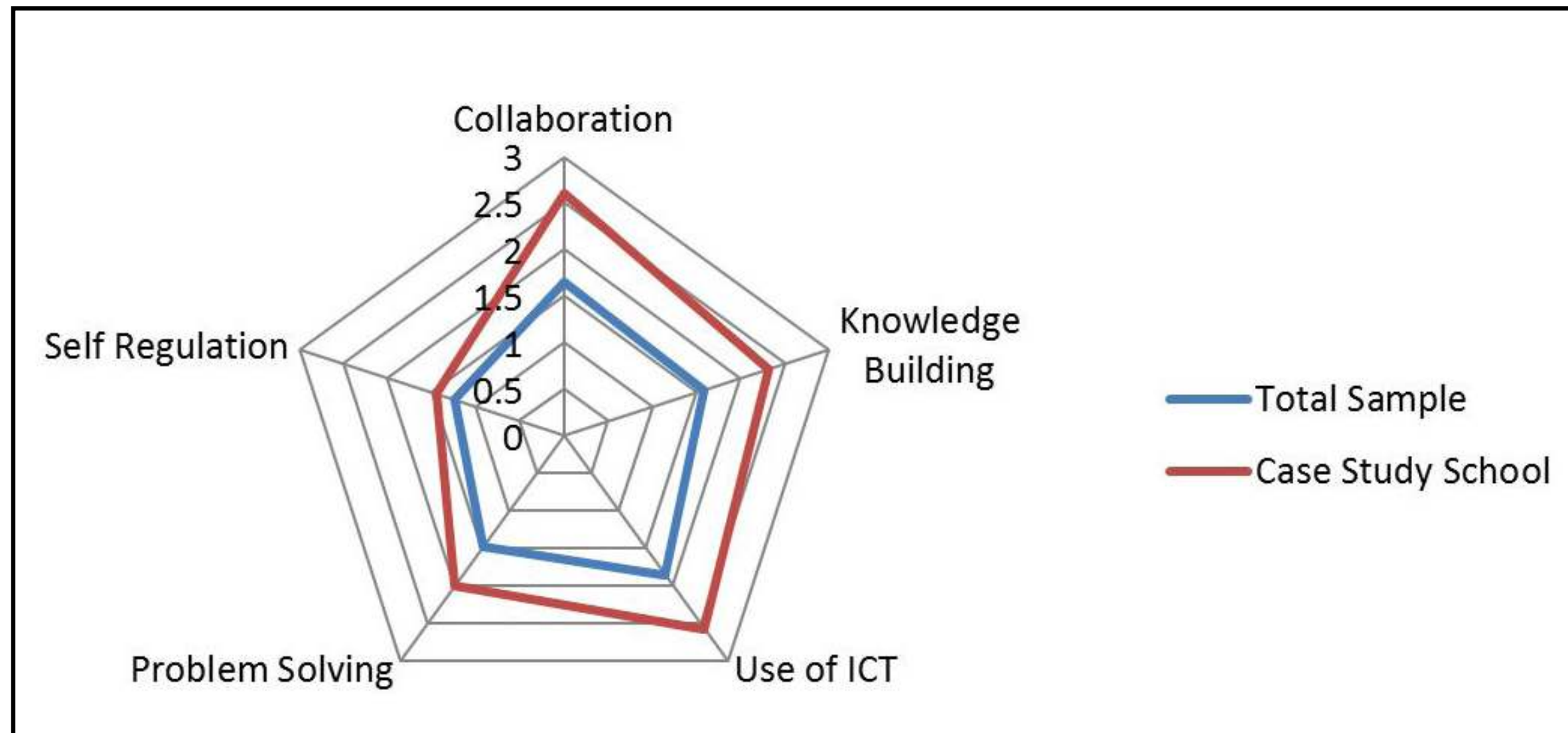

Figure 6: Comparing evidence of ITL dimensions in the case study school with incidence in the total sample

> *We started by getting real-life examples – for example, the Eiffel Tower – and seeing how tall it was. Then we could find out how long the shadow was and what the angle was from where we were standing, at the end of the shadow. We used Google Earth to find all these measurements. And then our major project for that subject and term took 4 or 5 weeks to put together.*
>
> Student

What did learning activities and student work look like?

Schools involved in the site visits were also invited to participate in the collection of learning activities (LA) and student work (SW). Teachers were asked to select activities which were reflective of the work that they would normally do with their class. The tasks could be single-lesson activities, homework tasks or longer projects that students were working on over a sequence of lessons. In addition to collecting learning activities, teachers were asked to submit de-identified pieces of student work along with each task to show how students responded to the learning activity.

In total there were 97 learning activities (59 humanities and 38 Science) included in the study, along with 559 examples of student work (345 humanities and 214 Science). These samples of LA and SW were coded using the innovative teaching and learning (ITL) dimensions: *knowledge building, problem-solving and innovation, skilled communication and collaboration, self-regulation and use of technology for learning* by expert teachers from the humanities and Science disciplines. Learning activities were coded for each ITL dimension separately, according to the coding rubric, and coders were careful not to make judgements about the activity itself. Each complete learning activity and student work example was coded a score of 1-4, with 1 being that the dimension was not evident and 4 being a high-level usage of the dimension More information about ITL dimensions is available on the *ITL research* website.

Figure 6 shows the mean code for the site visit schools on each ITL dimension across the 97 learning activities. On the whole, all dimensions were quite low with the average between 1 and 2. However, on average, *collaboration and use of ICT* were higher than the other dimensions, with *self-regulation* being the lowest. One school in the study scored consistently higher on each of the dimensions, in comparison to the total sample and this school will be examined closely in a separate article in the next edition of Scan in order to explore the implementation of innovative practice at this school in more detail.

From research into supports for practice

There are key supports to innovative teaching and learning reported in the study which highlight areas where schools can direct their goals for future planning. These key areas are:

- Recognising teachers who have qualifications higher than a bachelor degree as being more likely to be engaged in innovative practice in their classrooms.
- Increasing opportunities for teacher collaboration – examples seen at site visit schools were to make teacher learning and sharing the focus of every meeting, have teachers planning learning activities in cross-disciplinary groups and combining staff rooms to collapse established silos within schools.
- Encouraging staff to engage in professional learning activities, such as visiting other classrooms and ongoing professional learning focused on putting research into practice, which lead to higher innovative teaching practices.
- Initiating projects where teachers work collaboratively across key learning areas, to design extended learning activities.

Through the process of coding learning activities and student work in this study, it was found that when teacher coders analysed and scored learning activities across the ITL dimensions, this resulted in a deeper understanding of how 21st century skills could be integrated into learning activities. The importance of these learning activities to students developing 21st century skills was reinforced through the results of the coding, finding that if teachers did not plan opportunities for students to demonstrate skills, then students did not exhibit higher usage of the skills in their work.

This has led to the expansion of the ITL research project into developing a focused professional learning package for teachers, called *21st century learning design*, where teachers work collaboratively through materials on how to design learning activities to provide deeper 21st century skills development.

References and further reading

Bryk, A., Camburn, E. & Louis, K.S. 1999, 'Professional community in Chicago elementary schools: facilitating factors and organizational consequences', *Educational Administration Quarterly* 35(Supplement), 751–781.

Carneiro, R. & Draxler, A. 2008, 'Education for the 21st century: lessons and challenges', *European Journal of Education*, 43(2), 149-160.

Fullan, M. 2011, *Whole system reform for innovative teaching and learning. white paper* presented at the Global Forum, Washington, November 2011, accessed on 20 January 2014.

Government of South Australia, 2008, *eStrategy framework* Adelaide, The State of South Australia, Department Of Education And Children's Services, accessed 15 July 2009.

Groff, J. & Mouza, C. 2008, 'A framework for addressing challenges to classroom technology use', *Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE) Journal*, 16(1), 21-46.

Holmes, K., Bourke, S., Preston,

G., Shaw, K. & Smith, M. 2013, 'Supporting innovation in teaching: what are the key contextual factors? *International Journal of Quantitative Research in Education*, 1 (1), pp.85-102.

Langworthy, M., Shear, L., & Means, B. 2010, '*The third level: innovative teaching and learning research', Inspired by technology, driven by pedagogy: a systemic approach to technology based school innovations*. Paris, France: OECD.

Law, N., Pelgrum, W.J., & Plomp, T. 2008, *Pedagogy and ICT use in schools around the world: findings from the IEA SITES 2006 study*. Hong Kong: CERC-Springer.

ISTE 2007, '*National educational technology standards for students, second edition*', International Society for Technology in Education, Eugene: OR.

ISTE 2008, '*National Educational Technology Standards for Teachers*', International Society for Technology in Education, Eugene: OR.

Microsoft Educator Network, 2014, '21st century learning design', *Microsoft Educator Network*,

accessed 16 May, 2014.

OECD, 2006, *Are students ready for a technology-rich world? What PISA studies tell us*, OECD Publishing.

OECD, 2009, *Creating effective teaching and learning environments: first results from TALIS*. OECD Publishing.

Partnership for 21st century skills 2004a, *Framework for 21st century learning*, accessed from 15 July 2009.

Partnership for 21st century skills 2004b, *The intellectual and policy foundations of the 21st century skills framework. white paper*, accessed on 20 January 2014.

Shear, L., Gallagher, G., and Patel, D. 2011, *Evolving educational ecosystems: executive summary of phase I ITL research results*. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation.

UNESCO 2008, *UNESCO's ICT competency standards for teachers*, accessed 15 July 2009.

The good, the bad and the ugly?

Looking at what 2014 has to offer for teen and younger readers

Teenage girl on a park bench reading an e-book Maslov Dmitry/ Shutterstock.com

Paul Macdonald has a Masters of Education, working almost 20 years as a teacher of upper primary and secondary students. He has won numerous awards in teaching such as a Quality Teacher Award from the Australian College of Educators, a Premier's English Scholarship and awards for his coordination of regional Shakespearean festivals. His interests include the development of literacy with a particular interest in reading for gifted children, boys' literacy and books for adolescents. Paul won the inaugural Maurice Saxby Award in 2012 for his contributions to raising the profile of teen fiction He is the owner of *The Children's Bookshop* in Beecroft; the oldest specialist children's bookshop in NSW and winner of the NSW and ACT Specialist Bookshop of the Year 2013.

Books are windows to the age from which they emerge, the favoured reading genre of each age revealing much about its readers and their socio-historical context. Dystopian literature, for example, is predominately popular during times of economic and political change. Orwell's classic tale, *1984*, reveals much of the post-World War II rejection of despotism and denial of human rights. The horror genre rules during times of economic depression as readers seek escape while coping with bleak economic and political climates. So it is of interest as we focus on one of the leading genres of young adult fiction for 2014, the peculiarly labelled and somewhat controversial genre known as *sick-lit*. Is it good or bad for our young readers? What are the best examples of this genre? And is it here to stay?

What is sick-lit?

Sick-lit is arguably the leading genre of the moment but it is certainly not a new genre. *Sick-lit* refers to literature that focuses on such themes as death, fatal disease and illness. Literary media have been abuzz about the *sick-lit* controversy. In 2013, there was a battle in the press, particularly in the United Kingdom, in [The Guardian](#) and [The Daily Mail](#), discussing the pros and cons of the genre. The debate

continues to rage. While some see *sick-lit* books aimed at children as a disturbing phenomenon, others see such books serving as bibliotherapy, helping readers to come to terms with challenges in their own lives. Readers have always loved sick-lit, long before the genre label was coined. We know every narrative needs conflict that leads to degrees of resolution and the death of a beloved character has long been a feature of popular literature aimed at a younger audience. Beth dies in *Good wives*, Ruby Gillis dies in *Anne of the island* and Cedric Diggory and Fred Weasley die heroic deaths in the *Harry Potter* novels.

The death of a beloved character resonates through these classic tales for young readers

Ill children feature prominently in *Heidi*, *What Katy Did* and in *The Secret Garden* although in these stories, the children get better.

Love conquers adversity – happy endings in classic sick-lit

As he stepped on to the space in front of the hut two figures came towards him. one a tall girl with fair hair and pink cheeks, leaning on Heidi, whose dark eyes were dancing with joy. Herr Sesemann suddenly stopped, staring at the two children, and all at once the tears started to his eyes. What memories arose in his heart! Just so had Clara's mother looked, the fair-haired girl with the delicate pink-and-white complexion? Herr Sesemann did *not* know if he was awake or dreaming.

"Don't you know me, papa?" called Clara to him, her face beaming with

happiness. "Am I so altered since you saw me?" Then Herr Sesemann ran to his child and clasped her in his arms.

"Yes, you are indeed altered! How is it possible? Is it true what I see?" And the delighted father stepped back to look full at her again, and to make sure that the picture would not vanish before his eyes.

Heidi by Johanna Spyri

However, the endings are not always happy. Sick and dying children abound in Dickens and even though the sentimentality seems overdone to a modern reader, [little Nell's death](#) in *The Old Curiosity Shop* famously reduced a nation to tears.
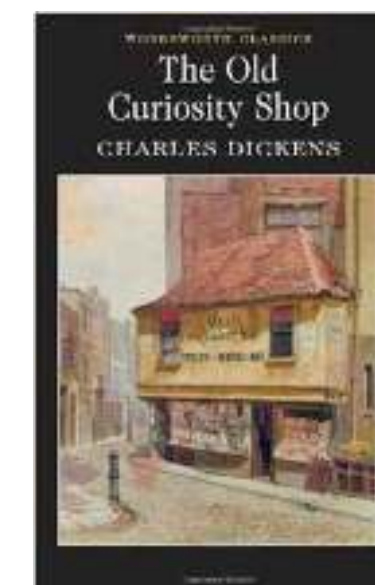
Her couch was dressed with here and there some winter berries and green leaves, gathered in a spot she had been used to favour. 'When I die, put near me something that has loved the light, and had the sky above it always. Those were her words. She was dead. Dear, gentle, patient, noble Nell, was dead. Her little bird – a poor slight thing the pressure of a finger

would have crushed – was stirring nimbly in its cage; and the strong heart of its child mistress was mute and motionless forever.
The Old Curiosity Shop by Charles Dickens

There are also lots of *sick reads* for adults such as the hugely popular fiction by Jodi Picoult. It is interesting that these books are classically considered *chick-lit*, a dismissive term used to describe stories about things that aren't deemed serious. It is clear, however, from their massive popularity, that these stories have huge appeal for readers Why does sick-lit resonate today, particularly with teen girls?
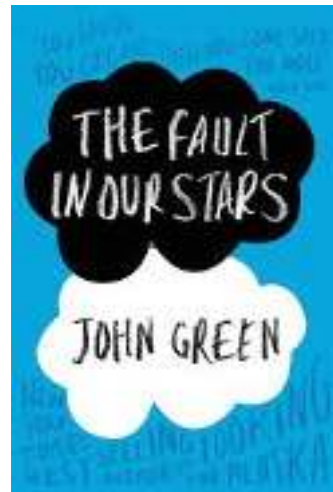
The rise of tragic realism

There has been a single book that is often cited as starting the avalanche of *sick-lit* that we have witnessed in the last year or two. In much the same way as *Twilight* parented the paranormal phenomenon; *The fault in our stars* by John Green (*Scan* 31.3) has been a best seller for teens and adult readers alike since its publication in early 2012, often topping the New York Times best-selling lists. *The fault in our stars* has deservedly received highly positive reviews from critics who have

called the book *a blend of melancholy, sweet, philosophical and funny* and said that it *stays the course of tragic realism*, while noting that the book's unpleasant plot details *do nothing to diminish the romance; in Green's hands, they only make it more moving* (*The New York Times' review*). The story of Hazel Grace Lancaster is a story for our age. Hazel is a typical teenage girl who goes shopping with her friends, watches awful television shows and reads poetry and books. But Hazel has thyroid cancer which means she has to carry a tank of oxygen around with her everywhere she goes. When Hazel meets the handsome and newly cancer-free Augustus Waters at a support group, she is surprised when he shows interest in her. Her relationship with Gus teaches her to re-examine her life and see that while she may be faced with trauma and sickness, life is better with love. While the reader may shed tears as they read John Green's novel, the world view offered by the book is affirming, with a strong message of hope pervading the book.
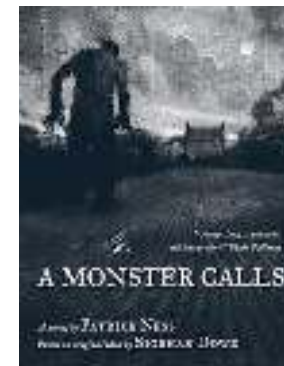
Sick-lit for young adults

Young adult *sick-lits* abound and include *Before I die* (*Scan* 27.4) by Jenny Downham, *Zac and Mia* by A J Betts, *Side effects may vary* by Julie Murphy, *Thirteen reasons why* by Jay
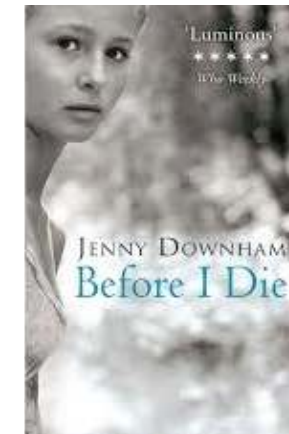
Asher and *Me and Earl and the dying girl* by Jesse Andrews. Indeed *Good Reads* lists an entire list of popular *sick-lits*, an ever growing list it would seem. One of my favourite books in this genre of the past couple of years has to be Patrick Ness's *A monster calls* (*Scan* 31.3). Told with terrible honesty, it deals with the complexities of a boy's emotions as his mother dies. Conor wants the awful process of his mother's dying to be over, though he doesn't want to lose her. Ness's novel is sad, beautiful and ultimately an uplifting read.

Young adult sick-lit: well written and engaging realism

Sick-lit for younger readers

For younger readers, we have seen the success of *Wonder (Scan* 31.2) by R J Palacio, the story of Auggie, a tough, sweet, ten year old boy, who was born with distorted facial features though lives life with integrity and gusto. By novel's end, we understand that the wonderful protagonist Auggie is not *sick*, rather he is truly extraordinary. *Us minus mum* by Heather Butler is another Stage 3 read that deals with a young boy's journey as he experiences the deterioration of his mother who is suffering with a brain tumour. So, are these books of value? They are because they are well written and engaging reads. They allow children to safely explore emotions and circumstances more extreme than their own.

Do sick-lit picture books exist?

There have always been picture books that deal with special issues such as grieving, cancer, family break up and so on. Indeed there has been a long tradition of picture books that deal with tough issues and Australian authors lead the way. Think of Libby Gleeson,
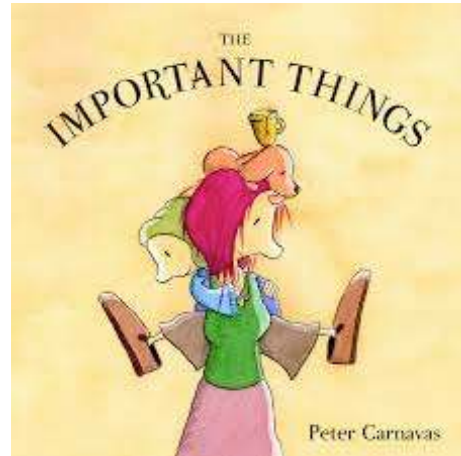
Armin Greder, Shaun Tan, John Marsden and Margaret Wild. Think of *John Brown, Rose and the midnight cat* by Jenny Wagner and Ron Brooks, perhaps one of the finest picture books ever produced in Australia. *The important things* by Peter Carnavas is about dealing with loss and celebrating memories and focuses on loss and absence beautifully. *The Scar* by Charlotte Moundlic, and Olivier Tallec was one of the most profoundly moving picture books of recent years but it is a challenging read. It focuses on a little boy's response to his mother's death in a genuine, deeply moving story sprinkled surprisingly with humour and engaging illustrations. Numerous websites offer lists of picture books dealing with the toughest of life's issues. The beauty of picture books has always been the oppor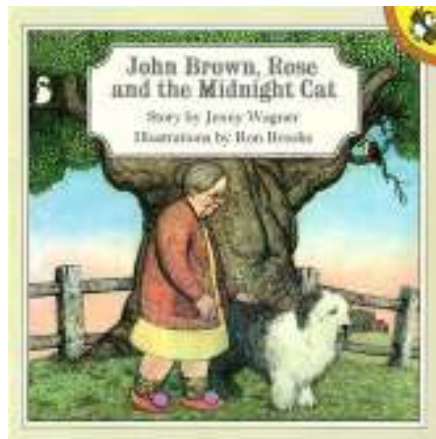tunity they provide for a meeting place and dialogue between parents and children. Perhaps picture books offer the best platform to discuss the greatest complexities of life showcased in sick-lit tales.

Why sick-lit now?

Why does the sick-lit genre dominate at the moment? It is an interesting question to ask teens in the classroom and beyond. We live a time of social and economic upheaval and perhaps we seek strategies, more so than usual, to cope with the uncertainties of our age. None of us would wish for people to experience pain or to have to cope with traumatic experiences. But we do need to confront the complexities of life, to talk about them and work together to process the harsher experiences of life. For people who are coping with horrible things right now, reading a book and talking about it with friends or family is a great way to help us get though it.

People seem to underestimate children and young adults' intelligence and what they are able to engage with emotionally. Books in this genre and many other books open doors to the world around us, they challenge, they force us to reflect. Ultimately, books like *The fault in our stars* do not depress us but demonstrate that life must consist of dualities such as light and shade and good and bad. As Palacio writes in *Wonder.*

..no, no, it's not all random, if it really was all random, the universe would abandon us completely. and the universe doesn't. it takes care of its most fragile creations in ways we can't see, like with parents who adore you blindly. and a big sister who feels guilty for being human over you. and a little gravelly-voiced kid whose friends have left him over you. and even a pink-haired girl who carries your picture in her wallet. maybe it is a lottery, but the universe makes it all even out in the end. the universe takes care of all its birds.

Using sick-lit in the classroom

There are many opportunities to use sick-lit in the classroom. While the English KLA immediately jumps to mind, some English teachers do not like to use sick-lit texts for close study in their classrooms because the intensity of dealing with difficult topics in detail can be too confronting for some students. However, these texts can be useful and accessible related texts in Stage 6 English, used for self selected wide reading and review or provide a basis for discussion about literary canons,

Key learning area	Outcomes
PDHPE K – 6	**Growth and Development** *Growth and Development involves developing each student's understanding of their own physical, social, cognitive and emotional development in the context of increasing awareness of changes that occur throughout the cycle of people's lives. Students participate in activities that increase their confidence and competence to manage change.*
PDHPE 7 – 10	4.2 A student identifies and selects strategies that enhance their ability to cope and feel supported. 5.2 A student evaluates their capacity to reflect on and respond positively to challenges.
Science 7 – 10	SC4-15LW explains how new biological evidence changes people's understanding of the world

click to enlarge

culture and popular fiction. Also, using popular fiction in the classroom does not need to be restricted to the English KLA. Allusions to popular sick-lit novels or picture books could also be useful in classroom discussions about grief and resilience in PDHPE or the impacts of developments in health technologies in Science. Some outcomes relating to these teaching ideas are listed below.

Whether or not teachers decide to use sick-lit in the classroom, the impact of this genre on young people can be profoundly positive and the best books in the sick-lit genre do what all books for what young people should do. They offer a positive platform for discussion. They offer hope. They make us wonder. That can't be a bad thing.

References and further reading

Binks, D. 2014, 'The fault with a sick-lit debate', *Kill Your Darlings*, accessed 16 May 2014.

Cody, D. 2007, *Dickens's popularity*, accessed 10 May 2014

Carey, T. 2013, 'The sick-lit books aimed at children: it's a disturbing-phenomenon. Tales of teenage cancer, self-harm and suicide' *Daily Mail Australia*, accessed 9 May 2014.

Good Reads, 2014 *Popular sick lit books*, accessed 6 April 2014

Hateley, E. 2013, 'Young adult literature as a tool for critiquing canonicity', *English in Australia*, Vol 48, No 2, 71-78.

Kavanagh, B. 2013, *Off the shelf October 2013 – Sick-lit* by Bec Kavanagh, accessed 16 May, 2014

Pauli, M. 2013, 'Sick-lit'? Evidently young adult fiction is too complex for the Daily Mail.', *The Guardian*, accessed 6 April 2014.

Perdue, D. 2014, *The Old Curiosity Shop*, accessed 9 May, 2014.

Standiford, N. 2012, 'The tenacity of hope', *The New York Times*, accessed 6 April 2014.

Williams, S. 2013, 'Art of Darkness', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, accessed 16 May, 2014.

Further reading suggestions

Picture books

Farmer Fred's cow – Margaret Wild

Following grandfather – Rosemary Wells

Harry & Hopper – Margaret Wild

Her mother's face – Roddy Doyle

I'll always love you – Hans Wilhelm

Jenny angel – Margaret Wild

Kenju's forest – Junko Morimoto

Little bear's grandad – Nigel Gray

My dog – John Heffernan

The selfish giant - Oscar Wilde

The very best of friends – Margaret Wild

Old pig – Margaret Wild

Toby – Margaret Wild

Books for younger readers

Gracie and Josh – Susanne Gervay

Lily and me – Moses Aaron

What's up mate? – Helen Bales

The tenth good thing about Barney – Judith Viorst

The heart and the bottle – Oliver Jeffers

The naming of Tishkin Silk – Glenda Millard

Books for older readers

A future for myself – Amanda Mackay

Angel – Phil Cummings

Gilbert's ghost train – David Metzenthen

Lookout Rock – Jane Carroll

Miranda's story – Maureen Stewart

Ribbons for her hair – Jane Carroll & Janna Taylor

Skinny B, Skaz and Me – John Singleton

Stay well soon – Penny Tangey

The day after forever – Erin Skiffington

The whole of the moon – Duncan Stewart

White Lies – J.C. Burke

Knox Grammar School: Mars colonies project on *Minecraft*

Bron Stuckey is a consultant specialist in game play, gamification, communities of practice and learning communities. She supports schools and other educational organisations in the use of games and game inspired media in student a nd teacher professional learning.
@bronst

Desire paths to learning

In the last edition of Scan (Scan 33.1) a series of articles by Kate Booth, Melanie Hughes and Michelle Jensen outlined the value and practicalities of using virtual worlds and multiplayer games in teaching. In the articles, readers were given insights into some quality practices within a variety of curriculum areas. This article builds on that view, asks you to consider the same virtual worlds and games, but looks at what happens when the curriculum is used as a springboard for student led innovation (Malmstrom, 2013).

Beyond the curriculum

In 2014 all of us are likely to bring some new technology or medium into our classrooms. Yet it may not realise its full potential if we do not look on that change as a chance to explore a new pedagogy, practice or paradigm. As professional educators we should always be reflecting on and questioning the value of the strategies we employ. Each new media should not just be a chance to do the old in new ways but a chance to create something completely new.

It is also likely that the new media we pilot will not be as new to the students as they are to us. Students may be more proficient with, and have greater visions for, this new media. How will we know this if at times we do not allow our learners to freely explore and design their own curriculum? This is where the concept of desire paths to learning comes into play.

Desire paths

In architecture and design the term desire path represents the path that people prefer to take as opposed to those mapped out for them. These desire paths can be seen all around us where a new track diverges away from the concrete path designed to channel our movement. These desire paths may

be shortcuts to the same destination or they may represent a totally new direction or destination that travellers chose to take. In architecture and city planning the natural behaviours of people can be used to discover the optimal position for pathways and services. Not rushing to lay out the pathways, but sitting back to watch the users engage can assist designers to see not only optimal paths but perhaps to discover whole new ways of relating to the landscape. If you watch the video introduction _Desire paths_ seen below you will get a feel for what these paths might mean in our geographical world and you are invited to comment on what strikes you about them.

Desire paths

Desire paths to learning

This concept offers educators the chance to see ourselves as learning architects and ethnographic researchers

as we take a step back to see where learners might take the learning. What the desire paths or desire lines practice in architecture tells us is that we should allow learners to freely explore these innovations and see where they might take them and then follow or use their lead. While we are thinking in this architectural metaphor, it seems fitting that one of the key tools to consider in desire paths to learning should be virtual worlds. In these spaces learners design, build, program, and interact in a learning landscape.

We need to let students explore the medium; demonstrate to us how much they know and what skill levels they have already attained. What vision do they have for it? They will in themselves be learning architects in practice. If you adopt the desire paths approach to learning you are not only allowing students to design, build and program, but to additionally to experiment in real world skills. Parents of _Minecraft_ players have an opportunity to know more about the desire paths children are exploring as they watch play, goal setting, autonomy, negotiation, mentoring and leadership explored in their homes.

I was introduced to this concept by the inspiring Victorian educator Andrew Douch (@andrewdouch) who was

speaking about educational uses of technology in general. It struck me that this put a label on a philosophy I have been developing over my now twelve years across learning in _Second life, Quest Atlantis_ and now _Minecraft_ virtual worlds. My experience is that I could never have imagined the heights to which students would take learning, had I not been able to step back and allow them the freedom to take it where they wanted first. Let me give you an example from the student congress of _Quest Atlantis_ (QA).

Quest Atlantis student congress explained (YouTube videos need a teacher log in)

This space was opened for students to who had levelled up to a certain point in QA missions to manage and own. They formed their own teams and were given the open brief to build an in-game mission about things that

were important to them and their peers. We thought that they would just want to build artefacts but very quickly these students wanted to program interactivity, design their own objects and avatar clothing, offer player rewards and even refine the system itself. They found ways to learn all they needed including, roping in peers, teachers and real world programmers as mentors and advisors. Their products were much admired by other learners and more importantly perhaps by the teachers and parents who were in awe of their design, skills, dedication and teamwork. It's not just the paths that were their own; it was also the destinations. These students took their work in the virtual world to places I would never have dreamed. I realised that had I set the tasks, tools or teams I would have lowered the ceiling on their potential motivation and learning.

Lived curriculum
Another tool that begs for this need to resist channelling is the game *Minecraft*. This sandbox genre game allows learners to make it do and become what they want. This particular game is probably played outside of school by more than two thirds of the learners in your classrooms. It is far less well known and understood by the adults around them. At the same time,

This desire paths philosophy is not about marooning learners to some digital *Lord of the flies* scenario. In all the cases cited here and in the previous edition of *Scan* (*Scan 33.1*), the teachers were co-players with their students. Curriculum is not abandoned but is used instead as a springboard for creativity and innovation. Additionally, there are important *general capabilities* such as citizenship, social and emotional learning and leadership that are all enhanced by engagement in open virtual world/game implementations. Once described as soft skills these capabilities are described by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) as an integral part of 21st century learning (*ACARA, 2013*). Game spaces afford what I have termed the lived curriculum (Stuckey, 2013). The lived curriculum is about participatory and experiential learning where students interact and refine their engagement with concepts and each other. A multiplayer learning space designed for desire paths will afford opportunities to experience citizenship, social emotional learning and leadership. Students given the opportunity to engage in in-game community will develop life competencies in self management, self awareness, social awareness,

relationship skills and responsible decision making (CASEL, 2013).

To my mind there are two ways we can adopt desire paths; either *open the pathways* and/or *open the destinations*. The first is a more moderate way to experience the effectiveness of the idea, and the second is a deep dive to wholly embrace the concept. Let's look those two sets of possibilities played out in *Minecraft*, but the value could hold true for many other tools and media.

Opening up pathways
Knoxcraft
Educator: Mr Michael Beilharz, Knox Information Communication Technology (ICT) Integrator

Knox Grammar School:
Mars colonies project on Minecraft

Take a look at what was achieved in Knoxcraft (Knox Grammar School) projects and challenges described on

the *Minecraft Experience* wiki. Here you see challenges set, some even as assessment tasks, with students teaming up as necessary to choose their own ways to realise the challenge and demonstrate their learning.

> *As learners discover the tasks that motivate them they will also begin to build their identity in the game world community.*

101 Open Ended Minecraft Challenges
Offering students a pool of interesting challenges allows them to follow their passions within curriculum designed tasks. Take a look at the crowd sourced list of challenges building in *101 Open Ended Minecraft Challenges*, started in my 2013 *3D Gamelab* camp and open to all. As learners discover the tasks that motivate them they will also begin to build their identity in the game world community. The learning areas are not explicitly stated in the tasks but outcomes can be seen embodied in student products.

Digging into Game-based Learning with Minecraft

101 Open Ended Minecraft Challenges

This now crowd sourced set of challenges was originally designed by Bron Stuckey for the October 3D Gamelab Teacher Camp. It is made available for any teacher wanting to build a learner-centered program within Minecraft. These are offered as a set of open-ended choices for learners of any age (student or teacher).

Suggested Challenge Ratings (please feel free to refine and/or add to) :
Explorer, Builder, Designer, Identity Builder, Inventor, Collaborator, Mentor, Leader, Thought Leader, ???

	Challenge name	Description and how evidenced	Rating
1	Home of my own	**Challenge:** Build your own home with a sign to proudly show it's and others may visit you. **Evidence:** Share screenshot, have peer visit to assess.	Explorer

101 Open Ended Minecraft Challenges

Escape to Morrow

Young Aussie Miners

Ways to make a start opening up pathways:
- offer students time for free play and to mentor each other before giving direction
- be in-world with your students and be prepared to learn with them and from them
- develop a set of options as open-ended tasks and challenges.

Opening up destinations
Escape to Morrow
Educator: Marianne Malmstrom (@knowclue), Elisabeth Morrow School, New Jersey USA

Escape to Morrow is a student designed game built in *Minecraft*. Students designed the survival game and its rules and offered it up for schools around the world to download, play and offer feedback or refinements.

Leisure Lakes
Educator: Yvonne Harrison, Department of Education and Training, Western Australia

Year 7 students were motivated to develop a community project which they called Leisure Lakes. They collaborated on the project plan and explained it to their peers. This student designed project is part of the curriculum for all students learning in *Minecraft* for this particular unit of work.

Ways to make a start opening up the destinations:
- outside of class time start a club free from the pressures of curriculum
- be like Google – take 20 percent of your game time for innovation and desire paths
- offer a desire path program such as *Genius Hour* (Kesler, 2013).

As educators with technology today, we will face many situations where we are not leading the charge with the greatest knowledge or experience. What we can't afford to do is restrain the student learning opportunities with a vision blinkered by our limited perspective.

More stories of desire paths in *Minecraft* are building on *The Minecraft Experience wiki*. Perhaps you have one to share?

The Minecraft Experience

References and further reading

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) 2013, *General capabilities in the Australian curriculum* accessed 4 April 2014.

Arizona State University Center for Games & Impact 2014, *Quest Atlantis* accessed 28 March 2014.

Booth, K. 2014, 'Virtual worlds in action', *Scan vol. 33, no. 1, pp. 6.*

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) 2013, *What is social and emotional learning?* accessed 28 March 2014.

Douch, A. 2014, *EvolvEducation* accessed 28 March 2014.

Elisabeth Morrow School 2014, *MorrowCraft* accessed March 28th

Groom, D. & Stuckey, B.E. 2013, *The massively Minecraft project* accessed 28 March 2014.

Hughes, M. 2014, 'Adventures in the virtual world', *Scan* vol. 33, no. 1, pp.15.

Jensen, M. 2014, 'Virtual worlds in education', *Scan* vol. 33, no. 1, pp.18.

Kesler, C. 2013, *Genius hour: where passions come alive* accessed 28 March 2014.

Knox Grammar School 2014, *Knoxcraft: guide to Knoxcraft* accessed 28 March 2014

Malmstrom, M. 2013, 'Confessions of a dyslexic teacher...' *Follow the Learning* accessed 28 March 2014.

New South Wales Department of Education and Training (NSWDET) 2003, *Quality teaching in NSW public schools: a classroom practice guide*, Professional Support and Curriculum Directorate, Sydney.

Stuckey, B.E. (2014) *The Minecraft experience:* Curating learning. *Learning Revolution* accessed 29 April 2014

Stuckey, B.E. (2013) 'The lived curriculum', *Community capers* accessed 28 March 2014.

Stuckey, B.E. & Groom, D. 2013, *Minecraft experience* accessed 28 March 2014.

Three D Gamelab 2013, *Teacher Camps* accessed 25 March 2014.

Science and Technology K-6:
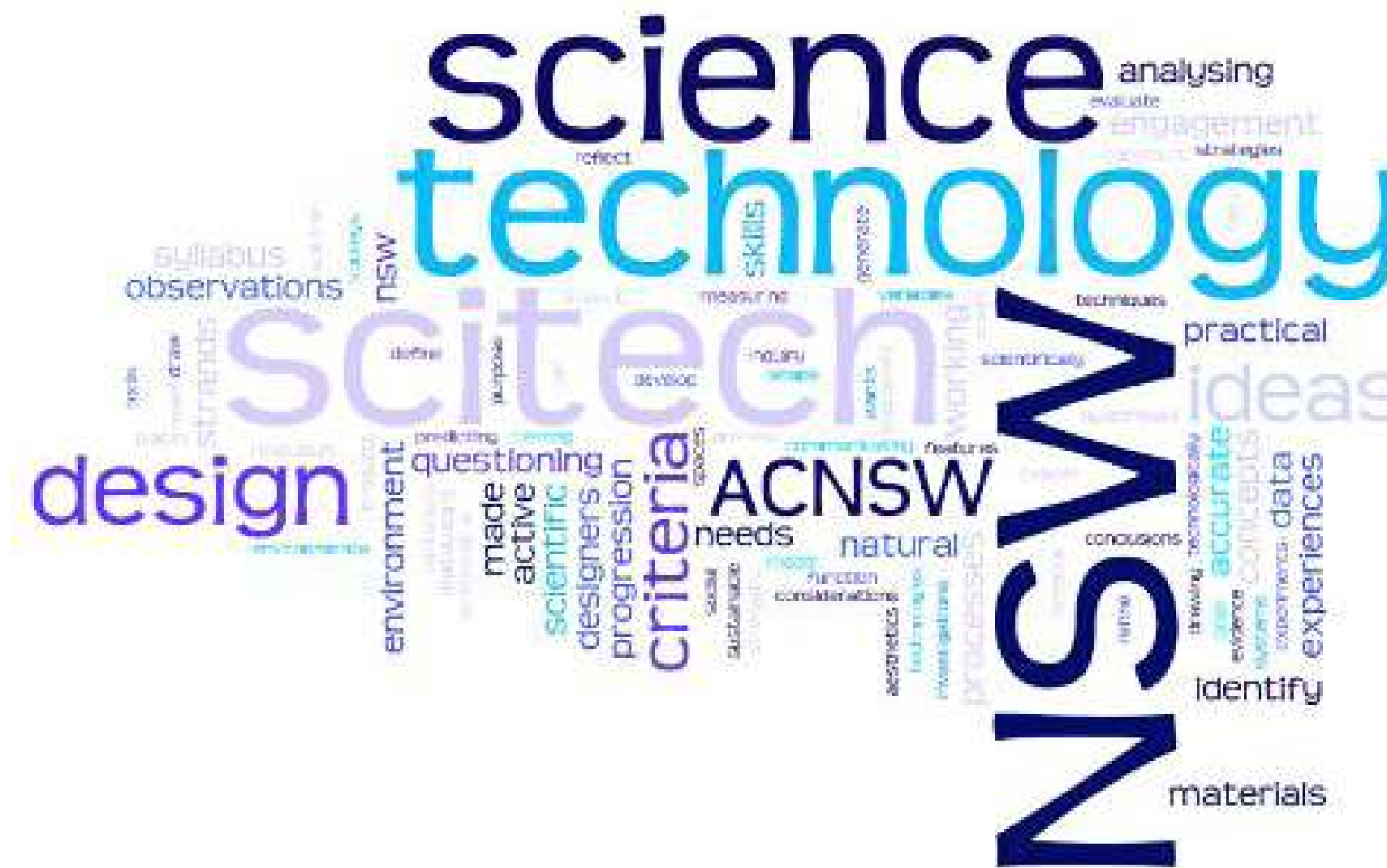
Getting the balance right in the classroom

The new Science and technology K–6 syllabus: an opportunity to re-invigorate the teaching of science and technology in the primary classroom.

Tanya Coli and Yvonne Hughes, Science and Technology Advisors K – 6, Department of Education and Communities, are strong advocates of how Science and Technology learning can enrich, engage and provide real meaning to students' thinking in the 21 century.

The implementation of the new *Science and technology K–6 syllabus* presents itself as an opportunity to re-invigorate the teaching of Science and technology (SciTech) in the primary classroom. Through doing, students are engaged in real-life situations of solving problems, creating solutions and conducting investigations. Students' learning is enriched and engaging.

Science and technology are taught together as one subject in NSW because the science investigation informs the technological design or the design informs the necessary investigation to be undertaken. This is a reflection of what occurs in the real world where knowledge and understanding acquired through the investigation is often applied through a design process to solve problems or solutions. This short video introduction to *Design and thinking* shows what this may look like in the real world as designers engage in critical and creative thinking, designing solutions at work.

Design and thinking: Identifying problems and designing solutions

The skills

The syllabus states that the processes of working scientifically and working technologically are at the centre of teaching and learning. This means that the content is delivered by the doing and it is through this practical application students will learn in an authentic, purposeful and engaging environment.

The skills of *working scientifically* (WS) and *working technologically* (WT) each have a step by step process that guides scientific investigations and technological design. Explicit teaching of these processes is essential.

🔍 click to enlarge

Working scientifically	Working technologically
Question and predict	Explore and define a task
Plan investigations	Explore and define a task
Conduct investigations	Produce solutions
Process and analyse	Evaluate
Communicate	

Relationships between working scientifically and working technologically

Working scientifically

Students identify and ask questions about their world. They plan and conduct a range of first-hand investigations in which they use and apply the skills and processes of working scientifically. The Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) states Through applying the processes of working scientifically, students use scientific inquiry to develop their knowledge of science and understanding about the *natural environment* and the *made environment.* In their investigations students will often draw on processes

> In their investigations students will often draw on processes and design ideas developed through working technologically.
> Science K –10 (incorporating Science and technology K-6) syllabus

and design ideas developed through working technologically (BOSTES).

Consider what working scientifically might look like in the classroom.

Opportunities to strengthen your understanding of working scientifically include:

- watching videos of scientific investigations in action in primary classrooms, which are embedded in the *working scientifically in K–6* resources page (intranet only)

- using the resource to support your teaching and learning of the skill strands

- participating in *SyllabusPLUS K–6* Science and technology Adobe

Connect series professional learning (PL) sessions when they are available(intranet only). These workshops are advertised in *SchoolBiz.*

Working technologically

Students recognise problems and respond to opportunities, needs and wants in their world for which possible solutions can be designed and produced. They explore and define design tasks, generate and develop ideas, produce solutions and evaluate their processes and solutions. In developing design solutions, students will often use the findings from their investigations (BOSTES).

Images from NSW Quality Teaching project 5.1: K–6 Science and technology support project
© Commonwealth of Australia 2003

> *In developing design solutions, students will often use the findings from their investigations (BOSTES).*
> **Science K-10 (incorporating Science and technology K-6) syllabus**

> *The study of technology involves solving real problems and creating ideas and solutions in response to needs and opportunities in a range of technological contexts.*
> **Science K-10 (incorporating Science and technology K-6) syllabus**

Consider what working technologically might look like in the classroom.

Opportunities to strengthen your understanding of working technologically include:

- watching videos of scientific investigations in action in primary classrooms, which are embedded in the *working technologically* K–6 resources page (intranet only)

- using the resource to support your teaching and learning of the skill strands

- enrolling in *SyllabusPLUS K – 6 Science and technology Adobe Connect series* professional learning (PL) sessions when they are available (intranet only)These workshops are advertised in *SchoolBiz.*
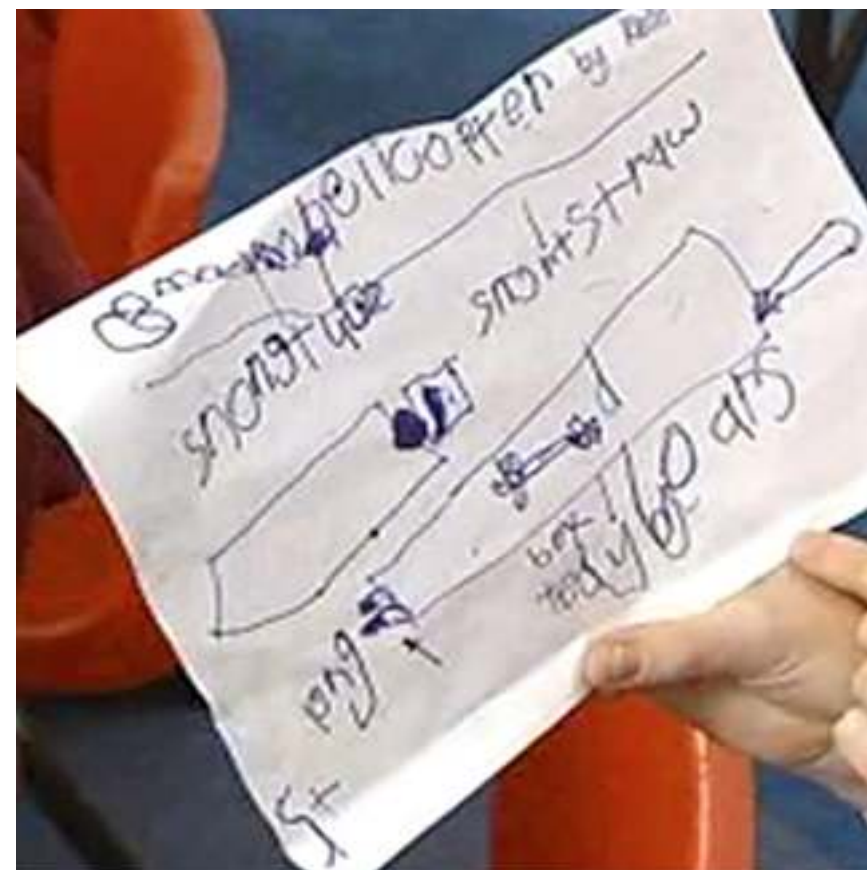
The study of technology involves solving real problems and creating ideas and solutions in response to needs and opportunities in a range of technological contexts (BOSTES).

Where to begin?

If students use the findings from their investigations when developing their design solutions it seems logical to begin with the problem.

But is this where we should always begin? Which do we develop first: the scientific inquiry or the technological design task?

Consider how this might look in the classroom. Examine the sample that has been provided. Select an appropriate stage, sub strand and content statement and develop both working scientifically (investigation) ideas and working technologically (design) ideas to support the content statement. Discuss and notate on the *Connecting inquiry to design PDF.*

Science and technology are *linked*

Images from NSW Quality Teaching project 5.1: K–6 Science and technology support project
© Commonwealth of Australia 2003

connecting inquiry and design

through problem solving by the skills and processes of scientific inquiry and technological design. Science often draws on tools and processes developed by technology. Technology in turn uses concepts, principles and processes developed by science. These areas are interlinked by the processes, by their practical application, by their interdependence with each other. It is mandatory for these two subjects to be taught as the one key learning area–*Science and technology. The study of Science and technology provides*

opportunities for students to think and act critically and creatively (BOSTES).

The sample units of learning are a good starting point for contextual and conceptual planning for inquiry based learning. These can be found on the *Teaching and learning exchange (TaLe)*.

• Science and technology: Stage 3 built environments

• Stage 1 physical world

• Stages 2 and 3 material world

• Early Stage 1 material world.

A NSW Department of Education and Communities login is required to access these resources on *TaLe*. Other SciTech resources are available on the *K–6 science and technology weblinks* page on the *My Science at ACU* website and on NSW DEC *Scootle*. Access to *NSW DEC Scootle* is via the *Staff portal* using your staff portal ID and password. Non NSW DEC teachers access Scootle via their own jurisdiction or they can register directly with *Scootle*. In Scootle, resources are best located by content terms or Australian curriculum outcomes.

• Take some time to explore the learning potential of Science and technology K–6. The opportunities

this syllabus presents are endless and limited only by your imagination.

> *The study of Science and technology provides opportunities for students to thikn and act critically and creatively...*
> **Science K –10 (incorporating Science and technology K-6) syllabus**

References and further reading

Board of Studies 2012, *Science K-10 (incorporating Science and Technology K-6) Syllabus,* accessed 10 May 2014.

Board of Studies 2012, *Science K –10: support materials*, accessed 10 May 2014.

Emma Heyde, educator, writer, and Publications Officer at *The School Magazine*, explores poetry as an engaging medium for teaching language, literacy and literature in the classroom.

Poetry for pleasure

Illustration from *The School Magazine: The Triantiwontigongolope* by Vilma Cencic

The *School Magazine* is one of the most important publishers of poetry in the country and many well-known writers of poetry started their careers by writing for *The School Magazine*. But does poetry still resonate with young people? And what can teachers do with poetry in the primary classroom?

We as adults know the value of poetry, the way it can capture experience or provide

us with access to new ways of thinking about our world and one another. We reach for poetry on occasions of intense emotions, for wedding services, funerals and at public ceremonies to mark events of importance such as Anzac Day services.

We know poetry's power and pleasures.

But do young people, with a world of entertainment, communication and learning available in a swipe, still want to read poetry? Does poetry still appeal?

We know from the thousands of emails that we receive at *The School Magazine* each year that the answer is a resounding yes.

> Hi Mungo,
> How u going and the chooks?
> I really enjoyed the Alice cat poem this month …
> Brittney

Students are moved, entertained and fascinated by poems in *The School Magazine*. The poems in the four magazines speak in language students recognise. They give students access to adult thought framed in manageable syntax and vocabulary. They hint at a bigger world than just one suburb and

just one school. Poetry excites young people with the possibilities of making others laugh, cry or shudder, simply with print on a page.

> Dear Mungo and Chooks
> We only just received the Orbit magazine and I REALLY like it. I love poetry and story writing and I find the comics really cool.
> From Francesca

Poetry in *The School Magazine*

The poems that appear every month in all four levels of the magazine are selected for their beauty, clarity of thought, variety and relevance to children.

The poems that are chosen for publication sing out with humour, vivid evocations of their world, poignancy, intellect and an unfailing sense of hope.

The following excerpt from *Soft silk sack* by Australian poet, Jenny Blackford, typifies the sophistication of language that poetry in the magazine so often displays.

Cat puddles
against the floor,
his body as flat as milk.

(Orbit #1, 2014)

Soft silk sack: Illustration of cat by Noela Young. Orbit #1, 2014

The Triantiwontigongolope

poem by CJ Dennis | illustrated by Vilma Cencic

There's a very funny insect that you do not often spy,
And it isn't quite a spider, and it isn't quite a fly;
It is something like a beetle, and a little like a bee,
But nothing like a woolly grub that climbs upon a tree.
Its name is quite a hard one, but you'll learn it soon, I hope.
So try:
Tri-
Tri-anti-wonti-
Triantiwontigongolope.

It lives on weeds and wattle-gum, and has a funny face;
Its appetite is hearty, and its manners a disgrace.
When first you come upon it, it will give you quite a scare,
But when you look for it again, you find it isn't there.
And unless you call it softly it will stay away and mope.
So try:
Tri-
Tri-anti-wonti-
Triantiwontigongolope.

It trembles if you tickle it or tread upon its toes;
It is not an early riser, but it has a snobbish nose.
If you sneer at it, or scold it, it will scuttle off in shame,
But it purrs and purrs quite proudly if you call it by its name,
And offer it some sandwiches of sealing wax and soap.
So try:
Tri-
Tri-anti-wonti-
Triantiwontigongolope.

But of course you haven't seen it; and I truthfully confess
That I haven't seen it either, and I don't know its address.
For there isn't such an insect, though there really might have been
If the trees and grass were purple, and the sky was bottle green.
It's just a little joke of mine, which you'll forgive, I hope.
Oh, try!
Tri-
Tri-anti-wonti-
Triantiwontigongolope.

Illustration of Triantiwontigongolope by Vilma Cencic: *Countdown* #1, 2014

Supported with an image of a cat in a girl's lap by The *School Magazine's* famous illustrator, Noela Young, the poem presents a concrete subject, a cat, in language that is not only beautiful, but is concise and richly evocative.

A very different cat in Robert Sealey's poem *Said the cat* (*Touchdown* #3, 2014) asks us to grant it eternal life. The cat persona addresses the reader directly and protests its short span.

'Only nine!' said the cat,
'I'd much prefer ten!
Nine's only eight more than dogs,
mice and men.'

The poem refuses to be explicit about the meme around which it is based (that cats have nine lives). Instead, readers are left to make the intellectual leap themselves, and enjoy the deep satisfaction that comes with making a connection between existing knowledge and a new idea.

But poetry in *The School Magazine* is not exclusively the preserve of contemporary poets. The magazines also publish significant poems from the past, such as the fabulously nonsensical *The Triantiwontigongolope* by CJ Dennis, first published in 1921.

But of course you haven't seen it; and I truthfully confess
That I haven't seen it either, and I

don't know its address.
For there isn't such an insect, though there really might have been
If the trees and grass were purple, and the sky was bottle green.
It's just a little joke of mine, which you'll forgive, I hope.
Oh, try!
Tri—
Tri-anti-wonti—
Triantiwontigongolope.

Why use poetry in the classroom?

Poetry, aside from being as relevant and as enjoyable as it has ever been for students, is also a vehicle for exploring the requirements of the Australian curriculum (AC) to teach the structures of our language in context. The AC is quite explicit that skills and concepts must not be taught in isolation.

… teaching specific skills in isolation, away from a purposeful context, actually makes learning harder.
Robyn Wild

Each strand [language, literacy and literature] contributes to the study of English its own distinctive goals, body of knowledge, history of ideas and interests, and each relates to material worth studying in its own right. Teaching, learning and assessment programs should balance and integrate the three

strands in order to support the development of knowledge, understanding and skills.

Australian curriculum

This recommendation is reflected also in the language of the *NSW syllabus for the Australian curriculum: English K–10*, where in each detailed outcome statement, students aim to develop and apply contextual knowledge across all objectives. For an example see (EN1–9B).

Poetry provides the perfect vehicle for watching the English language at play, display its dazzling ability to enchant, disturb, provoke and amuse us. Samuel Taylor Coleridge famously called poetry *the best words in the best order*.

The rigorous selection of the best words in a poem for exciting pleasure by beautiful, imaginative, or elevated thoughts (Macquarie dictionary online) means that poetry is particularly useful for demonstrating the capacity and flexibility of language to students. Poetry has a unique ability to capture sentiment and argument concisely, and possesses the licence to bend rules about syntax, grammar and punctuation to generate and amplify meaning.

Visual literacy

Poetry as it is published in *The School Magazine* also creates an opportunity to discuss elements of visual literacy, another key aspect of teaching and learning in NSW syllabus English K–10 and the Australian curriculum.

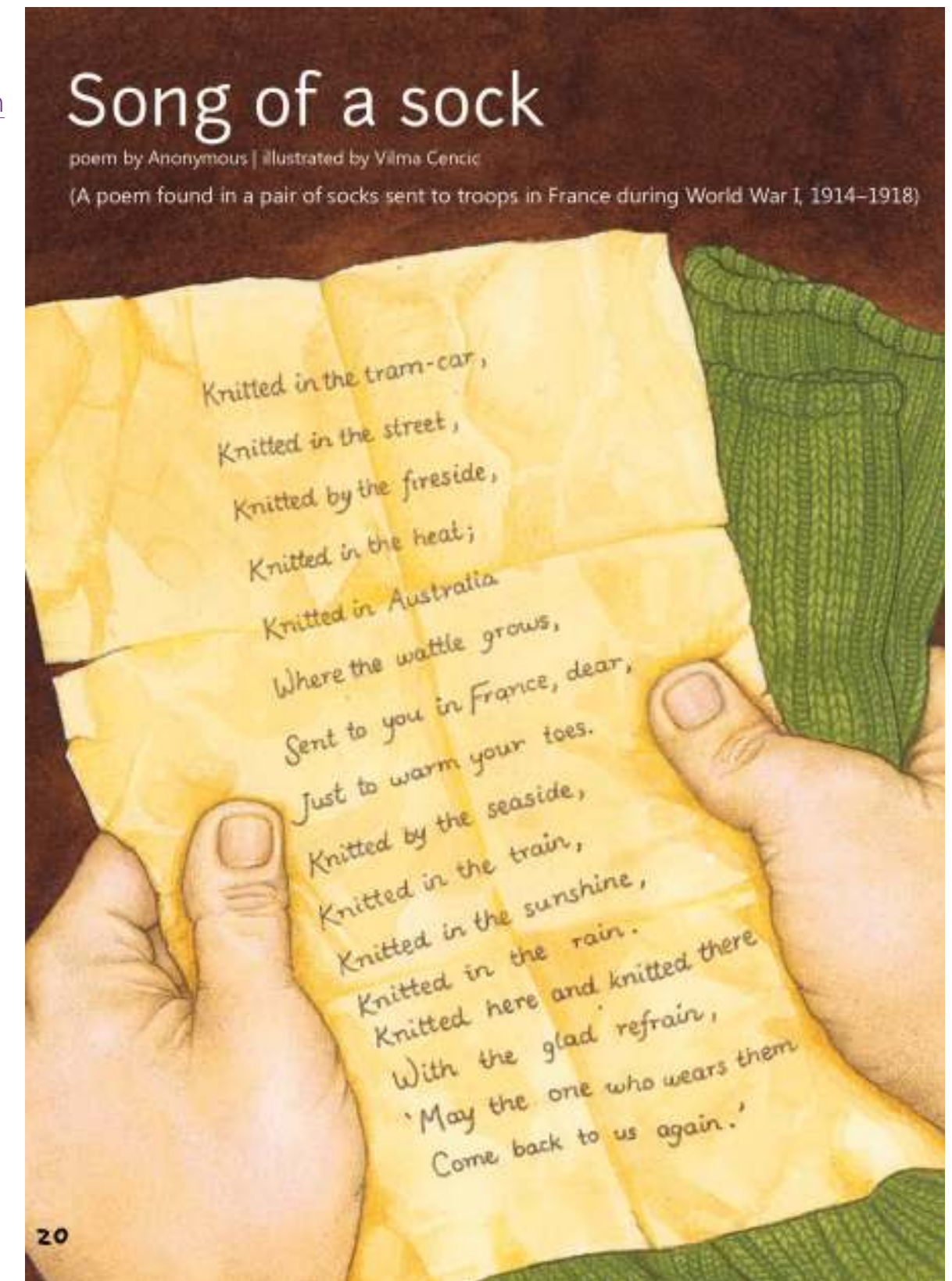Knowledge of this type is referenced in the curriculum right from the beginning of formal school education,

Illustration from *Song of a sock* by Vilma Cencic *Blast Off* #3, 2014

see for example outcome (ENe–8B), in English K–10, which contains in the foundation year content description the descriptor,

Students explore the different contribution of words and images to meaning in stories and informative texts (ACELA 1786)

The learning required becomes quite specific by Year 4, as outcome (EN2–8B) and AC content descriptor (ACELA 1496) make clear: *Students explore the effect of choices when framing an image, placement of elements in the image, and salience on composition of still and moving images in a range of types of texts*.

Students are expected not only to be able to discuss images and describe their effect, but also to create images and represent information using graphics and layout as makers of meaning.

The poetry texts published in *The School Magazine* are accompanied by illustrations of real significance. Many of these images not only illustrate the action, participants or setting of a particular poem; they also extend and enrich the atmosphere and impact of the written text and provide teachers with the opportunity to discuss vectors, salience, framing, angle and composition as required by syllabus content.

An example of this effect can be seen in the poem, *Song of a sock* illustrated by Vilma Cencic. The decision of the artist to represent the historical and personal context in which the poem was likely to have been read, in this case, by a soldier during the fighting of WWI, adds immeasurably to the poem's poignancy.

Practical applications

Each of the forty magazines that are published by *The School Magazine* every year is accompanied by a *Teaching Guide* which demonstrates how to use those texts in primary classrooms. The *Teaching Guides* explicate the language features of texts, including poetry, but do it in a meaningful context, and do it in a way that is innovative, pedagogically rigorous, and most importantly, fun!

Here are some additional ideas about making the most of the poetry in *The School Magazine* in a classroom setting.

Narrative persona

Sandra Bernhardt, editor and writer on language and poetics, has suggested in *Insight into poetry: persona* (*The School Magazine Teaching Guide, Orbit* and *Touchdown #2*, 2014) that *the persona of a poem is the voice of the poem; the person that readers can hear talking to*

them. It is helpful to differentiate between the narrative persona and the poet.

The term *persona* comes from Latin and Greek, Bernhardt explains, where it referred to the masks that actors wore in drama, the masks both hiding the actors from the audience and allowing actors to adopt multiple roles in a play. She continues:

> *In a similar way poets create personas behind which they hide and allow their personas to connect with readers directly. Sometimes the poet creates a persona simply to distance himself or herself from the subject of the poem, which might be too painful or intense to deal with personally. The classic example of this is TS Eliot's use of Prufrock as a persona in 'The love song of J Alfred Prufrock.' At other times, the persona is simply someone with a close connection to the setting of the poem, for example, the persona of Christopher Robin in collections of poetry such as* When We Were Very Young *and* Now We Are Six.
>
> (Bernhardt, p.14)

Contrasting the narrative persona in poetry is a particularly effective method of teaching students the differences between the author who wrote the piece, and the persona who appears to express it.

Consider the persona in the poem *Shell* by John Malone.

> *Listen to the sea, my grandad said*
> *as we stood on the soft white sand.*
> *And he clamped the shell to my ear*
> *like a mobile phone.*
>
> Shell by John Malone

The accompanying illustration by Australian artist Matt Ottley reinforces the illusion that this poem is written by a child. In fact, John Malone is a widely-published adult poet, who has created the persona of a child for his beautiful poem. The illustration has given the child persona an age and gender.

In contrast, John McCrae who wrote the moving lines quoted in *Orbit* #3, 2014, is said to have done so from the battlefields of Belgium where he served as surgeon to the First Brigade of the Canadian Field Artillery. McCrae wrote the poem a day after one of his closest friends was killed, like so many others, in fierce fighting between German and Canadian troops.

In McCrae's famous poem, the dead address the reader directly. They threaten that their rest depends on our resolve to finish their fight.

> *If ye break faith with us who die*
> *We shall not sleep …*
>
> *In Flanders' fields* by John McCrae

McCrae's poem gives voice to the dead of World War One, and through this persona, argues a political position that is all the more compelling given the active service its author saw, and his consequent death.

Personification

Poetry can also give life to non-human objects and creatures. Asking students to write from the perspective of an animal often provides a freedom from the intensity of discussing human behaviour and emotions. Students love to experiment. What tales might an emu tell through a ballad? What sort of elegy might a fruit bat write on the death of a friend on a powerlines? What metaphors might a bored dog, locked in a yard and only able to see the outside world underneath the gate, use?

Punctuation

In poetry, punctuation is fluid. Because of that, the decision by a poet to include punctuation is significant. The witty and clever poem *Six words* by Lloyd Schwartz, is an example of the dramatic differences in meaning to be derived from punctuation and its collaborator, blank space. Students can alter the punctuation and line arrangement of

poems to experience the creation of alternate meanings.

Conclusion

Poetry is being impacted by the opportunities for publishing on a digital platform as much as all traditional texts have been. But poetry remains in its importance and relevance for our students. Just as the study of English is both more sophisticated and more comprehensive than a focus on literary themes, so the internet has enabled poetry to flourish in new forms and places.

Sites such as the exciting Australian *Red Room Company*, The English site *The Poetry Archive*, and the wonderful *poets.com* (Academy of American Poets) are providing poetic gems for all readers to enjoy. The way the poems are curated is often thematic, which is invaluable when seeking a poem for a special occasion or purpose.

Poetry is language cut to its essence in order to provide a potent emotional and intellectual experience for a reader. Providing ways for students to analyse how and why poetry is capable of moving us, entertaining us, and taking us into the life and mind of another person is as vital as it ever was.

References and further reading

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2012, *Relationships between the strands*, accessed 20 March 2014.

Bernhardt, S.2014 'Insight into poetry: persona', *The School Magazine Teaching Guide, Orbit* and *Touchdown #2*, p.14.

Coleridge, S.T. 1827 'Table talk', *Gutenberg.org*, accessed 20 March 2014.

Malone, J. 2014, *Shell, Orbit* #3, 2014.

McCrae, J. 1915, 'In Flanders' fields' *Orbit* #3, 2014.

Schwartz, L. 1941 'Six words' *poets.org, accessed 21 March 2014.*

The School Magazine, 2014, *Teaching Guides*, accessed 20 March 2014.

Wild, R. 2009, *Where do I start? Stimulating ideas for literacy-rich primary classrooms*, Primary English Teaching Association, Sydney.

Share this

CBCA Children's Book Week 16 to 22 August 2014

Need some clever book week ideas for your library or classroom?

See the book week activities page on the CBCA website.
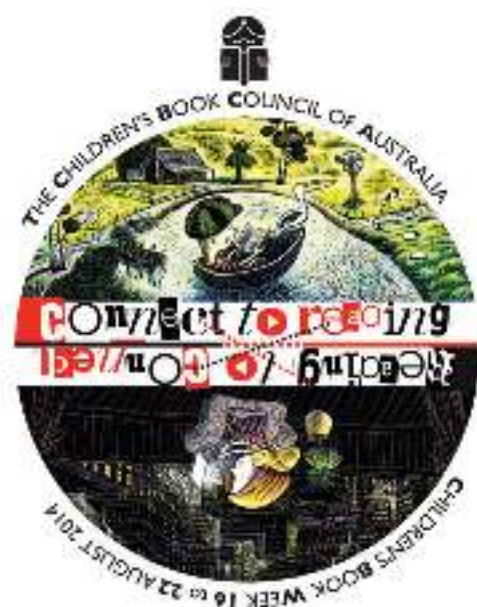
The NSW Writers' Centre Kids and YA Festival

Looking for something to inspire your creativity? The NSW Writers' Centre Kids and YA Festival showcases the work of some of our best-known authors, illustrators and publishers of stories for children and young adults. See the NSWWC website for details.

A taxonomy of school evolutionary changes

Using research from schools in the US, UK, NZ and Australia, Roger Broadie and Mal Lee have identified the key evolutionary stages that schools pass through on their way to digital normalisation. These stages have been mapped in detail in their recent publications *Taxonomy of school evolutionary stages* and *Evolution through the threads*. Both these documents are compelling reading for educators who are managing technological change in schools. The documents are available to download free from http://www.schoolevolutionarystages.net and http://www.broadieassociates.co.uk/.

Seeking learning and teaching inspiration? Follow NSW DEC Learning Systems on Twitter

Learning Systems provides high quality, responsive and flexible support to NSW public school teachers as they plan, manage and lead.

Image courtesy of Lee, M and Broadie, R (2014) *A taxonomy of school evolutionary changes*, Broulee Australia

resource reviews

Contents

supporting quality learning

Resource reviews are provided for teachers to support their teaching and learning programs.

The views expressed by reviewers are their own and should not be considered as an endorsement of the material by the NSW Department of Education and Communities (NSW DEC).

Reviews are sometimes accompanied by embedded video or multimedia content, book trailers, or links to other sources. Publication of such does not imply endorsement by the NSW Government, the Department or *Scan*. Since many of these videos are sourced from YouTube, teachers in NSW DEC schools should note that these resources are accessible only by staff.

Copyright for reviews is held by the NSW Department of Education and Communities. Permission for reproduction of reviews in part or full for any purpose must be sought in writing. For further information contact editor.scan@det.nsw.edu.au.

Resources are reviewed by teacher librarians, teachers and consultants across NSW. See Who reviews? for more information.

Access to reviews and resources

The searchable database of resource reviews includes those published in *Scan* and more!

Selected reviews for HSC syllabuses are also available on *NSW HSC online*.

Use *Scan* to select resources for learning, teaching and leisure. For example, use the barcodes of eresources to scan your selections into a SCIS order or go to the SCIS *Special order files* for the *Scan* Primary, Secondary and Professional website compilations. NSW DEC users can ensure ready access for teachers and students to the range of online resources through *Library*, in their portal.

Classification given in *Scan* for nonfiction material is the 14th Abridged Dewey, although when ordering SCIS cataloguing records, the 23rd may be specified.

KLA and USER LEVEL should only be used as a guide, as many resources transcend age and subject barriers.

USER LEVELS ARE GIVEN IN STAGES AS FOLLOWS:	
Early Stage 1	Preschool/kindergarten/ early childhood
Stage 1	Years 1–2
Stage 2	Years 3–4
Stage 3	Years 5–6
Stage 4	Years 7–8
Stage 5	Years 9–10
Stage 6	Years 11–12
Community	for community/parent/adult
Professional	for teachers

KEY LEARNING AREA (KLA) ABBREVIATIONS USED:	
CA	Creative Arts
English	English
HSIE	Human Society & Its Environment
Languages	Languages
Mathematics	Mathematics
PDHPE	Personal Development/Health/ Physical Education
Science	Science
SciTech	Science & Technology
TAS	Technology & Applied Studies
AND	
AC	Australian Curriculum
VET	Vocational Education & Training
CEC	Content Endorsed Course
COGs	Connected Outcomes Groups from the Planning and programming framework

Abstract – indicates a resource is described rather than evaluated

Australian Curriculum Springboard

How do people remember significant events of the past?

Significant events
Stage 2
Years 3 & 4

Film collection online: Anzac Day through time by *AustWarMemorial*

Outcomes:
A student:
- identifies celebrations and commemorations of significance in Australia and the world HT2-1
- applies skills of historical inquiry and communication HT2-5

NSW syllabus for the Australian curriculum History K–10 syllabus

A student:
- identifies and compares different kinds of texts when reading and viewing and shows an understanding of purpose, audience and subject matter EN2-8B

NSW syllabus for the Australian curriculum English K–10 syllabus

Content:
- days and weeks celebrated or commemorated in Australia (including Australia Day, ANZAC Day, Harmony Week, National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week, National Sorry Day) and the importance of symbols and emblems (ACHHK063)
- identify the effect on audiences of techniques, for example shot size, vertical camera angle and layout in picture books, advertisements and film segments (ACELA1483)
- explore the effect of choices when framing an image, placement of elements in the image, and salience on composition of still and moving images in a range of types of texts (ACELA1496)
- understand and apply knowledge of language forms and features

Advice, implementation support and resources for NSW DEC teachers at AC – NSW syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum (NSW DEC intranet)

Reviews:

Along the road to Gundagai
O'HAGAN, Jack & McLEAN, Andrew
Omnibus, SA, 2014
ISBN 9781862919792 [A821]

Illustrating the lyrics of the well-known 1922 song while providing a dual narrative that represents memories of World War I, this historical picture book has much to offer a study of Australian rural life during that period … Some images are disquieting but very pertinent for the History Stage 2 topic, *Community and remembrance*, and for analysing a visual text in *Reading and viewing 2*. Comprehensive teachers' notes are available. G. Braiding (*Scan 33.2*)

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 5
SCIS 1641839 $24.99

I was only nineteen
SCHUMANN, John & SMITH, Craig
Allen & Unwin, NSW, 2014
ISBN 9781743317235 [782.42162]

Illustrating Redgum's popular and moving 1980s song about the Vietnam War, this picture book visually interprets the lyrics. The reader is positioned with a young boy whose war veteran grandfather recounts his Vietnam experiences … As the emotive lyrics provide a perspective on the impact of war on Vietnam War veterans, the book could be used to spark discussions in the Stage 5 History topic, Australia in the Vietnam War era. Teachers notes are available. G. Braiding (*Scan 33.2*)

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 5
SCIS 1651260 $24.99

Teaching and learning opportunities:
- listen to the song, *I was only nineteen*, and read the lyrics before viewing the picture book. Discuss possible images that could illustrate the lyrics
- read the picture book and list the memories represented in the lyrics, in the illustrations of childhood and images of war
- identify the visual features of the illustrations (e.g. framing, composition, salience and use of colour) and discuss their effect
- discuss how the images complement the text and provide a dual narrative. View other picture books, e.g. *Rosie's walk*
- compare the illustrations of *Along the road to Gundagai* and *I was only nineteen*, focussing on the visual features and effects
- list and view examples of ways people remember significant events, e.g. medals, plaques, monuments, songs, photographs, portraits. Find and photograph examples at school
- use the *Paper camera* app to generate a sketch of a photo of a significant school event. Use *Sketch club* to colour it, selecting colours and effects to recreate the mood of the occasion
- read and display words of remembrance honouring war veterans, e.g. *The Ode* and ANZAC Cove inscriptions
- recall school ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day services, view images and videos of city and community services. List symbolic elements, e.g. rosemary, wreaths

Resources:
- *Day to remember: The story of ANZAC Day* by Jackie French & Mark Wilson (*Scan 32.1*)
- *I was only nineteen* by Redgum
- *Remembering World War One* by Mick Manning and Brita Granstrom (*Scan 33.1*)
- *Rosie's walk* by Pat Hutchins

Digitised collections:
- Australian War Memorial collection
- *World War I diaries - our stories, your stories*, State Library of NSW
- *Trove*
- *War and Australia*/, NSW State Records

Professional resources:
- *Along the road to Gundagai: Teachers' notes*, Scholastic
- *ANZAC Day*, Australian War Memorial
- *ANZAC voices*, Australian War Memorial
- Australian War Memorial
- *Composition* by Leah Crawford (Prezi)
- English sample unit: *Pictures tell the story!*
- *Memories and memorabilia: Recognising and preserving Australia's war heritage*, Department of Veterans' Affairs
- *Remembrance Day*, Australian War Memorial
- *We remember: Remembering Charlie Cooper*, Department of Veterans' Affairs
- *Words of remembrance*, ANZAC Day Commemoration Committee QLD

Composing:
- *Haiku deck*
- *Paper camera*
- *Sketch club*
- *Tayasui sketches*

Australian Curriculum Springboard

Peace studies: Hiroshima Day (4 August)

Kate Ter Haar: https://www.flickr.com/photos/katerha/5320906083/

Outcomes:

A student:
- uses knowledge of sentence structure, grammar, punctuation and vocabulary to respond to and compose clear and cohesive texts in different media and technologies EN3-6B, ACELT1615

- identifies and considers how different viewpoints of their world, including aspects of culture, are represented in texts EN3-8D, ACELT1608

NSW syllabus for the Australian curriculum English K–10 syllabus

Possible links to historical inquiry ACHHK115, ACHHS120 and HT3-5 NSW syllabus for the Australian curriculum History K–10

Advice, implementation support and resources for NSW DEC teachers at AC – NSW syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum (NSW DEC intranet)

Sadako Sasaki by Steve Simon

Review:

Kids peace station: Hiroshima

2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. This event is remembered on Hiroshima Day each year on 4 August. Kids peace station: Hiroshima provides opportunities for students to understand the actual event and the aftermath of the atomic bomb, while raising awareness about the importance of peace. Digital stories recreate the experiences of children during and after the bomb. Sadako story 21, in four cartoon animated chapters, is the story of Mai-chan, who is transported back in time after visiting Sadako Sasaki's statue at Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. Mai-chan relives Sadako's experiences and urges

Screenshot of Sadako story 21

students to spread the word about the importance of peace. Sadako and the atomic bombing is a timeline of Sadako's life, composed of sketches, photographs and narrative. Kid's peace plaza is a sharing space with letters and presentations from students. This resource, and links to special exhibits in the Virtual Museum on the parent site, will support students undertaking peace studies. C. Keane (Scan 33.2)

USER LEVEL: Stage 3

SCIS 1659356

Teaching and learning opportunities:
- view and discuss a range of texts on the bombing of Hiroshima
- discuss use of emotive language and impact of images
- describe the representation of people, places and events in film and the media
- locate Hiroshima on a map
- discuss and explore moral, ethical and social dilemmas encountered in texts
- create a grammatical word bank of words and phrases
- compose a persuasive text, facilitating equity and justice for others through personal choices and actions – poem, news report podcast, video, letter, blog post, poster
- investigate Britain's atomic bomb testing in Australia
- explore Bringing communities together

Resources:
- The day of the bomb by Karl Bruckner
- How to make a paper crane — origami by Rob's world
- Mieko and the fifth treasure by Eleanor Coerr
- Owl ninja by Sandy Fussell
- Peace-building guide
- President Truman press release August 6, 1945
- Sadako and the thousand paper cranes by Eleanor Coerr
- Sadako Sasaki by Steve Simon
- A sand storm delays Britain's third atomic bomb test in Australia's desert
- Soraya the storyteller by Roseanne Hawke

Professional resources:
- Centenary of the Commemoration of the First World War: Bringing communities together, 2014, A. Southwell (Scan 33.1)
- Cyberschoolbus: United Nations Global Teaching and Learning Project
- Resource reviews
- Scootle
- Student activity: Atomic bomb – Truman press release – August 6, 1945
- Suggested texts for the English K–10 syllabus
- TaLe

Songs:
- Imagine by John Lennon
- It's a wonderful world by Louis Armstrong
- Over the rainbow by Judy Garland
- War by Edwin Starr

Composing:
- Animoto
- Audacity
- blogED (NSW DEC intranet)
- Blogger
- GarageBand app
- Microsoft Photo Story
- Movie Maker

How to make a paper crane — origami by Rob's world

Australian Curriculum springboard

What happens next?

Outcomes:

A student:
- thinks imaginatively and creatively about familiar topics, ideas and texts when responding to and composing texts
  - EN1-10C
  - EN2-10C
  - ACELT1586
- responds to and composes a range of texts about familiar aspects of the world and their own experiences
  - EN-11D
  - EN2-11D
  - ACELY1660

NSW syllabus for the Australian curriculum English K–10 syllabus

Advice, implementation support and resources for NSW DEC teachers at AC – NSW syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum (NSW DEC intranet)

Teaching and learning opportunities:

- brainstorm scenarios
- identify clues in a text
- model comprehension strategies
- create a grammatical wordbank of words and phrases
- model writing strategies
- think, pair, share conflict and resolution
- use props for impromptu drama
- play predicting games, e.g. Knock, knock
- provide storyboard examples and scaffolds
- compose and present digital narratives
- create a podcast to share
- innovate on familiar stories

Review:

Imagine what happens next…

BUCHNER, Aaron & SCAHILL, Sophie.
Front Foot Marketing, NSW, 2013

ISBN 9780992324407 [808.5]

Containing eight story starters with different themes, key words and colourful illustrations, this resource could stimulate class discussions, composing and dramatic responses. Themes include adventure, space, fantasy and mystery and the suggested key words can be expanded in a brainstorming activity to create a grammatically organised wordbank (*Exploring composing K–6*, p.18), for think, pair, share activities. *The super sentence* section of the *Primary English writing activities video* models writing activities to enhance students' responses to this resource, while Scahill's detailed illustrations could stimulate storyboard creation for digital narratives. Providing opportunities to develop imagination and predicting skills, this resource could support the achievement of *NSW English K–10 syllabus* outcomes EN1-10C, EN2-10C, EN1-11D and EN2-11D. C. Keane (*Scan 33.2*)

USER LEVEL: Stage 1 Stage 2 Community

SCIS 1641421 Paper $19.95

KS2 English – great lesson ideas – writing activities
by TES connect

Resources:

- *Bear & Chook by the sea* by Lisa Shanahan & Emma Quay (reviewed *Scan* 29.3)
- *Cat* by Mike Dumbleton & Craig Smith (reviewed *Scan* 27.1)
- *Cat* by Mike Dumbleton & Craig Smith [ebook]
- *The fantastic flying books of Mr. Morris Lessmore* by William Joyce & Joe Bluhm (reviewed *Scan 32.1*)
- *The fantastic flying books of Mr. Morris Lessmore* app (reviewed *Scan 31.3*)
- *Fearless* by Colin Thompson & Sarah Davis (reviewed *Scan* 29.3)
- *Fearless* trailer by Sarah Davis
- *Harry the dirty dog* read by Betty White
- *I need my monster* read by Rita Moreno
- *Lisa & Emma read Bear & Chook by the sea*
- *Looking for crabs* by Bruce Whatley
- *The magnificent tree* by Nick Bland & Stephen Michael King (reviewed *Scan 32.1*)
- *The night I followed the dog* read by Amanda Bynes
- *A particular cow* by Mem Fox & Terry Denton (reviewed *Scan* 25.4)
- *Rosie's walk* by Pat Hutchins
- *The terrible plop* by Ursula Dubosarsky & Andrew Joyner (reviewed *Scan* 28.2)
- *The terrible plop* (book reading by Ursula Dubosarsky), National Library of Australia
- *Waiting for Mummy* by Tae Jun Lee & Dong-sung Kim (reviewed *Scan* 25.4)
- *Watch out! Big bro's coming!* by Jez Alborough
- *We're going on a picnic* by Pat Hutchins (reviewed *Scan* 22.1)
- *The wrong book* by Nick Bland (reviewed *Scan* 28.3)

Professional resources:

- *Bear and Chook books rap*
- *Book Week 2010: across the story bridge with Fearless rap*
- *Designing learning for diverse classrooms* by Paul Dufficy, PETA, 2005
- *Program builder*
- *Raps and book raps*
- *Resource reviews*
- *Scootle* (NSW DEC teacher access is through *My websites* in the Staff portal)
- *Storyline online*
- *Suggested texts for the English K–10 syllabus*
- *TaLe*
- *TES: Teaching resources* register for free

Composing:

- *Movie Maker*
- *My StoryMaker*
- *SmartDraw*
- *Story builder SMART Notebook*
- *Storybird*
- *Visuwords: online graphical dictionary*

NEALS

Australian Curriculum Springboard

What is the nature of conflict and how is it presented in a range of texts?

Swords Image 1633 by Rama

Outcomes:

A student:
- thinks imaginatively, creatively, interpretively and critically about information and increasingly complex ideas and arguments to respond to and compose texts in a range of contexts
  EN5-5C
- investigates the relationships between and among texts
  EN5-6C

NSW syllabus for the Australian curriculum English K–10 syllabus

Advice, implementation support and resources for NSW DEC teachers at AC – NSW syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum (NSW DEC intranet)

Teaching and learning opportunities:

- brainstorm understanding of the term *conflict* – create a mindmap
- create a graphic poster of different examples of conflict
- discuss external and internal conflict and scenarios
- in pairs, select one example of conflict and improvise an enactment
- rewrite the prologue using contemporary language
- identify the external and internal conflict presented in Act 3, Scene I
- identify quotes which exemplify the aggression between characters. e.g. Tybalt and Mercutio
- create a visual presentation of the events in this scene
- write a diary entry for Juliet, describing her internal conflict about Romeo
- create a news report about Tybalt's death or the deaths of Romeo and Juliet

Review:

The most excellent and lamentable tragedy of Romeo & Juliet: a play

SHAKESPEARE, William
Adapted and illustrated by Gareth Hinds.
Candlewick Press, USA, 2013

ISBN 9780763668075   [822.3]

Lush green lawns and shrubbery house several tombstones, divided by a stone wall. The hill top location offers an idyllic view of 16th century Verona, created in digitally enhanced watercolour, and provides the backdrop for Shakespeare's prologue, acknowledging the Bard's use of iambic pentameter in blocked sections of verse. The cemetery's stone wall is a visual prop to support the idea of unsubstantiated hatred and the prevalence of violence, *from ancient grudge break to a new mutiny*. Manga style drawings capture this violence, with sharp angled frames detailing the action to entice reader participation. In contrast to his faithful, albeit abridged, rendition of Shakespeare's text, Hinds adds a racial element to emphasise the antagonism between the feuding families: Juliet and the Capulets are Indians and are dressed in red; Romeo and the Montagues are dark skinned Africans, dressed in blue. This graphic novel offers an accessible introduction to Romeo and Juliet and its sumptuous illustrations could provide the stimulus for dramatic productions. C. Keane (*Scan 33.2*)

Romeo and Juliet trailer 2013 movie (directed by Carlo Carlei) by Streaming Trailer

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5
SCIS 1628732   Paper $22.95

Resources:

- *But I was born here, Miss* by Anonymous
- *Gareth Hinds'* website
- *The Graphic Shakespeare series*, Evans Publishing Group
- *The island* by Armin Greder
- *Looking for Alibrandi* by Melina Marchetta
- *The man he killed* by Thomas Hardy
- *Other brother* by Simon French
- *Only ten* by Allan Baillie
- *On the sidewalk bleeding* by Evan Hunter
- *Private Peaceful* by Michael Morpurgo
- *The Rabbits* by John Marsden & Shaun Tan
- *Romeo and Juliet*, MangaShakespeare
- *Romeo and Juliet: the graphical novel*, Classical Comics
- *Romeo et Juliette* by Marc Chagall (lithograph, 1964)
- *Will* by Maria Boyd
- *Window* by Jeannie Baker

Film/video:

- *The castle* directed by Rob Sitch, 1997
- *Looking for Alibrandi* directed by Kate Woods, 2000
- *Romeo + Juliet* directed by Baz Luhrmann, 1996
- *Romeo & Juliet* directed by Carlo Carlei, 2013
- *Romeo and Juliet* directed by George Cukor, 1936
- *Romeo and Juliet* directed by Franco Zeffirelli, 1968
- *Sarajevo Romeo and Juliet*, PBS, 1994
- *To kill a mockingbird* directed by Robert Mulligan, 1962

Songs:

- *Romeo and Juliet* by Dire Straits
- *Love story* by Taylor Swift

Professional resources:

- *Analysis of setting in the opening scenes of Baz Luhrmann's Romeo + Juliet*, Cliff's notes
- English sample unit: *Conflict: Stage 5*
- *Grade 9 literacy in English language arts: Who is to blame for Romeo and Juliet's death?*
- *How important is the theme of conflict in Romeo and Juliet?*, eNotes
- *Program builder*, Board of Studies NSW
- *Raps and book raps*
- *Resource reviews*
- *Romeo and Juliet. Education pack*, Royal Shakespeare Company
- *Scootle* (NSW DEC teacher access is through *My websites* in the Staff portal)
- Sly, C 2011, *Beyond the review: HSC resource package with a focus on* Hamlet by Nicki Greenberg, *Scan 30.4*
- Sly, C 2010, *Going graphic: reading in the gutters*, *Scan 29.4*
- *Suggested texts for the English K–10 syllabus*
- *TaLe*

Composing:

- *Cinemek storyboard composer*
- *Glogster EDU*
- *Microsoft Photo Story*
- *Movie Maker*
- *SmartDraw*
- *Visuwords: online graphical dictionary*

Australian Curriculum Springboard

Who else plays Ender's game?

ENDER'S GAME
ORSON SCOTT CARD · CHRIS YOST · PASQUAL FERRY
THE GRAPHIC NOVEL ADAPTATION OF SCI-FI LEGEND ORSON SCOTT CARD'S HUGO AND NEBULA AWARD-WINNING CLASSIC!

Outcome:

A student identifies and explains connections between and among texts.
EN4-6C
NSW syllabus for the Australian curriculum English K–10 syllabus

Content:

Students:
- recognise, explain and analyse the ways literary texts draw on readers' knowledge of other texts and enable new understanding and appreciation of aesthetic qualities (ACELT 1629)
- investigate how visual and multimodal texts allude to or draw on other texts or images to enhance and layer meaning (ACELA1548)

Advice, implementation support and resources for NSW DEC teachers at AC – NSW syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum (NSW DEC intranet)

Review extracts:

Ender's game graphic novel

YOST, Christopher
Marvel, USA, 2013
ISBN 9780785185338

... This text also provides the reader with an opportunity to watch a character develop and to ponder the same issues which are central to his life and possibly their own. This is a wonderful example of what the graphic novel does best, a feast of images that will fire the imagination of the most reticent reader. K. Rushton (*Scan 33.2*)

USER LEVEL: Stage 4
SCIS 1637586 Paper $24.99

Astro Boy, the movie: the novel

WEST, Tracey
Price Stern Sloan Vic, 2009
ISBN 9780843189346

Astro Boy is a robot, made by brilliant scientist, Dr. Tenma, to replace his deceased son. It is only after defeating a major threat to Metro City that Astro Boy understands his destiny is really to be a hero. This text is based on the original manga by Osamu Tezuka and the 2009 animated film. K. Rushton

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4
SCIS 1427151 Paper $12.95

The invaders

FLANAGAN, John
Random House Australia, 2002 (Brotherband)
ISBN 9781741664508

The sequel in this fantasy series carries the outcasts onward in their quest to redeem themselves and retrieve the Andomal from the evil pirate, Zavac. The combination of humour, a hint of romance and a dash of violence provides just the right ingredients for readers to engage with this second book in the trilogy. S. Rasaiah (*Scan 31.4*)

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5
SCIS 1553972 Paper $17.95

Teaching and learning opportunities:

- Adapt a text and represent a scene in the form of a graphic novel
- Review a book and film, comparing the strategies used in the two media to develop their characters. Alternatively, present your comparison using *Glogster EDU*
- Choose a stage of the narrative and compare a graphic novel and a novel. Compare the uses of verbal and visual text in showing the main character's motivation and action. What role do verbal and visual text play in characterisation?
- Choose a scene from a graphic novel and describe the setting

Resources:

- *The book thief* by Markus Zusak
- *Coraline* (graphic novel), based on the novel by Neil Gaiman, adapted and illustrated by P. Craig Russell
- *The hunters* by John Flanagan
- *Little brother* by Allan Baillie
- *The outcasts* by John Flanagan
- *Rangers apprentice* series by John Flanagan

Neil Gaiman's Coraline
read by Neil Gaiman

Professional resources:

- *Band of heroes fantasy fiction* blog and quest
- Raps and book raps
- Resource reviews
- Scootle
- *Suggested texts for the English K–10 syllabus*
- TaLe
- *A theory of adaptation* (2nd edition, 2012) by Linda Hutcheon

Composing:

- blogEd (NSW DEC intranet)
- *Book creator*
- *Comics creator* $2.49
- *Comic maker* free
- *Comic life* $6.49
- *Glogster EDU*
- *Strip designer* $3.79

Australian Curriculum Springboard

World War I through different eyes – on and off the battlefield

Michael Morpurgo's tour of War horse by Touch Press

Outcomes:

A student:
- identifies celebrations and commemorations of significance in Australia and the world
  HT2-1
- applies skills of historical inquiry and communication
  HT2-5
  NSW syllabus for the Australian curriculum History K–10 syllabus

A student:
- thinks imaginatively, creatively and interpretively about information, ideas and texts when responding to and composing texts
  EN2-10C
  NSW syllabus for the Australian curriculum English K–10 syllabus

Advice, implementation support and resources for NSW DEC teachers at AC – NSW syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum (NSW DEC intranet)

Teaching and learning opportunities:

- select four items to make a memorial box for an ANZAC soldier, an enemy soldier or a warhorse/donkey. Explain your choices
- make a book trailer for one of the reviewed or suggested books
- research what other animals have taken part in war
- design a medal for one of the animals involved in the war
- discuss how Ataturk's tribute is reflected in some of these books
- why do you think the authors have made an animal a main character?
- families at home had a different sort of suffering. Write a diary entry describing a day where the war impacted family life in some way

Reviews:

War horse

A multifaceted app, War horse includes the original novel's full text by Michael Morpurgo, accompanied by a full audio reading and illustrations. An interactive timeline with narrated quotes, war photos and videos provides historical background and is searchable by year or themes, such as *Theatres of war*, *Participants* and *Major battles*... Although not directly relating to Australian servicemen, this engaging multimedia resource still provides insight for the History Stage 2 topic, Community and remembrance, and Stage 5 Depth study 3: Australians at War: World Wars I and II (1914–1918, 1939–1945). S. Morton (*Scan* 33.2)

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5.
PUBLISHER: Egmont UK Ltd, UK
SCIS 1659360 $6.99

The red poppy

HILL, David & COLSTON, Fifi
Scholastic New Zealand, NZ, 2012
ISBN 9781775430704
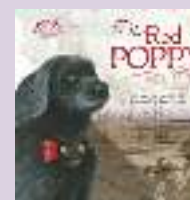
... Jim, a young Aussie soldier, is injured and takes cover in a shell hole, with a German soldier. Here he discovers the enemy is not *Fritz*, but has a name, Karl, a family and a dog... B. Hull (*Scan* 32.4)

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5
SCIS 1595698 Paper $21.00

Our enemy, my friend: the diary of Emma Shelldrake, the Adelaide Hills, 1915

(Republished 2012 as *My friend, the enemy*.)
BLACKMAN, Jenny
Scholastic Australia, NSW, 2005
ISBN 9781865045269

Emma is 12 and trying to make sense of what is going on in her life as she records her daily thoughts in the troubled year of 1915, as WWI is played out a world away. Readers can picture unfolding events in this easy to read story, which ably describes life in Australia during this time. K. McCulloch (*Scan* 24.3)

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5
SCIS 1204571 Paper $16.95

Resources:

- *Archie's War* by Marcia Williams
- *The best Christmas present in the world* by Michael Morpurgo
- *The donkey who carried the wounded* by Jackie French
- *In Flanders fields* by Norman Jorgensen & Brian Harrison-Lever
- *My father's war* by Sophie Masson
- *Only a donkey* by Patricia Mullins & Celeste Walters
- *Our Australian girl: Alice* series by Lucia Masciullo & Davina Bell
- *Simpson and his donkey* by Mark Greenwood & Frane Lessac
- *Simpson's donkey: a wartime journey to Gallipoli and beyond* by Peter Stanley
- *War horse* by Michael Morpurgo

Websites and apps

- Animals that have helped Australians at war, ABC
- ANZAC battlefields of World War One
- Australians at war
- The best Christmas present in the world by Michael Morpurgo (audio stream)
- Compass - embracing the enemy, Australian Screen
- M is for mates: animals in wartime from Ajax to Zep
- Memorial Box 01 - Australia in the First World War, Australian War Memorial
- Michael Morpurgo month: War (Michael Morpurgo talks about the theme of war in his books)
- War horse app trailer
- World War One, BBC

Professional resources:

- Australian War Memorial
- How to make book trailers, State Library of Victoria
- Gallipoli - baptism of fire laptop wrap
- Resource reviews
- Scootle
- TaLe

Composing:

- Animoto
- Photopeach

eresources

Resources are listed in Dewey order

Changes happen daily on the internet. Sites may not be permanent or structured as they were when reviewed. Reviews indicate fees, registration or devices as needed.

Icons used:

 app for iPad/iPhone/iPod touch; app for Android

 digital authoring tool; learning platform software

 ebook; ejournal; online database

 interactive; e.g. game; learning object

 media presentation; e.g. podcast; slide show; digital story; video; audio

 website

 must be purchased

 scan selected eresources into SCIS *Create orders* or check SCIS *Special order files*

Icons for eresources are from *Office clip art and media* and *Open Clip Art Library*.

War horse

A multifaceted app, *War horse* includes the original novel's full text by Michael Morpurgo, accompanied by a full audio reading and illustrations. An interactive timeline with narrated quotes, war photos and videos provides historical background and is searchable by year or themes, such as *Theatres of war, Participants* and *Major battles*. Bought to become a workhorse, Joey is transformed from a frightened young foal into a powerful and confident horse through the love of Albert, the owner's son, and Zoey, the ageing farm horse. As war erupts, Joey is sold to become a warhorse and although Albert soon enlists, vowing to find Joey on the battlefields, it is mainly through Joey that we discover all that war encompasses. His war journey mirrors those of the soldiers – fear, friendships, exhaustion, hunger and loss. Confronting incidents, indicative of the realities of war, are sensitively told. Although not directly relating to Australian servicemen, this engaging multimedia resource still provides insight for the History Stage 2 topic, *Community and remembrance*, and Stage 5 *Depth study 3: Australians at War: World Wars I and II (1914–1918, 1939–1945)*. S. Morton

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5

KLA: AC; English; History

SYLLABUS: English K–10; History K–10

PUBLISHER: Egmont UK Ltd, UK

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [F]

SCIS 1659360 $6.99

Michael Morpurgo's tour of War horse by Touch Press

Sketch club

Featuring an intuitive interface, this simple app can produce highly sophisticated artworks and was used by illustrator Andrew McLean to create the picture book, *Along the Road to Gundagai*. Artwork examples in the app, on the *Sketch club website* and on the *Sketch club YouTube channel* provide an inspirational gallery for viewing, appreciation and analysis. Incorporating a comprehensive set of brushes, colour and layer options, the app enables extensive customisation, creativity and complexity. A unique feature is the ability to record the creation of an artwork and examples of these videos can be viewed on the *Sketch club YouTube channel*. Photos taken through an app such as *Paper camera* can be loaded for colouring, enabling less competent artists to create satisfying results. The app does not require in-app purchases and is supported by an active online community, video classes and tutorials. It supports learning in Visual Arts for Stage 2 and 3 students *making and appreciating artworks*, and in English for learners *responding to and composing texts* using digital technologies. G. Braiding

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6

KLA: AC; CA; English

SYLLABUS: CAPA K–6; English K–10; Visual Arts 7–10; Visual Arts Stage 6

PUBLISHER: Blackpawn, USA

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [006.6]

SCIS 1659241 $2.99
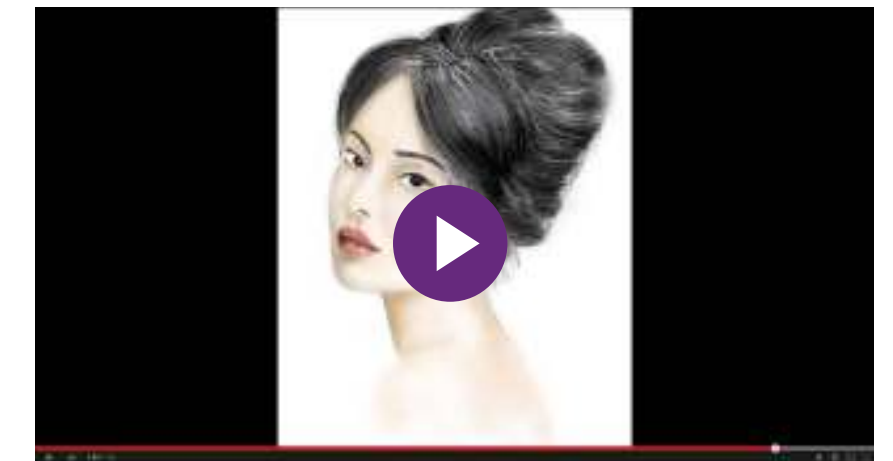
*Drawing & painting on iPad *Sketch club app* speedsketch* by MIRVIPanimation

BiblioNasium: where kids flex their reading muscles

Designed to encourage reading at home and in the classroom through a protected social network for children aged 6–13, *BiblioNasium* enables young readers to create reading logs and review and recommend books. Teachers manage their class as a group, uploading existing usernames and passwords if desired and identifying reading levels (lexile, Reading Recovery, guided reading) if wanted. Teachers can set up recommended and required book lists for each group, and can assess students' reading activity over time. Book reviews can be shared within the selected group, with the teacher able to approve before publication. Being an American initiative, titles are sourced from Amazon's book lists, though there is also a facility to add additional titles, including cover images and synopses, thereby modelling what is expected from students. Unfortunately, currently book reviews cannot be created or shared for manually added titles, which may limit useful application in the Australian context, though this feature is seemingly under development. The site may support learning in *ENe–10C*, *EN1–10C*, *EN2–10C* and *EN3–7C* when responding to texts. S. Morton

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3 Community Professional
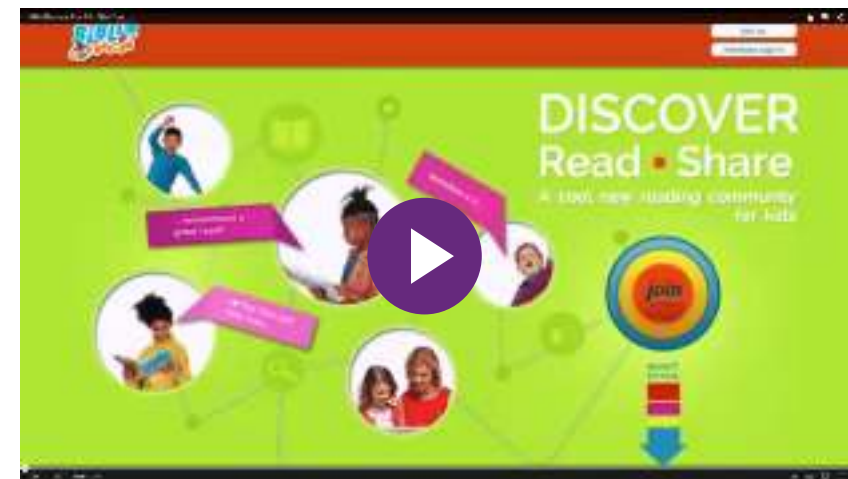
KLA: AC; English

SYLLABUS: English K–10

PUBLISHER: BiblioNasium, USA

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [028.5]

SCIS 1659136

BiblioNasium: for all – site tour by BiblioNasium

The oopsatoreum

Fusing fact with fiction, *The oopsatoreum* is an intriguing exhibition which showcases idiosyncratic inventions from the Powerhouse Museum's collection within a narrative about Shaun Tan's fictional inventor, Henry Mintox. The exhibition seeks to inspire creative thinking and curiosity; to demonstrate the significance of planning, testing, reflecting and revising in the creative process; and to help Stage 3 and Stage 4 learners investigate the Museum's collection while supporting learning within the English, Science and Technology syllabuses. This simple website provides an overview of the exhibition, including information *About Henry Mintox* and an illustrated *Timeline* of his fabulously creative but comically ineffective inventions. There is also information *For teachers*, including *Teachers' exhibition notes* and an *Interview with Shaun Tan* which discusses his book, *The Oopsatoreum: inventions of Henry A Mintox*. The exhibition runs from 7 December 2013 to 6 October 2014 and is free with museum entry. School groups can book an additional workshop ($10 per student), led by a Powerhouse Museum educator, in which Stage 3 students are challenged to design and launch their own rocket. T. Kenny

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4 Community

KLA: AC; English; SciTech; TAS

SYLLABUS: English K–10; Science K–10; Science & Technology K–6; Technology (Mandatory) 7–8

PUBLISHER: Powerhouse Museum, NSW

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [069]

SCIS 1647269
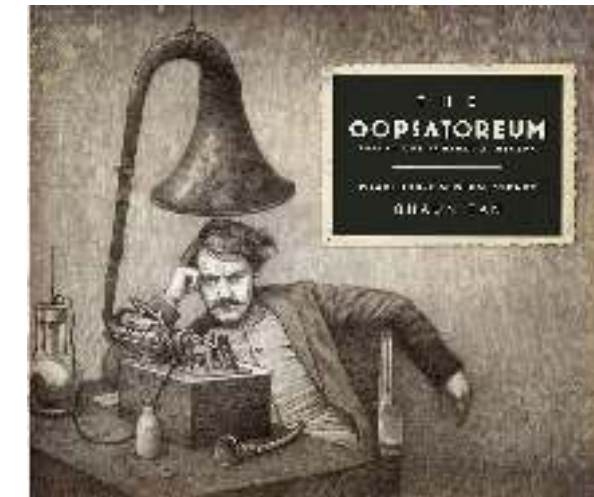
New Internationalist magazine guide

An index to key themes and countries explored in *New Internationalist* magazine since 1984, this page guides users to over 13 000 online articles relating to topics such as climate change, world poverty, human rights, Aborigines, gender, globalisation and corporate social responsibility. A selection of content is freely available online, with personal or institutional subscriptions facilitating greater access. Back issues can also be previewed individually via the magazine archive. Extensive and up-to-date, this site is easily navigated and has relevance for secondary students exploring issues relating to social justice, the environment, society and culture, and global issues. It is a worthwhile companion to the magazine's printed version, allowing searching across the sizeable database of online material. B. Kervin

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional

KLA: AC; HSIE; Science

SYLLABUS: Aboriginal Studies Stage 6; History K–10; Science K–10; Society & Culture Stage 6

PUBLISHER: New Internationalist Publications, SA

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [300.5]

SCIS 1590725 $POA

New Internationalist, est. 1973 by New Internationalist

Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House

Offering a comprehensive overview of aspects of Australian democracy and introducing the Museum's physical facilities, services and staff, this sometimes sprawling site would be best utilised with teacher orientation and guidance for students. Clear navigation directions would make this is a viable resource for students studying the Stage 5 Depth study, *Australia and Asia – making a nation*. Stage 3 students exploring state and federal governments within the HSIE Strand, *Social systems and structures*, could also use this in their classrooms. Permanent and temporary exhibitions can be previewed, including *Art is a weapon* and *Living democracy: the power of the people*. There are also School resources available to complement a school visit or for use in the classroom. The fact sheets, particularly those on the prime ministers, offer easily readable summaries, as well as further texts for research. The learning resource, *Marnti Warajanga – a walk together*, could be used by Stage 5 History students completing the Core Depth Study, *Rights and Freedoms (1945–Present)*. From practical classroom teaching resources to organising a visit, this website could be a valuable resource for both teachers and students. B. Hull

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 5 Professional

KLA: AC; HSIE

SYLLABUS: History 7–10; HSIE K–6

PUBLISHER: Museum of Australian Democracy, ACT

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [320.994]

SCIS 1469960

See Old Parliament House in a whole new light
by Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House

Bamboo paper

An intuitive digital notebook app for Apple and Android devices, *Bamboo paper* has broad potential for note taking, journaling, sketching, annotating, drawing and visual thinking across the KLAs. The app includes a selection of paper designs (including lines, grids and musical staff paper), 36 colours, an eraser, two basic pen styles, and three different pen thickness options. Photos and other images can also be inserted and annotated. Individual pages within a notebook can easily be rearranged, deleted, printed, saved as images (PNG format) or shared via email, Dropbox, Evernote or social media. Drawings are created using finger pressure, though serious users may wish to purchase a stylus for improved results. The app contains some discrete advertising, including options to purchase additional tools and features, and links to buy the pressure-sensitive Intuos creative stylus, produced by the app's creator, Wacom. Teachers using this resource in the classroom may therefore wish to ensure that in-app purchases are disabled. A gallery of artworks created using the app is available on the *Bamboo paper website* and may offer some additional inspiration. T. Kenny
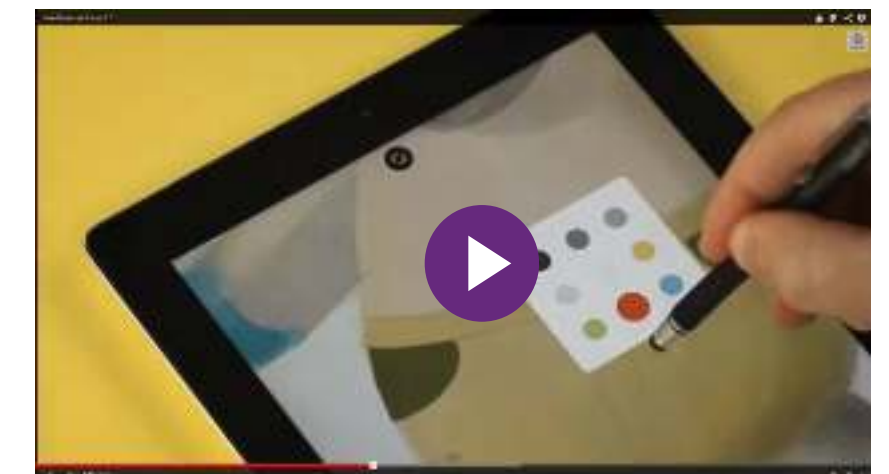
USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional

KLA: AC; CA; English; HSIE; Languages; Mathematics; PDHPE; Science; SciTech; TAS

PUBLISHER: Wacom Company, Germany

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [371.3028]

SCIS 1647392

New Bamboo paper 2.2 by wacomasia

ABC Splash

A collection of over 1000 videos and games for both primary and secondary students, this engaging website is rich with content gathered from a multitude of Australian and international sources for all KLAs. The site includes excerpts from news and current affairs programs, past episodes of *For the juniors* and *The making of modern Australia*, and hundreds of stand-alone items searchable by school level and syllabus area or topic. There are 21 *Collections* (themes), 12 *Teaching resources* (units of work) and 193 *Games*, including *ConCensus*, which allows students to create their own census. All resources have relevance to the syllabuses, though some do not have the actual outcome identified. Also included are links to articles and podcasts for teachers and parents on *classroom practice, education trends, reviews, student engagement* and more. Users may create a free account to add items as favourites, reducing search times. S. Morton

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5 Community Professional

KLA: AC; English; HSIE; Languages; Mathematics; PDHPE; Science, SciTech; TAS

PUBLISHER: Education Services Australia, Vic

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [371.33]

SCIS 1586147

What is ABC Splash? by ABC

Padlet

Formerly called Wallwisher, *Padlet's* website and Chrome app enable users to create online walls which can be used to display or collect information for any topic. Registration is free and building a new wall is surprisingly quick and straightforward. Users can drag and drop documents, images, and PDFs from their desktop to their wall. They can add text, copy and paste links to videos or websites, and use their webcam to take and insert photos. The granulated privacy settings enable teachers and students to make walls private, password protected, hidden, or open for public contributions. Collaborators can also be assigned specific permissions, such as

view, write, moderate and administer, making the site well suited for use with students. For serious users, a paid, professional version is also available, targeted at schools and businesses seeking a separate, fully hosted solution, though the free version will satisfy most schools' needs. This flexible tool has numerous cross curricular applications, including collaborative brainstorming, note taking, gathering feedback, collating research on a topic, gauging students' prior knowledge, and curating resources such as website links for students or staff. M. Sutera

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional

KLA: AC; CA; English; HSIE; Mathematics; PDHPE; Science; TAS

PUBLISHER: Padlet,USA

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [371.33]

SCIS 1659148

How to create a padlet wall by C21 Institute

SentencePlay.co.uk: games for teaching sentence structure in primary schools

Devoted to games for teaching sentence structure in primary schools, this website's minimalist home page opens with links to *Teaching tips, Games* and *Printables*. Make teaching sentences fun, brush up on your own English grammar knowledge at the linked *BBC skillswise* site, check out suggested teaching resources, and follow a few simple strategies are key messages in *Teaching tips*. Five interactive games – *Sentence laboratory, Sentence doctor, Dropping in, Definitions* and *Sentence magic* – are featured in the *Games* section. Comprising write and check with a partner, spot mistakes, embed clauses, animated definitions and magical techniques to improve sentences, each game has modelled examples, clear instructions and navigation, and is accompanied by suggested strategies and teaching instructions. *Printables* has a variety of posters to reinforce understandings developed in the games, as well as an interesting self-assessment activity for students. With interactive games suitable for class, small group or partner participation, this resource is definitely worth exploring. C. Keane

USER LEVEL: Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3

KLA: AC; English

SYLLABUS: English K–10

PUBLISHER: PhonicsPlay Ltd, UK

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [428.2076]

SCIS 1659151

National Geographic young explorer! More issues

Covering a range of natural and living world topics such as invertebrates, living and non-living things, shelters, and camouflage, these free issues of the online magazine, *Young explorer*, are well suited to both leisure reading and literacy groups. Compatible with iPads and computers, and loaded with exquisite photographs providing an up close view, each issue provides a book-like experience with turning pages. The simple text is ideal for young readers

and a read aloud option is offered. Back issues from October 2007 are available, and teachers' background notes and activity suggestions accompany each issue. The magazines and resources strongly support both the Science Early Stage 1 strand, *Natural environment,* and the Stage 1 strand, *Living world,* and provide an excellent introduction to nature magazines. G. Braiding

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1

KLA: AC; English; Science

SYLLABUS: English K–10; Science K–10

PUBLISHER: National Geographic Learning, USA

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [505]

SCIS 1659208

Food webs

Set in Western Australia's Kimberley region and Perth's Herdsman Lake, this free, interactive food web app is easy to use, clearly demonstrates complex relationships between plants and animals, and enables students to construct and interpret food webs. Users draw arrows to connect species, indicating the direction of the interaction. Answers can be checked and instructions are provided. Each animal's diet is also listed, enabling students to understand the role of living things in a habitat and to make informed decisions within the activity. The option of adding a cane toad demonstrates the effect of an introduced species on food web interactions. The advantage of this app over other interactive food webs is that it requires the user to analyse how organisms are connected. The *Easy* level supports the Science Stage 2 strand, *Living world,* and the *Hard* level strongly supports the same strand for Stage 4 learners, particularly *LW5*. G. Braiding

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 4

KLA: AC; Science

SYLLABUS: Science K–10

PUBLISHER: University of Western Australia, WA

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [577]

SCIS 1659351

I have fun with faces

ABSTRACT

Available for iOS and Android devices, this free app engages young students in learning about the face. Students learn to interpret expressions, which helps them understand the world socially and emotionally. Opportunities are presented to: sing along to a well-known song about the face; find, label and create the parts of the face; listen to and read stories about the face; and complete increasingly difficult jigsaws of various face types. The four activities, supported by audio which guides the user, help to develop early literacy and ICT skills for students in the year prior to school and in Early Stage 1. The app has been adapted from a resource suitable for personal computers, which could be used in conjunction with the app.

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Community

KLA: AC; English; PDHPE

SYLLABUS: English K–10; PDHPE K–6

PUBLISHER: NSW Department of Education & Communities, NSW

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [611]

SCIS 1647218

Club Kidpreneur

A not-for-profit initiative encouraging entrepreneurial thinking and financial literacy skills, this program helps primary students start their own micro-enterprise. The eight week *Ready-set-go* program is the curriculum strand of the program and is directly tailored to the Australian Curriculum general capabilities: *Literacy, Numeracy, ICT capability, Critical and creative thinking, Personal and social capability*, and *Ethical understanding*. Students work through a series of online modules, supported by introductory videos, as they learn to develop a business plan, create marketing material and interact confidently with customers. *A $50 challenge*, in conjunction with *Business in a backpack*, forms the basis of the enterprise project. The backpack provides students with the raw materials to make one of five products to launch their enterprise and all profits are donated to a charity or school P&C association. The program is supported by detailed teaching notes. It also includes a literature pack to support learning using the novel, *Curtis the Kidpreneur: codename Hawaii*, with activities aligned to the *National consumer and financial literacy framework*, including vocabulary lists, comprehension questions and a variety of activities for completion by individuals or groups. C. Blancato

USER LEVEL: Stage 3

KLA: AC; English, Mathematics

SYLLABUS: English K–10; Mathematics K–10

PUBLISHER: Club Kidpreneur Foundation, NSW

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [658.0207]

SCIS 1661009

Club Kidpreneur $50 challenge 2014 registrations now open by Club Kidpreneur Foundation

PixnTell

Creating simple, narrated photo slideshows is as easy as selecting images, placing them in order and then talking about each picture. The user controls the timing of the narration and each slide can have a different length. Classroom applications for this app are unlimited. Book trailers, information reports, picture book creation, explanations and speeches can all be facilitated using this product. Under the conditions of the free app, output videos display a watermark and users are regularly presented with messages encouraging them to upgrade via an in-app purchase. Upgrading removes these limitations, or teachers may prefer to purchase the schools' version, *PixnTell EDU*. Sharing videos is possible via social media or email. Integrating ICT capability is mandated in the NSW syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum and including digital stories across the KLAs provides meaningful and stimulating opportunities for students to demonstrate learning and deep understanding. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5 Community Professional

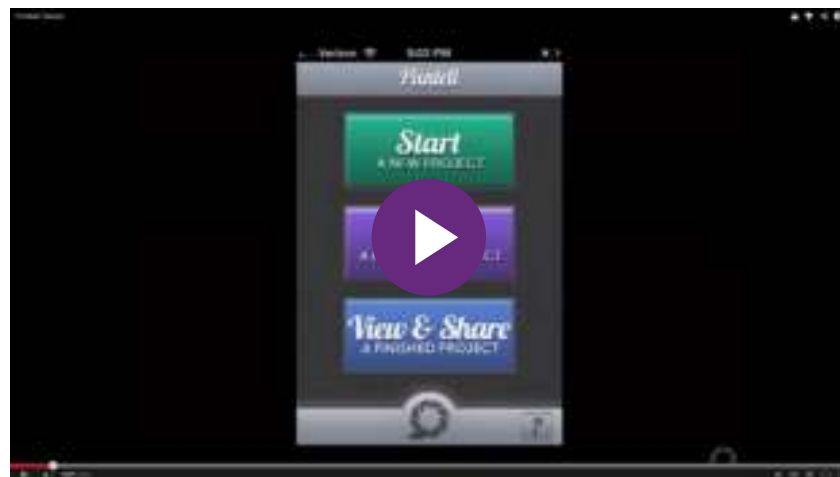KLA: AC; CA; English; HSIE; Languages; Mathematics; PDHPE; Science; SciTech; TAS

PUBLISHER: Focustrain, USA

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [779]

SCIS 1659368

Planning learning activities using apps? Note that the NSW DEC web filter currently only permits app downloads by staff.

PixnTell tutorial by Kate Peila

Children's books

The State Library of Victoria's vast research collection contains over 100 000 children's books, dating from the 16th century to the present. Focussing primarily on Australian publications, the fascinating collection of picture books, fiction, graphic novels, poetry, music and folktales reveals changing patterns in children's literature, as authors and publishers respond to shifting social and cultural contexts. This easily navigated website provides an overview of the collection, including *guidance for researchers*. Links within More to explore present additional information about the *Children's literature research collection*, *The Ken Pound collection* (an acquired private collection of 25 000 titles) and *rare children's books*. There are also links to related exhibitions, including *Evil females in children's folk and fairy tales*, *Domesticity to danger: themes in girls'*

annuals 1880–1960, and *The Gingerbread Man meets Dali: postmodernism and the picture book*. Students investigating themes in antiquarian or contemporary children's literature within the English Stage 6: *Extension 2* course may find this a highly relevant resource, particularly if they can visit the library to access the largely physical collection. T. Kenny

USER LEVEL: Stage 6 Professional

KLA: English

SYLLABUS: English Stage 6: *Extension 2*

PUBLISHER: State Library of Victoria, Vic

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [808]

SCIS 1647260

Our children's literature research collection by Statelibraryvictoria

Story box library

This subscription based website aims to provide quality Australian literature and to support the practice of storytelling.

Suitable for displaying on a computer screen or sharing interactively via an IWB, the illustrations in each story are accompanied by the enthusiastic and engaging voice of the presenter. Currently, there is a library of 34 picture books, which continues to grow. Titles can be filtered via age group, theme and author. For some titles, such as *The 39-storey treehouse* or *Shake a leg*, the author is the presenter, and for larger titles a chapter is read, rather than the entire book. Each title includes *Classroom ideas*, providing teachers with a myriad of options appropriate to their student cohort. These ideas include Australian Curriculum connections and support the English content and text requirements for Early Stage 1 to Stage 3 by introducing students to a range of spoken, print and multimedia texts. In 2014, Story Box Library is creating and producing the story segment for ALIA's National Simultaneous Storytime. S. Morton

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3 Community Professional

KLA: English

SYLLABUS: AC; English K–10

PUBLISHER: Story Box Library Pty Ltd, Vic

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [A820.8]

SCIS 1659132 $1 per student (school memberships)

Author Sally Rippin reads the first half of The Secret Message by Story Box Library

Oddizzi

A Geography, global citizenship and world knowledge site, *Oddizzi* connects subscribers throughout the world, enabling them to learn about currents affairs, other countries and other cultures. Resources include classroom material, videos, slide shows, games, an interactive map of the world with information pins, and an online encyclopedia of primary geography. Far from being a classroom reference site that only delivers factual data, *Oddizzi* has the potential to foster interpretation and critical thinking by using that data to *question why the world is the way it is, reflect on... relationships with and responsibilities for that world, and propose actions*

designed to shape a socially just and sustainable future, thereby supporting *Australian Curriculum: Geography*. Teachers may choose a free trial which allows prospective subscribers to trial the ClassPals network. Informative videos on the site show how teachers have used this resource to engage and inspire students to inquire about global issues. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL:	Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3 Community Professional
KLA:	AC; HSIE
SYLLABUS:	HSIE K–6
PUBLISHER:	Little Travel Bug Limited, UK
REVIEW DATE:	01/05/2014 [910.71]
SCIS 1659142	$POA

What is Oddizzi? by Oddizzi

must be purchased

Global closet calculator

Focussing on everyday items, this simple interactive game clearly demonstrates the global connections involved in the manufacture and importation of clothing and personal electronic devices. Once students have identified the origins of the clothes and accessories in their wardrobe, a map is generated, providing a clear visual representation of global relationships. The second part of the activity investigates the impact of this global interdependence, with students making manufacturing decisions to produce either jeans or an MP3 player. While the choice of technology is perhaps becoming a little dated, the decision making selections remain valid and are based on principles relating to human rights, fair trade, economics and environmental management, with information provided through animated videos. Compatible with iPads and computers, the resource supports the HSIE Stage 3 strand, *Social systems and structures*, in particular the interconnectedness between Australia and global environments. It could also support learning in the Science Stages 2 and 3 strand, *Products*, by helping learners to understand processes and environmental impacts associated with the production of everyday products. G. Braiding

USER LEVEL:	Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA:	AC; HSIE; Science
SYLLABUS:	HSIE K–6; Science K–10
PUBLISHER:	National Geographic Society, USA
REVIEW DATE:	01/05/2014 [910.76]
SCIS 1659192	
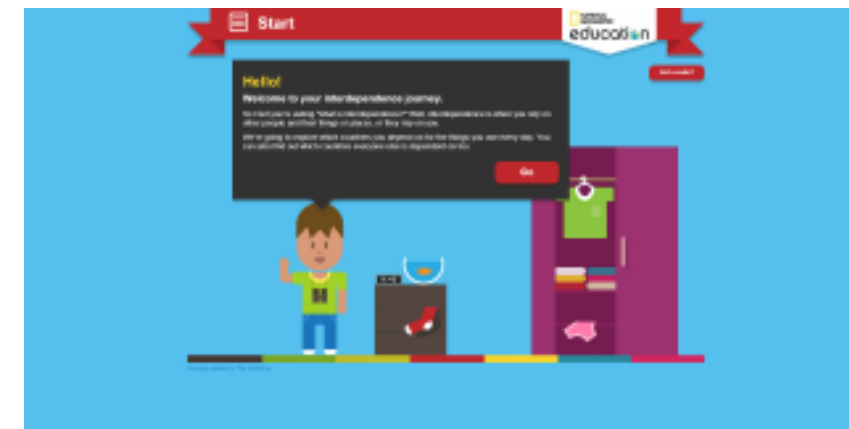
Australian dictionary of biography

Produced by the Australian National University, the well-credentialed *Australian dictionary of biography* provides a valuable point of reference for searches on Australian identities, including recent personalities. The biographies are concise, accurate and provide an historical snapshot of Australian life and culture at a particular time. Navigation is intuitive, with options to conduct a simple or advanced search, or to browse by name, date of birth, date of death, or author. The biographies are heavily text based and the level of language makes this resource more useful to an upper secondary audience. The inclusion of supplemental essays and the faceted browse, which allows repeated filtering by categories such as *gender, ethnicity, occupation, birth town and religion*, separates this website from other similar biographical collections. B. Kervin

USER LEVEL:	Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional
KLA:	AC; HSIE
SYLLABUS:	History K–10; Modern History Stage 6
PUBLISHER:	National Centre of Bibliography, Australian National University, ACT
REVIEW DATE:	01/05/2014 [920.094]
SCIS 1660383	

Australian memories of the Holocaust

Detailed and user-friendly, this website offers students a wide range of resources relating to the Holocaust period. The site includes maps of camps; flowcharts of prisoner movements within camps; glossaries; timelines; and _Memories_, which are conveniently grouped by theme, e.g. _World inaction_. Primary sources, accompanied by explanatory text, provide opportunities for users to research, learn and reflect. Stage 5 students completing the school-developed topic, _The Holocaust_, within Depth study 6 would find this an invaluable resource. There are also explicit syllabus links for the Stage 6 Modern History option, _Germany_ 1918–1945 in the _Lesson ideas_ section. Advanced English students studying _The fiftieth gate_ in the elective, _History and memory_, may also find this website a useful adjunct. B. Hull

USER LEVEL: Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA: AC; English; HSIE
SYLLABUS: English Stage 6; History 7–10; Modern History Stage 6
PUBLISHER: New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies, NSW
REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [940.53]
SCIS 1659186

Kids peace station: Hiroshima

2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. This event is remembered on Hiroshima Day each year on 4 August. _Kids peace station: Hiroshima_ provides opportunities for students to understand the actual event and the aftermath of the atomic bomb, while raising awareness about the importance of peace. Digital stories recreate the experiences of children during and after the bomb. _Sadako story 21_, in four cartoon animated chapters, is the story of Mai-chan, who is transported back in time after visiting Sadako Sasaki's statue at Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. Mai-chan relives Sadako's experiences and urges students to spread the word about the importance of peace. _Sadako and the atomic bombing_ is a timeline of Sadako's life, composed of sketches, photographs and narrative. _Kid's peace plaza_ is a sharing space with letters and presentations from students. This resource, and links to special exhibits in the _Virtual Museum_ on the parent site, will support students undertaking peace studies. C. Keane

USER LEVEL: Stage 3
KLA: AC; English; HSIE
SYLLABUS: English K–10; History K–10
PUBLISHER: Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, Japan
REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [952.03]
SCIS 1659356

Sadako Sasaki by Steve Simon

Australian Antarctic Division: leading Australia's Antarctic program

This factual website, produced by the Australian Antarctic Division, offers credible information _about Antarctica_, its wildlife, environment, history, tourism, and current research. A number of _educational resources_ are also available, including _images_, wildlife _sounds_, _videos_, _puzzles and games_. The associated website, _Classroom Antarctica_, is a comprehensive online teaching resource, containing eight units: _Continent_, _Exploring_, _Living_, _Working_, _Nature_, _Climate_, _International_ and _Stewardship_. A teacher resource kit can be requested and a clothing kit can also be borrowed. Through the suggested learning activities, students are encouraged to think critically about the key issues currently facing Antarctica, including climate change, tourism, whaling, fishing, mineral exploitation, resource management and the impact of humans on the environment. Together, these resources offer opportunities for engaging virtual excursions, particularly via the _live weather and webcam streams_. M. Sutera

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5
KLA: HSIE
SYLLABUS: Geography 7–10
PUBLISHER: Australian Antarctic Division, ACT
REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [998]
SCIS 1043837

Dr Andrew Constable – Southern ecosystems change by AusAntarctic

United States Antarctic Program

A portal for the United States Antarctic Program, this easy to navigate website contains clear written and visual information pertaining to Antarctica, its climate, environmental policies, conservation, and international cooperation. Maps, video clips, and still and moving images are available and live webcams provide vibrant imagery when weather conditions are favourable. Statistics are listed in both metric and imperial systems. The site, and its numerous links to external websites, may aid understanding for Stage 4 and Stage 5 Geography students investigating *Antarctica through the South Pole* in Focus area E7: *Interactions and patterns along a continental transect*. A. Frost

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5
KLA: HSIE
SYLLABUS: Geography 7–10
PUBLISHER: National Science Foundation, Division of Polar Programs, USA
REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [998.9]
SCIS 1659124

professional reading

Resources are listed in Dewey order

Digital-Storytime's best books of the year: top 25 picture book apps for ages 2-12

The editor of *Digital storytime* has scoured the iTunes App Store for the most exceptional and well-crafted storybook apps for children in 2013 and listed them on this site. As the previous three years of 'best of' lists for storybook apps are also provided, the wealth of scrutinised digital stories makes this site a treasure trove for teachers and parents. There are listings divided into age appropriate stories, from toddlers to upper primary students (tweens). Android devices are catered for with 'best of' listings for Kindle Fire, Nook Colour and Google Play. Many apps are also available for iOS devices. Favourite stories, such as *The very hungry bear* and *Dr Seuss's short story collection*, are included and all apps are rated according to the quality of their production, suitability for the age group and innovation in design and technology. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Community Professional
KLA: AC; English
SYLLABUS: English K–10
PUBLISHER: Digital Media Diet, USA
REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [028.1]
SCIS 1659139
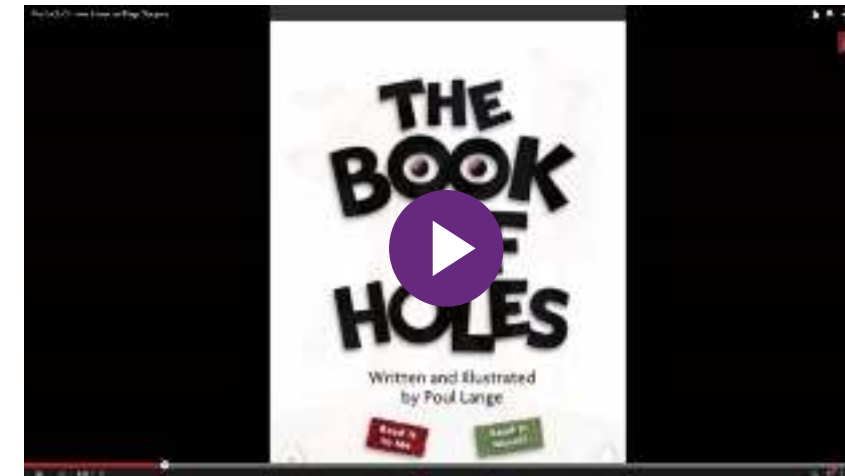
The book of holes interactive page samples
by ChocFacPub

Reflective teaching [series]
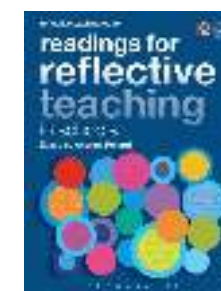
Bloomsbury, UK, 2014 Principles for effective teaching and learning frame the structure and content of these compressive guides to understanding and reflecting on the key issues relating to quality classroom practice. In the series, there is a companion library of contemporary readings and an associated website. The resources on the website are designed to support the development of high quality professional judgement, while recognising that the many challenges and dilemmas in education require high level decision-making. The sequence of topics aligns with the focus areas of the professional teaching standards and, as such, supports initial teacher education and continuing teacher professional development. There is an emphasis on engaging teachers in reflective thinking that is evidence based by gathering evidence from practice, analysing that evidence in relation to student learning needs and learner diversity, and evaluating the impact of their teaching and learning strategies on student achievement. F. Whalan

USER LEVEL: Professional
                   Paper $49.99 each

Reviewed titles in this series:

Readings for reflective teaching in schools
SCIS 1651630

Reflective teaching in schools
SCIS 1651626

ELTDP symposium, reflective teaching and its application, Professor Andrew Pollard
by ELTDPMalaysia

Makerspaces and online education

In outlining the concept of makerspaces, this web page provides inspiration for schools seeking to create their own innovative, resource rich learning spaces. Taking the idea of *learning by doing* to a higher level, the concept of makerspaces adopts digital tools and web-based collaborative platforms as students become actively involved in project based learning, problem solving, critical thinking and inquiry based learning. A community location such as a library can become a makerspace, providing participants with the tools and physical or online spaces where creative teams can build projects and experiment with technology. If assignments are designed to encourage students to collaborate and innovate using technologies such as 3D printers and audio and video equipment, a range of applications are possible across all Key Learning Areas. Inspiration for planning creative courses that incorporate tools available at this type of learning commons can be found at *SmartBlog on education*. Further ideas for making with apps are available at *There's a maker faire in that iPad!* *10 ways to create student makers with apps*. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Professional

PUBLISHER: Inside Online Learning, USA

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [371.3]

SCIS 1659199   ‖‖‖‖‖‖‖‖‖‖‖‖

Dale Dougherty - makerspaces in education
by IgnitePetaluma

edX: take great online courses from the world's best universities

An ambitious initiative governed by MIT and Harvard University, this massive open online course (MOOC) platform offers university level courses across a broad range of subjects. The site is easy to navigate and contains an expanding list of classes created by reputable (mainly American) universities and partners. Courses are listed according to their scheduled start date and users can filter by subject area and provider, though there is currently no search facility. For each course, prerequisites and estimated time commitments are outlined, and virtual books, think tanks, interactive tools and game-like laboratories provide engaging support for learning. A simple demonstration course is also available to help new users explore the *edX* learning experience. Registration is free, though learners may elect to purchase a verified certificate of achievement. The site's topics, tertiary level language and independent learning format make this resource an ideal learning pathway for senior students seeking extension or enrichment, and teachers undertaking professional learning. Teachers may also relish the opportunity to use selected interactive tools from courses in the classroom, including the molecule editor, electronic circuit simulator, interactive periodic table, and molecule structure tool. A. Frost

USER LEVEL: Stage 6 Professional

KLA: AC; CA; English; HSIE; PDHPE; Science; TAS

PUBLISHER: edX, USA

REVIEW DATE: 01/05/2014 [378.1]

SCIS 1659117   ‖‖‖‖‖‖‖‖‖‖‖‖

Scan the SCIS barcodes to select eresources for your collection.
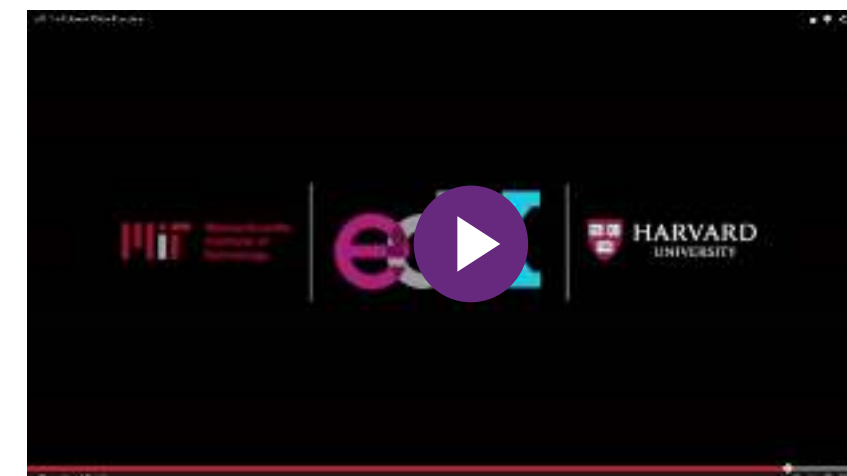
edX: The future of online education by edX

picture books

Resources are listed in alphabetical order by author

Let's paint!

ALBOROZO, Gabriel
Allen & Unwin, NSW, 2013
ISBN 9781743313695 [751.4]

With its ultimate message to *Have fun*! when being creative, this stimulating picture book examines the enormous range of artists' media and techniques on offer to every student of the visual arts. From initial

reluctance to *make a mistake*, students are challenged to seek out ideas from wherever they may come, to compare varied styles and subjects of successful artists, and not be too concerned about how long is spent on a piece of work. For example, whether the finished artwork is planned or spontaneous, it still may not please every viewer. Alborozo's illustrations are a delightful blend of finely rendered black ink caricatures and wild swirls of colour on stark white backg-rounds. This book would be excellent to share with a class at the beginning of a year's art adventures. I. McLean

USER LEVEL:	Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA:	CA
SYLLABUS:	Creative Arts K–6
SCIS 1617624	$22.99

I'm a dirty dinosaur

SHORT LIST 2014

BRIAN, Janeen & JAMES, Ann
Penguin Group Australia, 2013 (Puffin)
ISBN 9780670076154

As storytelling and responding to texts are integral components of the new English curriculum, picture books such as this provide teachers with multi layered opportunities. Pairing a dinosaur with another fun aspect of early childhood, playing in muddy pudd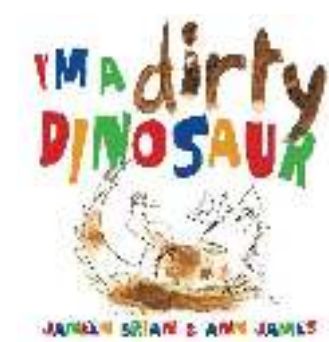les, is an ingenious combination. The subject matter, the rollicking rhyming language and the visual impact of this picture book wrap up a delightful package that draws its audience in and invites participation. Repetition and onomatopoeia are deployed throughout the book, complementing the cheeky illustrations of a little dinosaur that becomes progressively muddier from his snout down to his tail. The look and feel of the thick, rounded pages adds to the suitability of this multimodal text for early childhood readers. S. Rasaiah
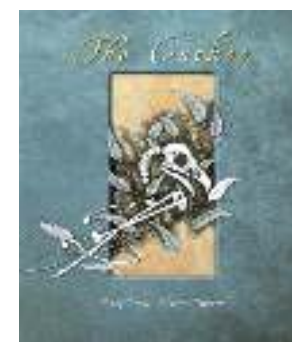
USER LEVEL:	Early Stage 1
KLA:	AC; English
SYLLABUS:	English K–10
SCIS 1596903	$19.99

Bringing out the cheekiness in I'm a dirty dinosaur
by thelittlebigbookclub

The cuckoo

CREW, Gary & TURVEY, Naomi
Ford St, Vic, 2014
ISBN 9781925000177

Exploring themes of neglect, bullying, rejection, identity, self-belief and forgiveness, perceptive readers may connect with this allegorical picture book. Martin, *the runt of the family*, rejected by his father and brothers, finds solace and fulfilment *in the company of wild creatures* at the edge of the Megalong Valley. Imagery in the challenging illustrations and the language, captured in text boxes, adds to Martin's sense of being trapped within his family and his own low self-perception. The predominantly black and white illustrations depict Martin's transformation into a soaring eagle and enhance the haunting, melancholy narrative. Seeing his grief-stricken father about to cast himself into the valley, Martin ultimately forgives others in order to build a better life for himself. This book may be useful as a complementary text when studying resilience, relationships and mental health. A. Frost

USER LEVEL:	Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6

KLA:	PDHPE
SYLLABUS:	PDHPE 7–10; PDHPE Stage 6
SCIS 1653478	$29.95

Jeremy

SHORT LIST 2014

FAILLE, Chris & SNELL, Danny
Working Title, SA, 2013
ISBN 9781921504402
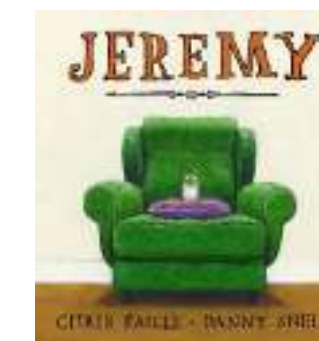
Vocabulary that depicts time and sequencing in this informative picture book makes it a perfect text to guide students through understanding how authors write in different ways for different audiences and purposes. The minimalist language and large, uncluttered images cleverly illustrate the growth and development of a fledgling kookaburra from a rescue to his return to the wild as a fully grown bird. Comparing the sizes of Jeremy to everyday objects as he grows is a subtle, effective use of visual clues. The words that connect readers to time passing link to the sequences of images of Jeremy as he matures. The narrative structure injects a story into what is a factual book about Australian wildlife. Teaching notes are available on the publisher's website. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1

KLA: AC; English; SciTech

SYLLABUS: English K–10; Science & Technology K–6

SCIS 1611995 $24.99

What makes a kookaburra laugh? by Tim Sharpe

Chasing shadows

FENTON, Corinne & SOMMERVILLE, Hannah
Hybrid Publishers, Vic, 2014
ISBN 9781925000146

This is a most sensitive picture book on the subject of childhood depression and grief over the loss of a parent. Beth's mother has died and Beth now sees only shadows. The arrival of a playful puppy does little to rouse Beth from her sadness until the child realises that Patches could easily die from snakebite. The likelihood that she could lose her friend kindles a spark within Beth. The therapeutic effect of having something to love and be loved in return is the overarching theme of the story and could be helpful for some students across a range of ages. The text is gentle and poetic which adds to the atmosphere of the story. The allegory of shadows lingering, representing the child's sadness, can be a conversation starter with a child, a group, or a class on depression and this can be the beginning of the understanding, acceptance and support that will show the way out of the shadows. Teacher's notes are available. M. Sutera

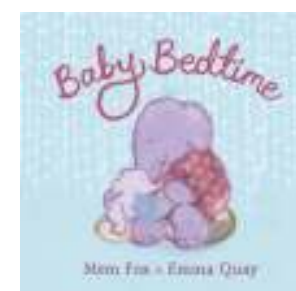USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3

KLA: PDHPE

SYLLABUS: PDHPE K-6

SCIS 1645142 $26.95

Baby bedtime

SHORT LIST 2014

FOX, Mem & QUAY, Emma
Penguin Books (Australia), Vic, 2013
ISBN 9780670075195

Anthropomorphism in the depiction of the characters as elephants removes gender, heritage age or race from this gentle story about bedtime rituals. Taking the form of a monologue, the voice of Mem Fox carries a rhythmic rhyme through the book as baby and parent go up the stairs, close the blinds, read a story and sing songs before bedtime. The images are textural with pastel colours and household patterns, making the setting familiar and comforting for the target audience of very young children. The text is as soothing as a lullaby, with each sentence beginning with *I could...* until the end, when the parent reassures the baby that it is time to sleep *...with a kiss upon your brow*. The parallel stories told through words and pictures may support teaching about visual literacy in the *NSW English K–10 syllabus*. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1

KLA: AC; English

SYLLABUS: English K–10

SCIS 1629742 $24.99

Fire

FRENCH, Jackie & WHATLEY, Bruce
Scholastic Australia, NSW, 2014
ISBN 9781742838175

With Australia regularly experiencing catastrophic bushfires, *Fire* provides insight for those fortunate enough to have escaped its devastating effects. Each phrase delivers dramatic impact, describing the powerful sensory responses bushfires evoke – sights, smells, sounds, taste and touch – all conveyed with a minimum of text. The rhyme, alliteration and imagery ably communicate a bushfire's ferocity and the resultant destruction, while the accompanying stunning watercolour illustrations complement and enhance the text, enriching the reader's experience. The tone, however, is not one of despair as the community comes together to ensure that as much as possible, as time passes, the landscape and people's lives are renewed. On the final page both author and illustrator provide background to their work, with French's lifelong focus on human impact and coexistence with the environment and climate clearly evident. *Fire*, with its companion *Flood*, supports the *NSW English K–10 syllabus* in the study of *texts that include aspects of environmental and social sustainability*. Additionally, it supports the use and purpose of figurative language to achieve EN2-6B and EN3-5B. The publisher has also provided Teachers' notes S. Morton

USER LEVEL: Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3 Stage 4

KLA: AC; English

SYLLABUS: English K–10

SCIS 1641830 $24.99

The first drawing

GERSTEIN, Mordicai
Little, Brown and Company, USA, 2013
ISBN 9780316204781

An innovative account of how drawing first began and who might have drawn the first picture on a cave wall is cleverly told in this picture book. The story begins with the scenario of a child contemplating a blank canvas and imagining how it could have been if he or she had been born before the invention of drawing more than 30 000 years before, when families lived in caves and woolly mammoths roamed the earth. The imagined child's encounter with a huge mammoth inspires the child to sketch an image of the animal on the wall of the cave using a burnt stick. The startled cave dwellers believe at first that this is magic until the child teaches everyone how to draw. The story concludes with the affirmation that drawing is still magic. Students may be intrigued to investigate this topic further, following the reading of this charming book. Using the available educator's guide, teachers could discuss the tight formation of plot and setting as the story turns full circle, illustrating cohesion in writing. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1 Stage 2
KLA: AC; English
SYLLABUS: English K–10
SCIS 1640289 $24.99

Gallipoli

GREENWOOD, Kerry & WHITE, Annie
Scholastic Australia, NSW, 2014
ISBN 9781743621295

An account of the ANZAC campaign at Gallipoli, this picture book portrays the events that took place by focusing on the experience of two mates, members of the Australian Light Horse, who sailed off to the Great War in 1914. Although it deals factually with the terrible conditions the men endured, the book manages to be positive in its treatment, emphasising the bonds of mateship and the deep rewards of a lifelong friendship. Greenwood does not hide the fact that men were killed or injured, or that hunger and disease were constant threats to their survival in the trenches. She also covers the less discussed story of how the troops managed to leave the peninsula in an ingenious manner, with no loss of life. Her story is complemented beautifully by the illustrations of Annie White. The photo album presentation of some images will help students understand that the soldiers who fought at Gallipoli left families behind and that many of them did not return. A. Ellis

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA: AC; English; HSIE
SYLLABUS: English K–10; History K–10
SCIS 1648963 $24.99

Diary of a Gallipoli soldier by Tim Young

Midnight

GREENWOOD, Mark & LESSAC, Frané
Walker Books Australia, NSW, 2014
ISBN 9781921977718

This true story is about the bond that is created between a soldier and his horse as they face the terror of war together. Greenwood uses the picture book medium to portray the capture of Beersheba from Turkish soldiers by regiments of the Australian Light Horse during World War I, one of the last great cavalry charges in history. ANZACs, animals in war, bravery, mateship – there are many topics for discussion that could follow the reading of this book, as the publisher's classroom notes suggest. Lessac's vivid illustrations support the story effectively and will have much appeal to young readers, although the text is rather poetic in nature and may need explanation to clarify meaning. The fact that this tale of bravery and sacrifice is based on a real event adds to its poignancy. A. Ellis

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA: AC; English; History
SYLLABUS: English K–10; History K–10
SCIS 1641851 $27.95

The bouncing ball

KELLY, Deborah & PERRY, Georgia
Random House Australia, NSW, 2013
ISBN 9780857980045

Revolving around a found ball and its subsequent adventures, this is a charming tale of finding something then losing it. But the loss means someone will find the item and then lose

it as well, the tale becoming circular. Children will enjoy reading the story, watching the ball come to different owners, reflecting on their own possessions and how they have lost objects, and pondering about what may have happened to them. The end invites the reader to predict what might happen and describe their own scenarios for the lost ball. On one level, it is a picture book with bright, colourful illustrations with a catchy refrain, yet it also encourages children to explore all that they can do with a ball. Teachers will discover many ways that this bright book can be used to teach English grammar as the language used is rich with verbs and prepositions. M. Sutera

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1
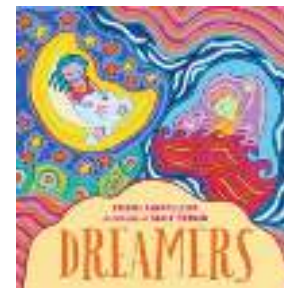KLA: AC; English
SYLLABUS: English K–10
SCIS 1626638 $19.95

Deborah Kelly talks about The bouncing ball by Random House Books AU

Dreamers

KWAYMULLINA, Ezekiel & MORGAN, Sally
Fremantle Press, WA, 2014
ISBN 9781922089700

 Capturing the imagination of children at play, this exquisitely illustrated picture book is full of movement and rich language. The inclusion of two noun groups in a minimalist sentence on every second page supports the swirling double-page patterns. Within these Aboriginal designs are images of bright children and animals replicating the actions in the text. Many teaching possibilities emanate from the reading of this book. As the *NSW English K–10 syllabus* calls for students to think imaginatively and creatively about familiar topics and one of the cross-curriculum priorities is the study of *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures*, this book by an Indigenous mother and son team would be a valuable addition to an English program. Teaching notes have been provided by the publisher. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1
                         Stage 2
KLA: AC; English
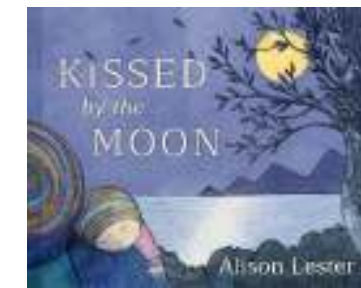SYLLABUS: English K–10
SCIS 1651587 $24.99

Kissed by the moon   SHORT LIST 2014

LESTER, Alison
Penguin Group (Australia), 2013 (Viking)
ISBN 9780670076758

 The glorious prose and gentle illustrations in this picture book croon wishes for everything in nature that a baby's first year may bring. Part hymn, part lullaby, the essence of this book stems from recognising how children can be taught to appreciate and protect the natural world. Love and kindness abound in the text as the baby is led through time and seasons by a caring adult, accompanied by a frolicking dog. From waking up to birdsong the baby is encouraged to smile, dance and splash before being lulled into growing sleepy at sunset and drifting into dreams. Students may make connections with the growth and development of the baby in the story. In addition, they may be able to discuss Alison Lester's techniques and how she creates an appropriate tone through the choices she makes and her artwork. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1
SCIS 1626632 $19.99

First flight

MILLER, David
Working Title, SA, 2014
ISBN 9781921504570

 Introducing the Australian bush and some of its creatures, this gentle story is accompanied by soft, delicate illustrations. The colours and the details of the echidna and blue tongued lizard, the cicadas and the honeyeaters are beautiful. This picture book tells a positive story about family and overcoming fear as a little yellow-bellied glider falls from his nest and finds that he can fly. When he gets safely to the ground he is afraid to try again until his mother finds him and encourages him to come back to the nest with her. Teacher notes that explore the figurative language used and the interplay between words and pictures are available on the publisher's website. A. Soutter

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1
SCIS 1650367 $24.99

 Planning learning activities using YouTube videos embedded in *Scan*? Note that a teacher log in is required to view YouTube videos in the NSW DEC environment.

The swap

SHORT LIST 2014

ORMEROD, Jan & JOYNER, Andrew
Little Hare, Vic, 2013
ISBN 9781921541414

The expressions on the animals' faces speak volumes in this perceptive picture book. Sibling jealousy is an emotion common in many families when a new baby arrives. In this book, the animals are personified, making their behaviour familiar to younger readers who may identify with Caroline Crocodile's feelings when baby brother is cooed over by Mama. Caroline's solution is to exchange her irritating brother for a new baby, one that doesn't dribble, smell or take up room on Mama's lap. Each animal that is suggested to Caroline incurs a funny, but disastrous problem which should endear this book to its excited readers. The outcome is comforting and adds a touch of realism as the baby reveals the reason for his dribbling. Repetition, alliteration, humour, and descriptive verbs and adjectives add to the quality of this text for students and teachers. S. Rasaiah

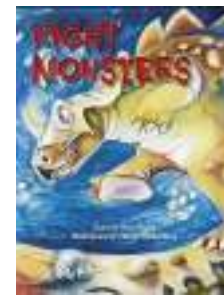**USER LEVEL:** Early Stage 1 Stage 1
KLA: AC; English
SYLLABUS: English K–10
SCIS 1626348 $24.95

Night monsters

POULOS, Nina & WESTENBERG, Cheryl
National Library of Australia, ACT, 2013
ISBN 9780642278333

The eye-catching, vibrant illustrations, as well as the rhyming story in this book will appeal to young readers. The plot hinges on a misunderstanding about which creature is responsible for frightening bush-dwelling animals – all Australian natives – by producing a series of terrible noises. The rhythm of the text, the rhyme and the alliteration combine to make the book useful as a script for readers' theatre in the classroom, as the book comes alive when read aloud. The rich vocabulary also presents an opportunity for semantic mapping. A spread at the back of the book contains information about the lively villain in the story, which makes the events seem plausible. S. Bremner

USER LEVEL: Stage 1 Stage 2
SCIS 1644579 $17.99

I've an Uncle Ivan

SHORT LIST 2014

SANDERS, Ben
Thames & Hudson, Vic, 2013
ISBN 9780500500361 [A821]

The sheet of press-out 3D paper models included in this picture book allows readers to progress beyond the text as they interact with some of the 14 different modes of transport referenced in the story. The 1950s style illustrations build towards the revelation of where all of Uncle Ivan's relatives are heading in their many and varied vehicles. The introduction of each member of the family riding everything from roller skates to unicycles is described in rhyming couplets and cleverly hidden clues. Supporting the outcomes in Objective C in the new English curriculum, this retro inspired book invites students to discuss how creative language features and visual media contribute to the enjoyment of a story. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1
KLA: AC; English
SYLLABUS: English K–10
SCIS 1611053 $24.95

I've an Uncle Ivan – children's book by Ben Sanders

I was only nineteen

SCHUMANN, John & SMITH, Craig
Allen & Unwin, NSW, 2014
ISBN 9781743317235 [782.42162]
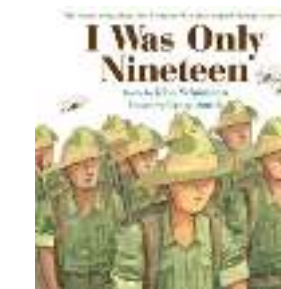
Illustrating Redgum's popular and moving 1980s song about the Vietnam War, this picture book visually interprets the lyrics. The reader is positioned with a young boy whose war veteran grandfather recounts his Vietnam experiences. This positioning helps build the historical skill of empathetic understanding. The strong imagery in the illustrations depicts the discomfort and terror faced by Australian soldiers in Vietnam and suits comparison to original sources such as photographs and video footage. This book could support the Stage 2 topic, *Community and remembrance* in relation

to Anzac Day discussions and the portrayal of memories. As the emotive lyrics provide a perspective on the impact of war on Vietnam War veterans, the book could be used to spark discussions in the
Stage 5 History topic, *Australia in the Vietnam War era.* Teachers notes are available. G. Braiding

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 5
KLA: AC; HSIE
SYLLABUS: History K–10
SCIS 1651260 $24.99

Here in the garden

STEWART, Briony
University of Queensland Press, QLD, 2014
ISBN 9780702250101

Beautifully illustrated, this is a gentle story about grief, loss, love and friendship. It is a perfect text to use with young readers experiencing the loss of a pet or a loved one. As the seasons change, a young boy remembers different things about his pet rabbit that is no longer with him. The heartrending refrain, and *I wish that you were here*, adds to the emotional tone of this picture book. The year passes, the

garden grows and changes, and the boy comes to terms with his loss, helping young readers understand that, with time, the heart begins to heal and that memories are forever. Figurative language introduces imagery, personification, alliteration and similes which enrich the lyrical text. The book is a valuable literary resource, introducing simple poetry illustrated with symbolism that will resonate with its audience. Teacher's notes can be found on the publisher's website. M. Sutera

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1
KLA: AC; English; PDHPE
SYLLABUS: English K–10; PDHPE K–6
SCIS 1646765 $24.95

Here in the garden – book trailer by Briony Stewart

Planning learning activities using YouTube videos embedded in *Scan*? Note that a teacher log in is required to view YouTube videos in the NSW DEC environment.

The three little pigs: and the somewhat bad wolf

TEAGUE, Mark
Orchard, USA, 2013
ISBN 9780439915014

A quirky reworking of the original story, this picture book sees the three pigs paid for their work on a farm and sent on their way when the farm's owners sell up and move. The first pig just wants to buy potato chips, the second wants to buy 'sody-pop' and the third wants to buy building supplies. They build their respective houses of straw, sticks and bricks. The third pig even has a vegetable garden. The wolf is hungry and angry, as he has not been able to get any donuts, hot dogs or pizza. He blows down the first two houses, but a twist lies in the wolf's attitude. Readers will not fail to notice that the first two pigs are males and the third, sensible pig is a female. The story provides opportunities for discussion of gender roles and junk food vs healthy food, in the context of a well-known tale, with vibrant illustrations and contemporary text. Teaching activities are available. H. Myers

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1
SCIS 1611779 $19.99

Clementine's walk

WHITE, Annie
New Frontier, NSW, 2013
ISBN 9781921928475 [A821]

A beautiful and heart warming rhyming picture book, this is the story of the exuberant Clementine, a dog that makes herself dog-tired trying to convince various family members to take her for a walk. A broader message, of the value of spending time with people one cares about, should illicit good class discussions after sharing the text. Clementine cleverly uses her leash as a visual cue to communicate with her human family, but the book is enriched with clues for readers wanting to practice their prediction skills as the story unfolds. Of particular note is the labelled story map on the final endpapers, as teachers could use this as a visual tool for students when retelling the story, or planning their own recounts and narratives. I. McLean

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1
KLA: AC; English
SYLLABUS: English K–10
SCIS 1626644 $24.95

The treasure box

WILD, Margaret & BLACKWOOD, Freya
Penguin Group (Australia), 2013 (Viking)
ISBN 9780670073658
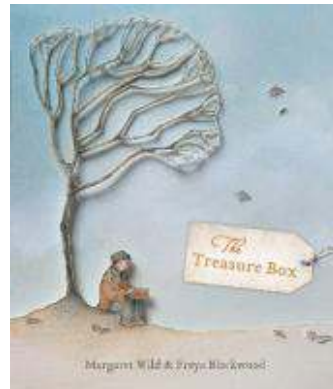
Recounting a war story emphasising resilience and survival, this haunting picture book transcends all ages. On a literal level, the narrative speaks of Peter and his father who fled their home when the enemy bombed their village and burned the library. All but one book was lost which became the treasure entrusted to Peter throughout the ensuing years. Intuitive readers may glean a deeper message about the value of books and their place in the documentation of history. Visual learners will read the pictures, constructed with a mix of collage and photographed images, creating depth and movement. The endpapers and cutouts, taken from foreign editions of war-themed books, combine with ashen colours to symbolise the sombre mood at the beginning of the story. The illustrations lighten into bright hues as the reader is reassured that hope and perseverance can triumph. This book supports responding, interpreting and the critical analysis of texts in the NSW English K–10 syllabus and could support Community and remembrance outcomes in the NSW History K–10 syllabus. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 3 Stage 4

KLA: AC; English; HSIE

SYLLABUS: English K–10; History K–10

SCIS 1589474 $24.99

The treasure box by Margaret Wild read by Victoria Carlton by Victoria Carlton

That is not a good idea!

WILLEMS, Mo
Walker, UK, 2013
ISBN 9781406349412
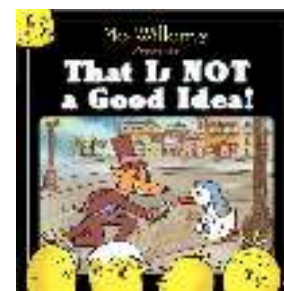
Taking inspiration from the silent film era, and aspects of the fairytale of The three little pigs, Willems presents the humorous and suspenseful story of a wily and dapper fox and his desperate attempts to woo a naive mother goose. Is he inviting her to dinner, or as dinner? Her newly hatched, yellow goslings, who start out as mere observers of the onscreen action, appear to be much the wiser. They offer frequent, yet unheeded, warnings in large, red font. Plump Goose, however, demonstrates that she is no damsel in distress and the climax will have the audience laughing out loud. Much of the picture book's concisely written text resembles the slides used during cinema screenings of early silent movies with white, antique typeface on black pages. I. McLean

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1 Stage 2

SCIS 1630396 $24.95

That is not a good idea! by Mo Willems by HarperKids

fiction younger

Resources are listed in alphabetical order by author. See also *eresources*. Some of these books are also suitable for upper primary students.

Darcy Moon and the deep-fried frogs

CARVELL, Catherine
Freemantle Press, WA, 2014
ISBN 9781922089717
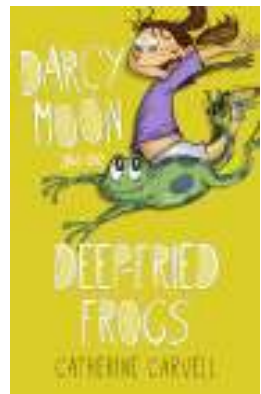
Darcy Moon starts to hear animals talking and a frog asks for help to save the swamp and fix the food chain. This book could be used as a springboard for many different aspects of literacy study, such as report writing on an endangered or extinct Australian species, letter writing to a local government about a significant environmental issue, or recount writing about the major events in Darcy's adventure to save the wetland ecosystem. Themes include self-acceptance, environmental sustainability, impact of humans on the environment, personal responsibility and food labelling. The references to Australian animals and Australian environments make this a useful resource for teaching the *Living world* content in the new Science syllabus. It can also be used as a resource to introduce scientific terminology. *Teacher's notes* and sample chapters can be found on the *publisher's website*. M. Sutera

USER LEVEL:	Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA:	AC; English; Science
SYLLABUS:	English K–10; Science K–10
SCIS 1646755	Paper $14.99

Little chef, big curse

COTTON, Tilney
Scholastic Australia, NSW, 2014
ISBN 9781742832692

A hint of Roald Dahl's *Matilda* with bullying adults and a flawless main character, and a dash of *George's marvellous medicine's* concoctions, combine with a millennium-old interplanetary curse, creating a *Kitchen Rule*s fairytale. Eleven year old Matty Swink has a wonderful gift, able to decipher the ingredients of any product simply by taste. His passion is cooking, his aim to follow in the footsteps of his now dead grandmother and run his own restaurant. Unfortunately, he is in the care of Fenella Flinch, who has taken over Granny Swink's diner and treats Matty very badly. Readers will thoroughly enjoy the slapstick humour of her gross, stomach-churning dishes and empathise as Matty tries to find an escape. As always in fairytales, there is good battling evil, although it is only towards the end that we discover which side the Moon Mice are on, and who the real villain is. The book may support *EN3-7C* in the exploration and discussion of simple appropriation of texts. S. Morton

USER LEVEL:	Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA:	AC; English
SYLLABUS:	English K–10
SCIS 1641853	Paper $16.99

The adventures of Tooki: the secret of the stones

COURTIER, Jamie & KIMM, Vicky
Walker Books Ltd, UK, 2013
ISBN 9781406330021
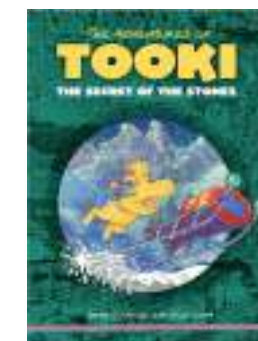
This fantasy in graphic novel format is set in the land of Orb, home to a community of furry creatures called Tufties. When winter arrives early, the Tufties hurriedly depart their summer home for the lowlands, but a mishap in transit leaves one of their number, Tooki, marooned as the snow sets in. In upper primary English lessons, interrogating the nature of magic and exploring the composer's construction of the 'types' represented, would take students beyond simple consideration of the plot. The secret that Tooki discovers underpins the story, questioning the trust the two species have in the magic provision of food, and would appeal to younger readers. The story, in the way it is constructed, has many worthwhile themes. S. Bremner

USER LEVEL:	Stage 1 Stage 2
SCIS 1632581	$27.95

The great blood bank robbery

CRANNA, Andrew
Walker Books Australia, NSW, 2013
ISBN 9781922179302

Skull River City, located deep beneath the Earth's surface, is the scene of a terrible crime, particularly for the vampire inhabitants of the city. The young heroes of this graphic novel, who just happen to be a vampire and a werewolf, face adversity and use their wits to overcome the evil Mosquito King and return the fresh blood supply. The plot is

tight and a series of conflicts will keep the reader eager for resolutions. Although the colourful cover drips with rich, red blood, the action packed frames on each page are, surprisingly, rendered in black and white. Students who enjoy monsters and adventure should appreciate this story of heroism and friendship with its shades of *Harry Potter* meets *Monsters Inc.* meets *Twilight*. C. Keane

USER LEVEL:	Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA:	AC; English
SYLLABUS:	English K–10
SCIS1630791	Paper $19.95

Ash Rover: keeper of the phoenix

DARLISON, Aleesah
Walker Books Australia, NSW, 2014
(Ash Rover 1)
ISBN 9781922179029

All the elements of a fantasy quest junior novel appear in this first volume of a three part series. There are mythical creatures, magic and mayhem, an evil wizard and friends on a mission to save their village. This would be a suspenseful book to share with a class as an introduction to narrative, fantasy and character development. Alternatively, it is

appealing for readers beginning their journey into the fantastical realms created for reading pleasure. Themes of action, adventure, friendship, fantasy and mythical creatures create a resource for teachers to focus on the characteristics of the genre, including the character traits shown in the story, such as resourcefulness, courage, persistence, compassion and independence. The suggested classroom ideas may be helpful for teachers. M. Sutera

USER LEVEL:	Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA:	AC: English
SYLLABUS:	English K–10
SCIS 1647853	Paper $14.95

Refuge

FRENCH, Jackie
Angus & Robertson, NSW, 2013
ISBN 9780732296179
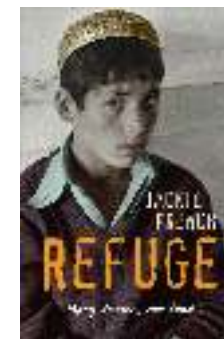
A novel of imagination and adventure that takes the reader on a journey of self-discovery and growth, *Refuge* tells the story of Faris, a 13 year old Afghani, whose father was arrested and tortured by the police in his home country. After his father escapes to Australia, Faris and his grandmother attempt to follow, but the boat carrying them from Indonesia sinks during a

storm. Faris regains consciousness to find he is in his ideal Australia, with its golden beaches and blue water, where he can play with other children from different times and places. Slowly, with the help of Susannah, he realises that he can find the strength to survive in the world of the storm and find his father in Australia. The author describes *Refuge* as the story of 60 000 years of migration to Australia. It is a tale of love and acceptance where people, treated as equals, can live without fear. A. Ellis

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4
SCIS 1615888	Paper $15.99

Jackie French on Refuge by HarperCollins Australia

Planning learning activities using YouTube videos embedded in *Scan*? Note that a teacher log in is required to view YouTube videos in the NSW DEC environment.

Monkey and me

GILMAN, David
Puffin Books, Vic, 2014
ISBN 9780143308232
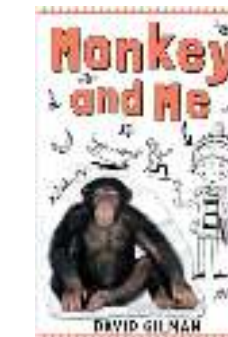
Beanie, so nicknamed because of his loss of hair as a result of leukaemia treatment, is a normal, intelligent almost ten year old, who is full of humour and always getting up to mischief. His upbeat, jovial dad and his worried, but not smothering mum, do their best to make his life as smooth as possible. When Beanie, with his older brother's gang, explores the derelict Black Gate, an overhead thumping spooks them. Beanie discovers the cause - a very frightened chimpanzee. The two begin to communicate through sign language and Beanie decides to save and protect Malcolm the chimp. Beanie does not hesitate to use his 'circumstances', as his disease is nicknamed, to assist with the rescue. Throughout, Beanie's determination, positivity, creativity and resilience shine through with an authentic, if a little precocious, voice. The reader's vocabulary will be enhanced as Beanie articulates the situations in which he finds himself. S. Morton

USER LEVEL:	Stage 2 Stage 3
SCIS 1651990	Paper $14.99

Up and away

HARMER, Wendy & EDMONDS, Andrea
Scholastic Australia, NSW, 2014 (Ava
Anne Appleton)
ISBN 9781743621813

Alliteration abounds in this predictable first novel for newly independent readers. Ava Anne Appleton of Australia Avenue has a dog, Angus, a mother, Anne, and a father, Alan. Even their campervan is named *The Adventurer*. When Ava meets a new friend, Bonnie, the B-team emerges, as expected. The plot, setting and dialogue are comfortable and gentle. The girls, their parents and their pet dogs become instant friends and the happily-ever-after theme continues throughout. Accessible, literal language, supported by cosy black and white sketches, allows most students to absorb the story. The inclusion of more figurative language would have added value for students learning about the author's purpose and the development of characters. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Stage 1
SCIS 1647140   Paper $9.99

Ava Anne Appleton: #2 Up and away by Scholastic

Alice-Miranda shines bright

HARVEY, Jacqueline
Random House Australia, NSW, 2013
(Alice-Miranda)
ISBN 9781742752907

This, the eighth in the *Alice-Miranda* series, finds one of the four firm school friends less than happy. Jacinta has suddenly turned back into the quarrelsome and bad-tempered girl she once was, and nothing Alice-Miranda does can identify what the problem might be. Further turmoil occurs when Mr Parker, in a coma for three years and to whom Alice-Miranda has been reading once a week, suddenly disappears. Throw in a wondrous discovery in a secret cave in the hills, a devious and unscrupulous mayor, a horrible high school teacher and principal, plus some family relationship crises and Alice-Miranda has her hands full restoring order and happiness. Astoundingly, accomplish this she does, assisted by Millie, Sloane, Jacinta and even her very highly positioned aunt. Readers will appreciate this light-hearted combination of friendships, humour, mystery and the never-say-die attitude of Alice-Miranda. More information about the author and the series can be found on the author's website. S. Morton

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4
SCIS 1623510   Paper $15.95

Jacqueline Harvey talks about Alice-Miranda shines bright by Random House Books AU

Planning learning activities using YouTube videos embedded in *Scan*? Note that a teacher log in is required to view YouTube videos in the NSW DEC environment.

The treasure of Dead Man's Cove

IVANOFF, George
Random House, NSW, 2014 (You choose)
ISBN 9780857983831

Interactive novels may hold the key to inspiring students who regularly choose books that are less complex or less challenging. By encouraging readers to persevere and sustain their reading, a series such as You choose bridges the gap between popular picture-driven books and novels with more depth. The style of this new series relies on first person narrative, short active sentences and minimalist chapters. Choices need to be made that drive the plot forward, while creating the illusion of reading a whole chapter book. This strategy, and the adventurous treasure hunt and piratical content of this first book in the series, should appeal to students who otherwise may balk at a book with 137 pages. Teachers could explore this 'choose your own ending' strategy, engaging students to offer different, creative resolutions in their own writing. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Stage 1 Stage 2
KLA: AC; English
SYLLABUS: English K–10
SCIS 1648523   Paper $14.99

Jack Pepper

LEAN, Sarah
HarperCollins Children's Books, UK, 2014
ISBN 9780007570164

Ruby recognises the name and face of Jack Pepper, a ginger and white terrier, on a "lost dog" poster. The narrative then flashes back to three years earlier, to a game of pretend dragon training, which Ruby played with Sid in an attempt to forget about the inconvenient birth of her baby brother, also named Jack. Into that game had stumbled a tiny lost puppy! While the swift narrative certainly engages the reader, this brief book ends abruptly. Jack Pepper's story continues in *Hero*, of which an excerpt is included at the conclusion of this first instalment. The author runs writing competitions for young readers from her website. I. McLean

USER LEVEL:	Stage 2 Stage 3
SCIS 1649012	Paper $14.99

Badudu stories

O'BRIEN, May L. & LEANEY, Angela
Fremantle Press, WA, 2014
ISBN 9781922089823
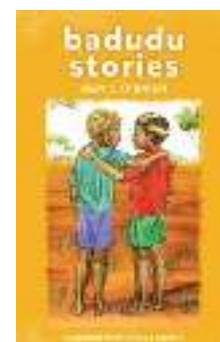
Four acclaimed short stories, written from an Aboriginal child's perspective, are combined in this single volume. As Indigenous words are interspersed throughout each story, a pronunciation guide and dictionary of words from the Wongutha people assists with the reading. The *badudu* of the title is from the language of the Wonguthu nation, meaning *not what it seems*. This forms the big idea of each story as the protagonists raise awareness about learning English as a second language. EAL/D students may relate to some of the amusing situations that arise as misunderstandings occur when colloquial English is used. By deepening understanding of the cross-curriculum priority, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, this accessible book is a valuable tool for teaching the new Australian Curriculum. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL:	Stage 1 Stage 2
	Professional
KLA:	AC; English
SYLLABUS:	English K–10
SCIS 1651561	Paper $12.99

The Catier Emerald

O'HELY, Eileen
Walker Books Australia, NSW, 2014
(Kitten Kaboodle. Mission 1)
ISBN 9781929931

In Dingy Litter Alley, a lost cat is about to be set upon by a pack of aggressive dogs. Saved at the last moment by the impressive kung fu skills of Kitten Kaboodle, of Clandestine Activity Taskforce (CAT), this ginger feline hero is winning the battle, except for the humiliation of young human owner, Judy, stumbling across the scene, and revealing his alter ego to be… Buttons! Soon, Kitten Kaboodle is off on a new and dangerous mission against Disaster Organisation Group (DOG) Fortress. This fast paced humorous novel satirises *Mission: Impossible*, with our spy hero having more clever gadgetry, disguises and witty repartee than Maxwell Smart (*Get Smart*) and James Bond 007 combined in the retrieval of the precious Catier Emerald. The illustrations by Heath McKenzie are delightful, with many expressive faces on good cats and evil dogs. I. McLean

USER LEVEL:	Stage 2 Stage 3
SCIS 1641856	Paper $14.95

The firebird mystery

PITT, Darrell
Text Publishing, Vic, 2014 (A Jack Mason adventure)
ISBN 9781922147752

What do you get when you combine a consulting detective, an orphaned young acrobat, airships, and a mystery which, if left unsolved, might be the end of the world as we know it? *The firebird mystery* is the first in an eight book series and is set in an alternative past where historical figures and events are blended with futuristic inventions. The story is full of mystery, action, humour, and interwoven with historical figures and events from the Victorian era. Themes in the story include trust, loyalty, family, power and corruption. Teacher's notes are available. M. Sutera
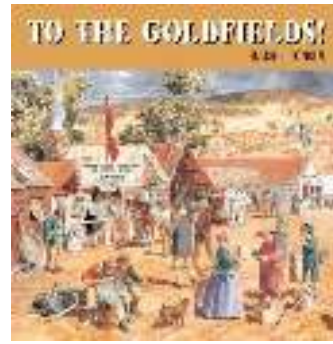
USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4
KLA:	AC; English
SYLLABUS:	English K–10
SCIS 1647153	Paper $16.99

To the goldfields!

TONKIN, Rachel
Walker Books Australia, NSW, 2014
ISBN 9781922179883

Narrated through the eyes of a young boy, the human element of life on the goldfields is depicted in this picture book and is accompanied by highly detailed illustrations. The book provides a compelling interpretation of the Victorian goldfields and enables the reader to empathise with the discomforts, challenges and successes from a child's point of view. The high level of detail in the illustrations provides a great deal of information on landscapes, living and social conditions and technologies of the time. Historical facts about laws and life on the goldfields are woven through the narrative and provide a springboard for further research. The book is a good example of historical fiction, would suit role play and dramatisation, and strongly supports the history topic: *The Australian colonies* and the Stage 3 COGs unit: *Traditions and heritage*. G. Braiding

USER LEVEL: Stage 3
KLA: AC; HSIE
SYLLABUS: History K–10
SCIS 1651620   Paper $16.95

fiction for older readers

Resources are arranged alphabetically by author. See also *eresources*. Some of these books are also suitable for upper primary students.

Nymph

ALEXANDRA, Tonya
Walker, NSW, 2014
ISBN 9781922077240

Greek mythology is interwoven into this mystical narrative about a forbidden romance between the faded star nymph, Merope, and Lukas, a 17 year old mortal boy. Banished to Earth for displeasing the gods, Zeus and Orion, Merope attends high school and tries to live a normal human life, learning to behave as a teenager on a small Greek island. Narrated in the third person, the use of humour and colloquial teenage dialogue may engage the target audience. The over emphasis on females being stunningly beautiful and often unable to make decisions is an unfortunate aspect of this supernatural love story, inviting discussion about gender stereotyping and representations of women. A. Frost

USER LEVEL: Stage 6
SCIS 1646939   Paper $19.95

The finisher

BALDACCI, David
Macmillan Children's Books, UK, 2014
ISBN 9781447263005

One person's attempt to hold onto all things that she cares for in a world full of secrets and lies is the central theme of this gripping fantasy novel by the popular David Baldacci. It is a well written first instalment of the struggle of the teenage heroine to protect those close to her and hold true to her own values against the threats, jealousies and circumstances of her life. It is well structured, incorporating both natural and mystical elements in a manner which adds to the complexity of the plot. Readers will be able to identify with the central character's struggles as she does battle against human and non-human forces. While the novel is too complex for classroom use, there is scope for close studies of various aspects of the story as examples of the fantasy genre. B. Kervin

USER LEVEL: Stage 5 Stage 6
SCIS 1651302   Paper $16.99

Two wolves

BANCKS, Tristan
Random House Australia, NSW, 2014
ISBN 9780857982032

One day after school, the police come to Ben Silver's house, looking for his parents. Soon after, his parents arrive home, announcing that they are going on a family holiday. Ben wants to be a detective when he grows up and what unfolds is a mystery beyond Ben's wildest imaginings. His parents are in trouble, but why? What will happen if he discovers why? The story presents many dichotomies – nature vs nurture, good vs evil, family loyalty vs doing the right thing, child vs adult – all examples of the 'two wolves' within us. Ben makes some wrong decisions, but with the best of intentions. He shows resilience, resourcefulness and strength of character. This well crafted novel with a believable protagonist, who struggles with family loyalty against the antagonist, his own father, should intrigue readers. Teaching notes can be

found at [Random House Australia](). H. Myers

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4

SCIS 1644044   Paper $16.99

Two wolves - official book trailer
by Random House Books AU

The bone dragon

CASALE, Alexia
Faber and Faber, UK, 2013
ISBN 9780571295616

There are few novels about foster care for the many secondary students in care in every high school. This is a book for them and for others who have suffered grief and loss. It is the story of Evie, who was physically and emotionally abused before she was adopted in middle childhood. We meet her when she has just had an operation to repair the damage that was done to her. She is in the care of a kind couple who have lost their son in a car accident. She knows she is loved but she still suffers from terrifying nightmares and flashbacks. Her foster uncle helps her by carving a bone fragment from her rib into a dragon to give her strength. At night the dragon comes to life and takes her on magical midnight journeys that allow her to sleep peacefully for the rest of the night. She learns to confront her demons and, it seems, the dragon avenges her. A. Soutter

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6

SCIS 1611003   Paper $19.99

Bird

CHAN, Crystal
The Text Publishing Company, Vic, 2014
ISBN 9781922147707

Jewel Campbell was born of a Jamaican father and a Mexican mother on the day her five year old brother died while trying to fly. Her grandpa had nicknamed him 'Bird' and Jewel's parents blame him and Jamaican evil spirits for the boy's death. For her entire life, Jewel has felt as though she was not as important or as loved as Bird. After a family visit to Bird's grave on the 12th anniversary of his death, Jewel sneaks away to be alone and climb her favourite tree. She is surprised there by a boy who is staying with his uncle in a nearby house. A strong friendship develops between the two and, after years of not feeling wanted, Jewel finally finds someone who will listen to her and in whom she can confide her secrets and fears. *Bird* is a complex, sad, beautifully written novel, interweaving themes of family, grief and love with superstition and difference. All of the main characters are flawed but the climax and ending of the novel leave the reader with a sense of hope. H. Myers

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4

SCIS 1641852   Paper $16.99

Crystal Chan's Bird by Simon & Schuster

Evil under the sun

CHRISTIE, Agatha
Adapted by Didier Quella-Guyot & Thierry Jollet.
Harper, UK, 2013
ISBN 9780007451340

Cleverly condensed written text is well supported by ink and watercolour illustrations that faithfully reproduce the locations found on Burgh Island off the Devon coast, all described in Christie's original work, and crucial to the plot. Accurate illustrations for the 1940s period – buildings, clothing and furnishings – prepare the reader for old fashioned phrases and sentiments. A long distance illustration sets the scene for each chapter. Using the clues provided by the detailed images, students could describe the location, the action and the behaviour of the characters. Viewing a [film adaptation](), especially one starring David Suchet as Poirot, could springboard discussion about the effectiveness of different media. As the text is predominantly dialogue, this graphic novel could easily be adapted as a play script and would appeal to lovers of mystery. C. Keane

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4
KLA: AC; English
SYLLABUS: English K–10
SCIS 1632298 $24.99

Planning learning activities using YouTube videos embedded in *Scan*? Note that a teacher log in is required to view YouTube videos in the NSW DEC environment.

Jane Eyre: the graphic novel

CORZINE, Amy
Classical Comics, UK, 2008
ISBN 9781906332082

A blurb on the cover of this graphic novel claims that the full story is presented as a fast paced read in modern English. Although these claims are supported by the text, the author's original language choices are what constitute a novel. What the reader receives in this version is the plot, but not a graphic version of the original novel. This text may be a useful support for students who are struggling to read the original and it provides useful information about the Bronte family and how a graphic novel is made, however it is only the ghost of the original. Supporting students to access the novel by using the original language in a graphic novel would provide an opportunity to more fully appreciate the artistry which has made the original novel so popular for so long. K. Rushton

USER LEVEL: Stage 4
KLA: AC; English
SYLLABUS: English K–10
SCIS 1477430   Paper $27.69

Tank Boys

DANDO-COLLINS, Stephen
Random House Australia, NSW, 2014
ISBN 9780857981301

Fact and fiction combine in this book to provide insight into the thoughts and actions of soldiers living and dying on the battlefields of France during WWI. The focal point is history's first tank-versus-tank battle, but it is the men (and adolescents) of both sides who paint the picture of life and death on the front. The chapters alternate between the activities of the allied forces and those of the German forces. Inexorably, both groups move closer until the tanks of both sides engage. The ugliness of war is portrayed as gently as possible, although some scenes and language are better suited to a more mature reader, able to cope with distressing descriptions. The huge personal cost of war to families, landscapes and countries on both sides is highlighted, providing opportunities for discussion on courage and cowardice, mateship and heroism. *Mephisto*, the world's sole surviving German A7V tank, can be seen at the Queensland Museum. This text may support Stage 5 *Depth study 3: Australians at War: World Wars I and II (1914–1918, 1939–1945)*. The story is also available in ebook format. S. Morton

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5
KLA: AC; HSIE
SYLLABUS: History K–10
SCIS 1647135   Paper $17.99

Almost dead

DELANEY, Kaz
Allen & Unwin, NSW, 2014
ISBN 9781743313268

A witty, paranormal young adult romance, this novel explores regular and fantastical situations of growing up. Macey Pentecost, the main protagonist, provides a fun and sassy narrative voice as she navigates the conundrum of being a privileged teenager growing up amongst the Gold Coast elite. Her family structure is breaking down, she is noticing boys, she is into clairvoyance and she sees ghosts. Although Macey and Finn are stereotypical teen characters, readers may be entertained by their sharp banter and witty characterisation. Although the plot is a little predictable in parts, it is fast paced with some clever twists that provide intrigue. This interwoven narrative of family, friendship, and growing up may

instigate a discussion on belonging.
A. Frost

USER LEVEL: Stage 5 Stage 6

SCIS 1641267   Paper $15.99

The road to Gundagai

FRENCH, Jackie
Angus & Robertson, NSW, 2013
(Matilda saga 3)
ISBN 9780732297220
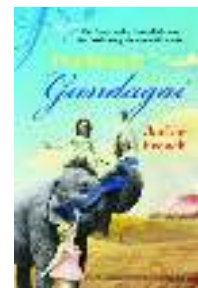
Set in Australia's Great Depression, this is the third book in the *Matilda saga* but stands alone as a thoroughly enjoyable novel. Featuring Blue, orphaned, badly burned and ensconced in the country with spinster aunts, this tale of mystery, courage, intrigue and romance follows Blue's thrilling escapades as she journeys with a travelling circus. Full of colourful characters and their daily lives, from the first page the reader empathises with Blue and wants to look out for her. Luckily for Blue, she meets many unique characters along the way who do just that, including Sheba the elephant, although there are many surprises in store for her. Glimpses of 1930s Australian history take the reader on a passage into the past as Blue's troubles and tribulations are recounted.
G. Braiding

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5

SCIS 1627429   Paper $19.99

SWF2013: Interview with award-winning Australian kids' book author, Jackie French by SydneyWritersCentre

The encyclopedia of early Earth

GREENBERG, Isabel
Jonathan Cape, UK, 2013
ISBN 9780224097192

In graphic novel format, this series of intertwined stories of a storyteller on a quest for enlightenment is reminiscent of Nordic tales, with touches of the Old Testament and Greek mythology. The initial introduct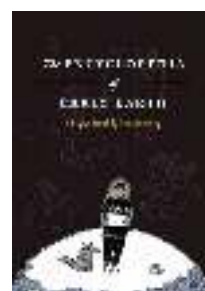ion of star-crossed lovers who seem destined to remain apart may herald a love story, but this is not to be a romance in the traditional sense. The intertwined stories may appear to be old, but the dialogue is an amalgam of 21st century cheek and formal choices. Through

reading images, students might explore how the composer has uniquely managed to convey the cold, which almost seeps from the largely grey-toned pages, despite occasional splashes of warm colours. The intertextual devices within individual sections of this book will introduce Stage 4 and 5 learners to many literary traditions. S. Bremner

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5

SCIS 1638324 $39.95

Spill the beans – Isabel Greenberg by Solent TV

Dangerous

HALE, Shannon
Bloomsbury, UK, 2014
ISBN 9781408838853

Exploring the notion of how far you would go for someone else, this science fiction novel is intertwined with a young romance. Maisie, the main protagonist, has high intelligence and determination as she deals with life and death situations from a unique perspective. A romantic triangle, extra-terrestrial invasion, shifting allegiances, life threatening battles and many characters with super powers provide a high energy plot that is constantly shifting with an extraordinary volume of events occurring. Readers may enjoy the clichéd puns that are prevalent throughout the novel, remembering that science fiction requires a willing suspension of disbelief. Careful consideration in relation to the appropriateness of this book for readers may be required in terms of their age, personal circumstances and maturity. A. Frost
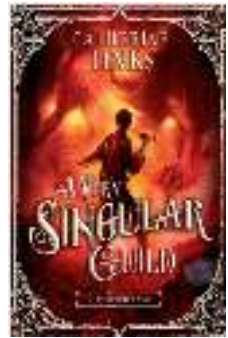
USER LEVEL: Stage 5 Stage 6

SCIS 1651995   Paper $15.99

Dangerous by Shannon Hale book trailer by Bloomsbury publishing

A very singular guild

JINKS, Catherine
Allen & Unwin, NSW, 2014
(City of orphans)
ISBN 9781743313091

Late 19th century London is still cursed with an influx of bogles, creatures living in the city's underground sewers and tunnels, only emerging to consume unsuspecting little children. Alfred Bunce now has the financial backing of the London Sewers Office to continue his battle to eliminate the monsters. His new apprentice, Ned, assists Jem in the task of luring out the bogles so that Alfred can use his strangely powerful spear. The life and times of England are woven in with the mystery of the bogles, the contrast between the wealthy and the underclasses clearly apparent. Ned's fascination with the growing technological revolution is weighed against the prevailing superstitions. As this book is the third and final title in the series, the reader would benefit from reading the previous titles. S. Morton

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6
SCIS 1627412   Paper $14.99

Catherine Jinks chats with Shearer's Bookshop
by ShearersBooks

Afterworld

LOUNSBURY, Lynette
Allen & Unwin, NSW, 2014
ISBN 9781743315101

Containing a poignant and philosophical examination of death, the existence of life after death, and the traumas and challenges that go with this, the content of this novel may be confronting to some readers as it investigates issues of religion and the afterlife. Figures from many religions appear with an emphasis that all religions are correct. Although Dominic is 15 years old, the layered characters feel older and real connections with them only occur towards the fairytale ending of the novel. The three stages of this quirky, yet intriguing, narrative are stylistically different. This facilitates the development of the characters and teaches the reader about Dominic's initial struggle to understand the history of the world, his place in it and the afterlife. The supernatural elements of this story require careful consideration. A. Frost

USER LEVEL: Stage 6
SCIS 1644335   Paper $17.99

The fall of the house of Usher

MANNING, Matthew K.
Stone Arch, USA, 2013
ISBN 9781434242587

A popular tale by a well-known author is successfully transformed into a graphic representation, capturing the mood effectively. Utilising a number of techniques, including bold borders, combinations of light and shade and well defined illustrations, it is able to take the reader on a downward emotional journey of fear, doom and guilt. It is a very good example of how to construct and develop a short story. While the graphic form encourages readers of all abilities to experience and enjoy the construction method, it also provides an example of reinventing literature in another form. It has merit as a source for a number of classroom activities, including focusing on form, responding to text, and the interrelationship of language with ideas. B. Kervin

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5
SCIS 1611366   Paper $12.95

The year my life broke

MARSDEN, John
Pan Macmillan Australia, NSW, 2013
ISBN 9781742613352

The author of this novel has placed the reader squarely in the world of the upper primary student using the voice of Josh, the Year 6 protagonist, to tell the story. The first person narration is peppered with occasional coarse language, slang and colloquial speech and the plot concerns family and school life, sport and a mysterious empty house. The involvement of the police and a shooting in that house inject some drama into an otherwise pedestrian story. This sub-plot breaks up the many pages describing Josh's passionate obsession with playing cricket. The interplay between Josh and his arch nemesis, the PE teacher, makes for uncomfortable reading, given the negative portrayal of this teacher. Josh's emergence from disgruntled new boy at

school to cricket hero is inferred through his relationships with parents, classmates, neighbours and the girl next door. Teachers' notes are provided by the publisher. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4
SCIS 1639736   Paper $12.99

Racing the moon

MORGAN, Michelle
Allen & Unwin, NSW, 2014
ISBN 9781743316351

Joe Riley is a 12 year old growing up in Sydney during the Great Depression. He is a lovable larrikin, getting into trouble, and not averse to running a scam or two to earn some money. His dad runs an illegal bookmaking business and manages to gather enough money to send Joe to a Catholic boarding school. Unwilling to be subjected to bullying, corporal punishment and sexual harassment by one of the priests, Joe retaliates and is sent to a reform school on the south coast where he learns the value of hard work and friendship. Joe feels he belongs there, even though life on the farm is tough. One of the challenges he decides to face before leaving is to 'race the moon', a dangerous escapade and not quite

within the rules of the farm! Narrated in the first person from Joe's perspective, the story presents a reasonably accurate account of the harshness of life and the social issues existing in Sydney during the depression years. Incidents of domestic violence against Joe and his mother, at the hands of his father, though contextual, are disturbing. Teaching notes are available. H. Myers

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4
SCIS 1641869   Paper $15.99

The mystery of the golden card

NIX, Garth & WILLIAMS, Sean
Allen & Unwin, NSW, 2013
(Troubletwisters)
ISBN 9781742374000
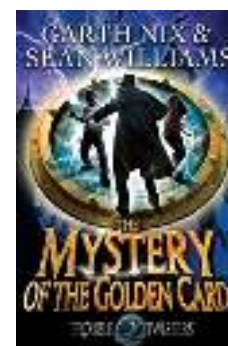
Trouble twister twins, Jaide and Jack, have special gifts that will allow them to eventually guard the wards. They decide to accept the mission suggested by their father (also a Warden) to recover the Golden Card of Translocation, lost somewhere in the vast estate of the recently deceased Young Master Rourke. Negotiating secret passages with animated suits of armour and talking parrots, they attempt to outsmart the secret agents for The Evil

who are also looking for the Golden Card. Whoever finds the Card will gain access to the Gift, which will make them the most powerful. Within the race to save the world from evil, there are themes of friendship, family and responsibility that may engage students. Additional discourse on consequences based on previous decisions may instigate discussion on accountability. Teachers should be aware of the menacing and sinister prologue and the overarching theme of keeping secrets from parents. A. Frost

USER LEVEL: Stage 5 Stage 6
SCIS 1611226   Paper $19.95

The Mystery of the Golden Card (Troubletwisters 3) book trailer by Allen & Unwin

Planning learning activities using YouTube videos embedded in *Scan*? Note that a teacher log in is required to view YouTube videos in the NSW DEC environment.

Hollow city

RIGGS, Ransom
Quirk Books, USA, 2014
(Miss Peregrine's peculiar children)
ISBN 9781594747175
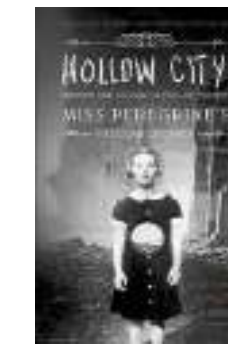
Relying on prior knowledge about the peculiar children and their teacher, Miss Peregrine, this second novel picks up from the first as Jacob and his friends journey to London. Readers unfamiliar with the complex plots, settings and peculiar characters, may struggle to engage immediately with this new experience involving time loops, shapeshifters and bizarre animals. Those who have been transported into this realm between fantasy and realism will accept all that occurs as the peculiar personae strive to resist the hollowgasts and release Alma Peregrine from her bird form. The characters, real and imaginary, are well developed, the language sophisticated and well crafted and the suspense is palpable. Cleverly sourced vintage photographs complement this dark narrative. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Stage 5 Stage 6
SCIS 1645217   Paper $16.95

Hollow city by Ransom Riggs book trailer
by FullyBookedVideo

The little prince

SFAR, Joann
Walker, UK, 2013
ISBN 9781406331981

Adapted from the 1943 novella by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, this graphic novel version retains the essence of the fairytale story whilst engaging the reader with whimsical illustrations. The endearing quotes and salient plot points and messages from the original story are present and dramatised through the medium of the graphic novel. Close-up faces clearly show the emotions of the little prince and the aviator, although purists may decry this modern interpretation of the prince with his manga-like eyes. This representation of the classic French story retains all of the original adults' behaviours such as smoking and drinking, while the prince's flower appears as a naked sprite. Students who need additional support with reading, or who struggle to sustain their reading, may find the comic-book format of this rendition suits them. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Stage 4
KLA: AC; English
SYLLABUS: English K–10
SCIS 1635171   Paper $16.95

Hunted

STIEFVATER, Maggie
Scholastic, NSW, 2014 (Spirit animals)
ISBN 9781742839998

Following the path of a true fantasy quest, this series entertains readers with a mixture of suspense, a belief in the unbelievable and a connection with characters, both human and spiritual. The premise of the series relies on the partnership and subsequent powers of human children with their spirit animals. In this second episode in the series, set in the world of Erdas, the four children and the spirit animals from Book #1 must evade the Conquerers and recover the talisman guarded by Rumfuss, the boar. The fast pace of this adventure and the elements of trust and companionship amongst the characters allow the reader to readily engage with the scenarios. A Spirit animals online game enables followers to interact with the Greencloaks on quests to protect Erdas. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4
SCIS 1644944   Paper $12.99

Spirit animals teaser by Scholastic

 Planning learning activities using YouTube videos embedded in *Scan*? Note that a teacher log in is required to view YouTube videos in the NSW DEC environment.

Kokoda

TUCKER, Alan
Scholastic Press, NSW, 2014 (My Australian story)
ISBN 9781743622056
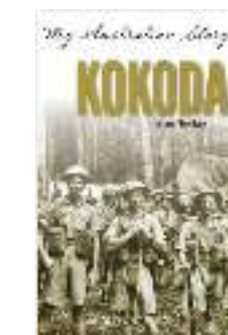
In this book, Tucker has produced a balanced recreation of life, both on the Kokoda Track and in Australia, during 1941 and 1942. The story centres on Archie McLeod, who, at 14, has to stay at home in Australia with his mother while his two older brothers go off to fight the Japanese in New Guinea. In his diary, Archie paints a vivid picture of life in Townsville and the changes that occurred with the influx of American troops and equipment. The novel records his daily life at home, including his battles with the local bully, while letters from his brothers, Des and Harold, tell of their struggles in the jungle on the Kokoda Track. The language is very upbeat and even though the author provides a wealth of detail about the reality faced by Australians at the time, the book is an enjoyable read and one that would engage boys in the art of reading. The book, supported by historical notes and a glossary, may also be a useful resource for the History Stage 5 Depth Study 3:

Australians at War. See underline teacher notes for discussion points and activities. A. Ellis
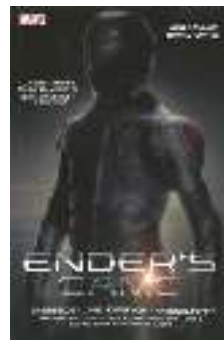
USER LEVEL: Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5
KLA: AC; English; History
SYLLABUS: English K–10; History K–10
SCIS 1649002   Paper $16.99

Ender's game graphic novel

YOST, Christopher
Marvel, USA, 2013
ISBN 9780785185338

Ender has been born and bred to be a boy hero who has to defeat the Formics and save his planet. He is recruited to Battle School, separated from his family and trained to fight. This is a science fiction graphic novel which will engage the reader through the plot and the underlying themes in the moral conflict Ender feels between his desire to fight and win and his desire to be a moral person who does not inflict pain or act in a cruel manner. Readers who long for fast paced, action packed narratives will enjoy the fight to the death atmosphere which surrounds the central character. However, this text also provides the reader with an opportunity to watch a character develop and to

ponder the same issues which are central to his life and possibly their own. This is a wonderful example of what the graphic novel does best, a feast of images that will fire the imagination of the most reticent reader. K. Rushton

USER LEVEL: Stage 4
KLA: AC; English
SYLLABUS: English K–10
SCIS 1637586   Paper $24.99

Ender's game official trailer #2 (2013) – Asa Butterfield, Harrison Ford Movie HD by MOVIECLIPS trailers

information, poetry and drama

Resources are in Dewey order

Why spacemen can't burp

SYMONS, Mitchell
Red Fox, UK, 2014
ISBN 9781849415514 [030.2]

Author Mitchell Symons is known for his previous volumes of "gross facts", such as *Why eating bogeys is good for yo*u and *Do igloos have loos?*, which both won Blue Peter awards for information books. The information presented is quite random and not necessarily "gross", despite its cover art and subtitle suggesting a space theme. Eclectic facts briefly explain the Leaning Tower of Pisa, Barbie dolls, fish fingers, laughing hyenas and decaffeinated coffee. Some facts are humorously illustrated by Nigel Baines' cartoon panels. A 45 page illustrated appendix provides excerpts from other

books by the author. Symons' underline website showcases the *Gross facts* and *That's so gross!* series, provides a facility for sending free bogey ecards, and offers downloadable quiz sheets. I. McLean

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA: AC; English; SciTech
SYLLABUS: English K–10; Science & Technology K–6
SCIS 164809   Paper $14.99

Procrastination buster: getting things done

GENOVESE, Jane & GENOVESE, Sharon
Learning Fundamentals, WA, 2012
ISBN 9780980738858 [155.232]

As both teachers and students know, beating procrastination is not easy. There are so many distractions today that anyone can easily avoid getting down to work. This booklet aims to provide a toolkit of different techniques to help students stop wasting time and succeed at school. Of course, many students will thumb through the booklet to avoid completing schoolwork but if they do they may realise that overcoming procrastination means enjoying life more and being less stressed. The book

is really a short course in tackling the negative thoughts that sabotage a student's efforts to organise and begin their work. There are many reflective exercises to help learners pinpoint their best ways of dealing with distractions, and the associated website contains great study skills resources. Schools can also book a 'procrastination buster' workshop. Year advisers and school counsellors will find this book valuable. A. Soutter

USER LEVEL: Stage 5 Stage 6
                Professional
KLA: PDHPE
SYLLABUS: PDHPE 7–10; PDHPE
                Stage 6
SCIS 1587880   Paper $12.95

Elephants in the bush and other Yamatji yarns

CAMERON, Clarrie
Magabala Books, WA, 2013
ISBN 9781922142146 [305.89]

Humorous and entertaining, this collection of short stories told by an Aboriginal storyteller recounts amusing tales of station life in outback Western Australia. The antics of the characters and the harsh conditions of the

landscape are brought to life through Cameron's colourful language and hilarious descriptions. Aspects of Aboriginal culture, relationships and challenges are sprinkled throughout and told through the eyes of an Aboriginal person. From incredibly close encounters with snakes, seemingly misplaced elephants, trackers leading police afar and cattle droving in extreme conditions, these compelling yarns are an enjoyable read best suited for adults. G. Braiding

USER LEVEL: Professional
SCIS 1629096   Paper $19.95

Yamakarra!: Liza Kennedy and the Keewong Mob

Compiled and published by the Western Heritage Group.
Western Heritage Group Inc., NSW, 2013
ISBN 9780980594720 [305.89]

An important piece of Aboriginal oral social history is woven into this multi layered tapestry of personal experiences and memories. With a sensitive and expansive treatment, the text provides a human face to the changing attitudes and cross-cultural difficulties experienced by the indigenous population. Commencing with

recollections of an earlier carefree existence, it traces the journey through invasion, impact of government policies, co-existence and finally the celebration of survival, growth and recognition. The use of personal accounts and other primary sources allows the book to be used in a variety of ways, especially in History Stage 4: *Aboriginal and indigenous peoples, colonisation and contact history*, Stage 5: *Rights and freedoms*, and English Stage 6: Area of Study: *Discovery*. It is an empowering and positive story honouring the older members of their communities and has a lot to offer in the classroom. B. Kervin

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA: AC; English; HSIE
SYLLABUS: English Stage 6; History
                7–10; History K–10
SCIS 1647632   Paper $59.99

Indigenous rights

Edited by Justin Healey.
The Spinney Press, NSW, 2014 (Issues in society)
ISBN 9781922084323 [305.899]

Providing a very useful snapshot of Aboriginal rights in Australia today, this text also includes a glossary, fast facts, some multiple choice questions and suggestions

for exploring the issues discussed. The resource also includes photographs and cartoons and most topics are covered in one or two pages with bolded subheadings and breakaway boxes to support the reader. Even more valuable is the variety of reputable sources from which the articles have been drawn. Australian issues are clearly situated in a global context and challenging issues like the Northern Territory Emergency Response (aka *the intervention*) are addressed in this context. While information is provided from government sources, Aboriginal voices are also represented, as are organisations such as Amnesty International. K. Rushton

USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5
KLA: AC; HSIE
SYLLABUS: Aboriginal studies 7–10;
                History K–10
SCIS 1647341   Paper $26.00

Planning learning activities using YouTube videos embedded in *Scan*? Note that a teacher log in is required to view YouTube videos in the NSW DEC environment.

One day: around the world in 24 hours

DIN, Suma & ENGEL, Christiane
A & C Black, UK, 2013
ISBN 9781408180235 [306]

Reminiscent of the *Life in a day* film, this book peeks into the daily lives of 15 children from 15 countries and five different time zones. Aspects of the children's daily lives are shown across one day via full page illustrations beside pages laid out in comic book art effect. Placing the day across international time zones, this book provides a snapshot of the differences and diversity in our world today. This raising of global awareness may assist teaching about social life and customs in the *Cultures* strand in HSIE. At *Global dimension, the world in your classroom*, the author explains her rationale for writing this book, including aspects of time measurement and the rotation of the earth. She touches on children's rights issues, inferred in some of the illustrations, and asserts that children everywhere can identify with the same emotions and situations. G. Braiding

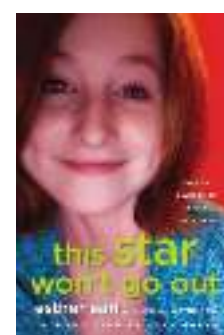**USER LEVEL:**   Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA: AC; HSIE
SYLLABUS: HSIE K–6
SCIS 1611100 $24.99

Life in a day by Life in a day

This star won't go out: the life & words of Esther Grace Earl

EARL, Esther
Penguin Books, Vic, 2014
ISBN 9780141354033 [362.196]

A memoir of journals, emails, blogs, letters and sketches tells the life and journey of Esther, who was diagnosed with thyroid cancer at 12 years of age and succumbed to the disease at 16. Described as a bright and talented girl by all who knew her, including her legion of friends whom she met via Skype, Twitter and from her YouTube videos, Esther refused to let her illness define who she was. She wrote light-hearted accounts of her treatments and drew little sketches to illustrate her thoughts. Esther used the internet as a way to connect with others outside her world and share her passion for Harry Potter and being a 'nerdfighter'. The format of the book illustrates the writer's point of view through pages that are colour coded, according to whose voice is being heard. Students may gain a deeper understanding of perspective and tone in writing as they read extracts from doctors, parents, online chat and Esther's own words. These exposés may support the Area of Study: *Discovery* as each stakeholder on Esther's journey realises a depth of self-discovery. The Earl family founded the Welcome to TSWGO non-profit organisation, dedicated to making a difference in the lives of children with cancer. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Stage 6
KLA: English
SYLLABUS: English Stage 6
SCIS 1646945   Paper $19.99

This star won't go out by Esther Earl, Lori Earl, and Wayne Earl by Penguin Teen

Domestic and family violence

Edited by Justin Healey.
The Spinney Press, NSW, 2014
(Issues in society)
ISBN 9781922084309 [362.82]

Domestic violence is more than a crime; it is an abuse of power by someone in a position of trust. It is often hidden so there are likely to be many students who have not been able to tell anyone about what is happening in their homes and will find this book very helpful. There may also be students who are themselves in abusive relationships with boyfriends or girlfriends and the section on signs of an abusive relationship will help them clarify what is happening. There is excellent advice from the *Bursting the bubble* website

about how students can safely tell someone about family violence. The book contains several lists of sources of support, and concludes with a guide to managing relationship conflict in a positive way. A. Soutter

USER LEVEL:	Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional
KLA:	HSIE; PDHPE
SYLLABUS:	Legal Studies Stage 6; PDHPE 7–10, PDHPE Stage 6
SCIS 1647343	Paper $26.00

Disasters

BURNIE, David
Scholastic, UK, 2013 (Scholastic discover more)
ISBN 9781407136530 [363.34]

Exploring the causes and impact of disasters, this well written resource may be valuable for Stage 4 and Stage 5 Geography students investigating outcomes 5A1, LSG3, and LSG5. Step-by-step instructions and timelines outline how disasters occur and their impact (including personal recounts of events). Stunning colour and black and white diagrams, images, photographs and maps will attract and maintain student attention. Topics are defined by bold headings with unambiguous written text. Short paragraphs delineate key ideas within each topic. Coloured text boxes provide interesting key notes. A free digital companion book that investigates exploration into and management of disasters, rescue and recovery is available for downloading in pdf format. The resource is easy to navigate, with extraordinary colour images, though some students may struggle with the white written text on some pages. Teachers may wish to share the text interactively on an IWB to showcase specific aspects of disasters and disaster management. A. Frost

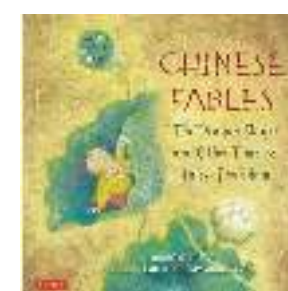|	
USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4 Stage 5
KLA:	AC; HSIE; Science
SYLLABUS:	Geography 7–10; Science K–10
SCIS 1593801	Paper $22.99

Chinese fables

NUNES, Shiho S & TAY-AUDOUARD, Lak-Khee
Tuttle, USA, 2013
ISBN 9780804841528 [398.2]

This is a collection of short stories that reflect the values and virtues of Chinese life, past and present. Developed from short abstracts and adapted for a modern audience, each story stands alone and has a hidden jewel of wisdom to show children how to live a life that is honest, respectful, courageous and self-reliant. Though the stories contain nuggets of ancient wisdom, some of these nuggets are a little hard to find. Children will read the stories for their own enjoyment, but may not always understand the subtle message that each contains. Guidance from a parent, teacher or guardian may be needed to promote a deeper under-standing. This is a delightfully illustrated book, useful in exploring aspects of Chinese culture in Stage 4 *Depth study 3: The Ancient world: The Asian world*. A. Ellis

USER LEVEL:	Stage 3 Stage 4
KLA:	AC; English; History
SYLLABUS:	English K–10; History K–10
SCIS 1594696	$18.99

Wollongong's native trees

FULLER, Leon
Big Bean Books, NSW, 2011
ISBN 9780959471137 [582.16]

This reference book contains photographs and descriptions of the trees found in the Wollongong area, as well as in other coastal forests of New South Wales. It is ideal for identification of the flora in the Illawarra region, as it provides maps and locations for various tree species. The book would be particularly useful for schools during local tree planting activities and environmental days in the Wollongong area. Students of Stage 5 Science would find it a valuable reference book when studying the Living World strand: SC5-14LW2. For senior students doing Biology, Earth and Environmental Science or Senior Science, this reference would be useful for local ecosystems studies. As well as identifying species, there is information included on the biotic and abiotic factors of the region and how they influence the distribution of species, as well as an historical account of the forests in the area. J. West

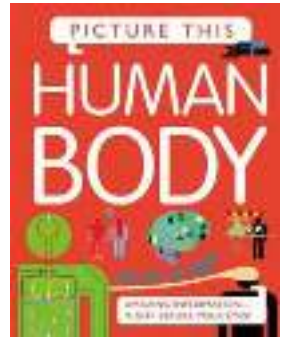|	
USER LEVEL:	Stage 5 Stage 6
KLA:	AC; Science; SciTech
SYLLABUS:	Biology Stage 6; Earth and Environmental Science Stage 6; Science K–10; Senior Science Stage 6
SCIS 1608383	Paper $45.00

Human body

HYNES, Margaret
Kingfisher, UK, 2013 (Picture this)
ISBN 9780753435038 [612]

The emphasis on graphic organisers to explain and illustrate many aspects of the human body makes this resource very useful for class work and research skills. The flow charts, pie charts, cycles, measuring scales, maps, symbols and labelled cross-sections in this science book are all excellent. They could be used to inform students how to include similar explanatory diagrams in other topics. Chapters include *Metric measures, Fuelling the body, Water of life, Waste disposal, The body's internet* (the nervous system), and *Keeping healthy. Find out more* has recommendations for additional book, internet and museum resources. This book is an excellent resource to support the Stage 2 unit, *A look inside*. I. McLean

USER LEVEL:	Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA:	SciTech
SYLLABUS:	Science & Technology K–6
SCIS 1610258	$16.99

Understanding anxiety

Edited by Justin Healey.
The Spinney Press, NSW, 2014
(Issues in society)
ISBN 9781922084347 [616.85]

Everyone experiences anxiety sometimes but, for some students, it can significantly interfere with their learning and friendships. This book clearly explains the major anxiety disorders and presents advice on how to manage and overcome anxiety when it becomes a problem. It sets out the signs, symptoms and treatments for anxiety, using sources such as the *Australian Psychological Society*, *Beyondblue*, *Raising Children Network*, *Lifeline*, *KidsHelpLine*, and *This Way Up*. Unfortunately, there is nothing about web treatment options such as *E-couch* or *MoodGYM*. However, there is a very good section on managing stress and keeping anxiety at bay. School counsellors will find this a very useful book to open up discussions about anxiety with students. A. Soutter

USER LEVEL:	Stage 5 Stage 6 Professional
KLA:	PDHPE
SYLLABUS:	PDHPE 7-10; PDHPE Stage 6
SCIS 1647331	Paper $26.00

Do your ears hang low?

Sung by the Topp Twins, pictures by Jenny Cooper.
Scholastic, NZ, 2012
ISBN 9781775431046 [782.42083]

Comical illustrations bring the lyrics of this traditional children's song to life in this picture book. An energetic mouse leads the way as each verse introduces a new animal with different shaped ears that can flip-flop, stand high or waggle about. The mirror at the end invites the reader to examine his/her own ears. The expressive faces of the crazy animals with their crazy ears enhance this rendition of the song. The song is sung and played by the Topp Twins, a comic and country music duo, on a CD that accompanies this picture book. The speed of the singing may make it difficult for very young children to sing along with the recording. Students would enjoy shared reading sessions, using this book as a stimulus for their own writing. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL:	Early Stage 1 Stage 1 Stage 2
SCIS 1574873	Paper $19.99

The hunger games. Catching fire: the official illustrated movie companion

EGAN, Kate
Scholastic Press, USA, 2013
ISBN 9780545599337 [791.43]

For anyone interested in the adaptation of a story from one medium to the other, this book documents the process in exquisite detail. Not just the crew, but also cast, discuss their experiences with the author, providing significant insight into the creation of the film. The many choices the director, the scriptwriter and the costume designers have to make are discussed, as they attempt to give audience appeal to already established characters. How much does a script based on a book have to mimic the text it is portraying? The way in which this adaptation was conceived and completed can also be compared with how other popular stories have been brought to the screen. The book gives a useful behind the scenes look at a collaborative creative process. S. Bremner

USER LEVEL:	Stage 4
SCIS 1637891	Paper $22.99

Imagine what happens next…

BUCHNER, Aaron & SCAHILL, Sophie
Front Foot Marketing, NSW, 2013
ISBN 9780992324407 [808.5]

Containing eight story starters with different themes, key words and colourful illustrations, this resource could stimulate class discussions, composing and dramatic responses. Themes include adventure, space, fantasy and mystery and the suggested key words can be expanded in a brainstorming activity to create a grammatically organised wordbank (*Exploring composing K–6*, p.18), for think, pair, share activities. *The super sentence* section of the *Primary English writing activities* video models writing activities to enhance students' responses to this resource, while Scahill's detailed illustrations could stimulate storyboard creation for digital narratives. Providing opportunities to develop imagination and predicting skills, this resource could support the achievement of *NSW English K–10 syllabus* outcomes EN1-10C, EN2-10C, EN1-11D and EN2-11D. C. Keane
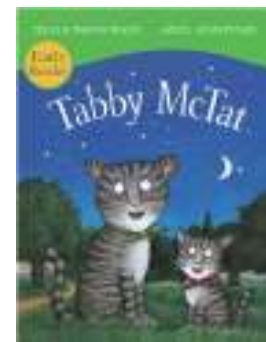
USER LEVEL: Stage 1 Stage 2
KLA: AC; English
SYLLABUS: English K–10
SCIS 1641421   Paper $19.95

Tabby McTat

DONALDSON, Julia & SCHEFFLER, Axel
Alison Green, UK, 2013
ISBN 9781407136271 [821]

Tabby McTat is a busker's cat, each day singing with Fred in their special spot and earning smiles and coins from passers-by. One day while Tabby goes for a stroll, Fred is injured and is taken to hospital. After Fred's disappearance, Tabby is adopted by a nearby family but when Fred returns and discovers his busking spot occupied and his friend missing, he reluctantly moves on. Despite beginning a family of his own and having a wonderful lifestyle, Tabby misses Fred so much he undertakes a long journey to find him. Donaldson's signature rhythmic verse and repetition leads the reader through a story of friendship, companionship and the recognition that what one person may consider a failing, others might regard as a talent, in this case Samuel Sprat's exceedingly loud voice. The cover of this edition identifies the book as an early reader. S. Morton

USER LEVEL: Stage 1 Stage 2
SCIS 1643451   Paper $7.99

Along the road to Gundagai

O'HAGAN, Jack & McLEAN, Andrew
Omnibus, SA, 2014
ISBN 9781862919792 [A821]

Illustrating the lyrics of the well-known 1922 song while providing a dual narrative that represents memories of World War I, this historical picture book has much to offer a study of Australian rural life during that period. A range of visual elements, constructed using *Sketch Club* on an iPad, is incorporated, exploring the effects of framing, colour and salience. Country childhood memories are portrayed brightly in frames, in contrast to the sombre war scenes, not mentioned in the lyrics, which bleed out of the edges like memories that can't be contained. Some images are disquieting but very pertinent for the History Stage 2 topic, *Community and remembrance*, and for analysing a visual text in *Reading and viewing 2*. Comprehensive *teachers' notes* are available. G. Braiding

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 5
KLA: AC; English; HSIE
SYLLABUS: English K–10; History K–10
SCIS 1641839 $24.99

The most excellent and lamentable tragedy of Romeo & Juliet: a play

SHAKESPEARE, William
Adapted and illustrated by Gareth Hinds.
Candlewick Press, USA, 2013
ISBN 9780763668075 [822.3]

Lush green lawns and shrubbery house several tombstones, divided by a stone wall. The hill top location offers an idyllic view of 16th century Verona, created in digitally enhanced watercolour, and provides the backdrop for Shakespeare's prologue, acknowledging the Bard's use of iambic pentameter in blocked sections of verse. The cemetery's stone wall is a visual prop to support the idea of unsubstantiated hatred and the prevalence of violence, *from ancient grudge break to a new mutiny*. Manga style drawings capture this violence, with sharp angled frames detailing the action to entice reader participation. In contrast to his faithful, albeit abridged, rendition of Shakespeare's text, Hinds adds a racial element to emphasise the antagonism between the feuding families: Juliet and the Capulets are Indians and are dressed in red; Romeo and the Montagues are dark skinned Africans, dressed in blue. This graphic novel offers an accessible introduction to

Romeo and Juliet and its sumptuous illustrations could provide the stimulus for dramatic productions. C. Keane
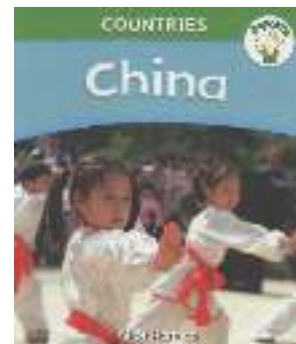
USER LEVEL: Stage 4 Stage 5
KLA: AC; English
SYLLABUS: English K–10
SCIS 1628732 Paper $22.95

China

HARMAN, Alice
Wayland Books, UK, 2013
(Popcorn. Countries)
ISBN 9780750279208 [951]

Providing geographical information on China and the lives of its people through simple text, large photographs and colourful pages, this slim resource includes information that is accessible across a range of student reading ability. Topics cover climate, landscape, customs and daily life and a map locates China within its region and shows its major cities. The inclusion of the English sounds for some Mandarin words and a dragon craft activity provides an interactive element and brings a little Chinese culture to life. Delivering a good example of an informative text, the book strongly supports the HSIE Stage 1 *Cultures* strand and the cross curriculum

priority, *Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia*. G. Braiding

USER LEVEL: Early Stage 1 Stage 1
KLA: AC; HSIE
SYLLABUS: History K–10; HSIE K–6
SCIS 1623364 Paper $12.99

Caroline Chisholm: the emigrant's friend

McCARTNEY, Tania & REYNOLDS, Pat
New Frontier Publishing, NSW, 2013
(Aussie heroes)
ISBN 9781921928482 [994.02]

One of the titles in the 'Aussie heroes' series, introducing primary students to people who have made a significant contribution to Australian society, this biographical text outlines Caroline Chisholm's tireless efforts to ease travel for migrant families to Australia, assist and educate young homeless women, improve social conditions for females, establish schools and set up land lease programs to assist pioneer families. At times the colour illustrations provide further meaning to support the text, but they are not overly engaging. An easy read for an average Stage 3 student or presenting more challenging vocabulary for Stage 2 students, this book provides

many opportunities for discussion. There are links to the primary History topic: *The Australian colonies*, and Stage 3 content relating to migration, colony establishment and the contributions of women, are all touched upon. L. Williams

USER LEVEL: Stage 2 Stage 3
KLA: AC; English; HSIE
SYLLABUS: English K–6; History K–10
SCIS 1627381 Paper $14.99

Australian Federation: one people, one destiny

BRENNAN, Net
Black Dog, NSW, 2014 (Our stories)
ISBN 9781922179944 [994.03]

Using a combination of primary sources and accessible language, this book clearly explains the developments and events that led to Federation in Australia. Bold titles, text boxes and numerous photographs, paintings and political cartoons explore the causes and effects of happenings that led to a federated nation. Key people are featured through text and portraits and personal perspectives are provided. The format of this book enables students to inquire about our history, identify different points of view,

and build empathy and understanding. This book strongly supports the History Stage 3 topic, *Australia as a nation*. *Teachers notes* are available. G. Braiding
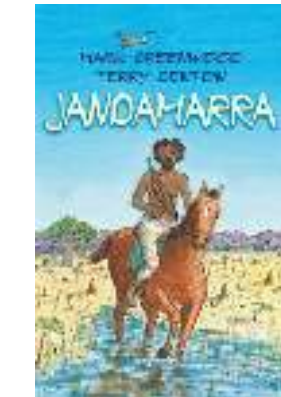
USER LEVEL: Stage 3
KLA: AC; HSIE
SYLLABUS: History K–10
SCIS 1651595 Paper $18.95

Jandamarra

SHORT LIST 2014

GREENWOOD, Mark & DENTON, Terry
Allen & Unwin, NSW, 2013
ISBN 9781742375700 [994.103]

The struggle between station owners grazing sheep and cattle in the Kimberley region of north-west Australia and the traditional custodians of the land, the Bunuba people, is at the heart of the Jandamarra story. Growing as a skilled hunter and tracker, Jandamarra (Pigeon) made a life changing decision to defend his people against the station owners by becoming an armed and fearless outlaw. His ability to appear and magically disappear infuriated the troopers who were determined to hunt him down. The dramatic events that led to Jandamarra and the Banuba people halting the progress of pastoral expansion for more than three years has

become legendary and a cultural part of Aboriginal history. This book explains the life and death of Jandamarra in explicit illustrations that demonstrate the violence of the conflict and the rugged beauty of the region. Including this book in a study of *Australia as a nation* may lead students to a deeper understanding of the insurrections and racial conflicts that occurred in Australia's 19th century frontier history. S. Rasaiah

USER LEVEL: Stage 4
KLA: AC; HSIE
SYLLABUS: History K–10
SCIS 1594258 $29.99

looking for more reviews?

supporting quality learning

Search the comprehensive *Resource reviews database* at www.schools.nsw.edu.au/resourcereviews

Who reviews?

Gaye Braiding, Epping North PS

Sue Bremner, Association of Independent Schools

Basil Capizzi, teacher

Alana Ellis, Australian Curriculum Advisor 7–12

Amanda Frost, The Hills Sports HS

Cath Keane, Editor, Learning Systems

Ian McLean, Penrith PS

Sue Morton, teacher librarian

Helen Myers, Camden HS

Sally Rasaiah, Cammeray PS

Kathy Rushton, consultant

Alison Soutter, Project Officer, FACS

Maria Sutera, Orange Grove PS

Jane West, Science Advisor 7–12

Frances Whalan, Association of Independent Schools

Leigh Williams, History K–6 Advisor