

AICS NEWS

Issue 1

Aboriginal Independent Community Schools

September 2003

Kulkarriya Community School Wins National Literacy and Numeracy Week Award



Kulkarriya Community School Chairperson Mrs Nita Cox, Principal Josh Bell, staff and students travelled to Sydney at the end of last month to attend the National Literacy and Numeracy Week Awards. The School was awarded a National Excellence Award for Literacy in the non-government schools' category. Only three (3) such awards are given out, annually, around Australia. National Literacy and Numeracy Week is a Commonwealth initiative, funded by DEST. The happy group are pictured here with the Minister for Education, Science and Training, Dr Brendan J Nelson.

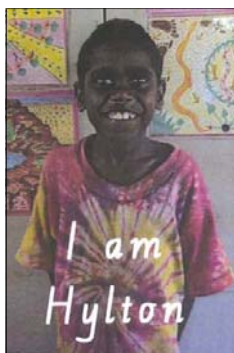
Radio Rawa

An exciting new addition to school resources at Rawa Community School is the BRACS (Broadcasting in Remote Aboriginal Communities) system. This system allows the school to broadcast radio shows all around Punmu Community. Radio Rawa is already proving to be a fun and effective learning resource for students, as they write promos, play songs and interview special guests. Students Amos Simpson and McKenzie Rogers, assisted by their teacher Kathryn Ferguson recently interviewed the new Pilbara Manager of the Department of Indigenous Affairs Kevin Caton. Kevin was a great subject to interview because, as well as talking about his new job, he used to be an AFL footballer, and told the community about playing for the Eagles! If you're ever travelling through Punmu make sure you tune in to 105.9 FM on your radio dial for Radio Rawa!



Newfoundland Comes to Yakanarra

Alison Gushue, a teacher from the island of Newfoundland off the coast of Canada, recently visited Yakanarra Community School. Alison's school, in rural Ontario, has many Native American students so she was really interested in an AIC School like Yakanarra. Alison loved being at the school and thought that the emphasis on English Literacy and Walmajarri Language was a great example of "two-way learning." She had great fun with the students and found time to do some reading with the kids.



Publishing Success for young Wulungarra Author

Hylton Laurel, aged 11, of Millijidee is about to become a published author with the publication of his story "The Cowboy Frog." *The Cowboy Frog* is now in print and the book is due for launch in Broome, during mid October, by Indigenous publishing house Magabala Books. The Millijidee Community is very proud of Hylton's achievement and at least half of the community's inhabitants is planning to travel to Broome to attend the big event. Written in English and Walmajarri, Hylton's story is about a cocky frog who becomes a hero in his own backyard, it also won him an award in a multicultural book competition two years ago.

AETC Sponsors Numeracy Research Project

The Numeracy Research Project flagged during the AICS Conference at the beginning of the year has finally been launched with the first meeting of the cross-sectoral working party held early this month. This project is commissioned by the AETC and has the following aims:

1. *Indigenous students, primarily in the K-7 year groups.*
2. *To explore the social, environmental and institutional contexts within which these strategies have been effective, and suggest how these may have influenced their effectiveness.*

3. *To describe and compare trends in numeracy and literacy achievement for Indigenous students in the study.*

4. *To propose a model of successful mathematics learning for Indigenous students in the K-7 year groups.*

The project is being managed by the Support Unit with the assistance from the Edith Cowan University and will be concluded in February 2004.

If anyone knows of schools and teachers who are having success with the teaching of mathematics then please put them in touch with Les Mack.

For a more detailed description of the project contact Les.

Diary Dates for Fourth Term:

October:

Third GRG payment (25%)

November:

ESL—ILSS Submit Round 2 data for students enrolled July—December
Country Areas Program, Literacy, Numeracy, LOTE, Special Ed, VET—Educational Accountability Reports due

December: (first week)

Performance Report due to DEST
Commonwealth CGA grants announced

Scaffolding Snippets from a Notebook

These are some of my notes from the workshop for school coordinators, run by Wendy Cowey in Perth 2—3 July 2003. I hope you find them useful and I'm happy to follow up with you on anything I've written. Just contact me at the email address below. Kate Mullin

How were the texts on the suggested booklist for scaffolding levelled/benchmarked?

All schools will have received a shrink wrapped pack entitled "Mapping Literacy Achievement" - Results of the 1996 National School English Literacy Survey. The front cover has grey and orange tinted photographs of kids and a map of Australia in the bottom right corner.

Information from this book formed the basis of the 'benchmarking/levelling exercise'

What do you do with students who already decode at junior secondary level?

The potency of doing miscue analysis is reduced when students are decoding at such a high level. The students now need to be tested using the TORCH test of reading comprehension to ensure that their comprehension matches their decoding skills. You may also care to analyse their writing for future scaffolding directions.

The TORCH test is currently being 'repackaged'. I've already ordered copies for two (2) schools. If you'd like me to order a copy for your school contact kmullin@ais.wa.edu.au

When students are working at 95% or above at an Individual Working Level (fortnightly testing) then they are in a position for you to engage them in higher order literacy tasks. They are beyond the level of proficiency required for instructional work and so can be engaged in discussions of the test user or text analyst type (*4 Roles of a Reader-Luke and Frebody*).

If anyone wants to read the *4 Roles of a Reader* article just email me on kmullin@ais.wa.edu.au

Why can't we give just a little 'supportive cueing' to students during testing? It can't hurt can it?

- It doesn't help students become more proficient readers and masks their actual proficiency level—it has ramifications for what counts and what doesn't when you are calculating %.
- It changes the dynamics of the testing scenario to one of greater dependency on the teacher.
- It doesn't allow students the extra processing time which often results in the correct response ie the student doesn't get the opportunity to work things out for himself/herself.

- We can't compare results within your school if testing is not done under the same conditions.

Self corrections are generally regarded as positive reading behaviours. However, if they are too frequent it means that students are not predicting well. For Independent Work Level tests ie fortnightly testing, this is saying something about the efficacy of the Orientation which has taken place.

How do you start to analyse narrative texts?

Try looking at the text through the 3 lenses

- Experiential
- Interpersonal
- Textual

These were introduced to most of us by Mary Macken-Horarik in Broome (see the handout entitled *Functional Grammar and Narrative*).

When you've chosen a passage for high order book orientation it is useful to divide it into clauses. A clause is a group of words containing a verb which can be part of a sentence or a whole sentence. It may also be one word, the verb.

Try and figure out for yourself what the language is achieving in each clause ie what is its function? Just keep asking yourself what is the purpose of this clause, what is the language being set up to do? Don't worry if you don't have fancy labels to name the functions, just keep it clear and concise. When you've done this, and worked through it with your students, you then have the basis of a writing plan.

Involvement on the part of the reader is often achieved through engagement with the feelings and emotions of characters (interpersonal) in the narrative. With less experienced readers it is often best to start reading texts with more of an emphasis on the experiential with occasional forays into the interpersonal domain.

Be aware that texts for older readers don't often follow the blueprint which we commonly associate with narrative structures. So the orientation stage of the story may not be an explicit telling of who, what, when, where. This information may be available to the reader—but implicitly. Just keep asking yourself—what's happening with the language here? What's it being used to do? That way you will keep more or less on track. Keep monitoring what it is you are doing to gain this meaning because you'll have to discuss this with your students too.

Wongutha: On the Road to Self-Sufficiency

A vision that Les Tucker, the Chairman of the Christian Aboriginal Parent-directed School Board, has long held is that the hostels at Coolgardie and Wongutha should be able to achieve a level of self-sufficiency through the production of food at Wongutha, a vocational school located on a farm north of Esperance. This vision is beginning to be realised through successful aquaculture and vegetable production trials at Wongutha. Both of which are part of the education programs offered by the school.

For the past two years trout have been raised in three 10,000 litre tanks. They are purchased as fingerlings in March and harvested in October/November when they are sold to local restaurants and, of course, eaten by staff and students.

One of the challenges associated with aquaculture is the management of nutrient levels in the tanks created by the waste produced by the fish. While this can be a problem which threatens the survival of the fish, at Wongutha this was seen as an opportunity. Through the application of innovative technology, developed and installed by the Wongutha staff, the school has set up a hydroponics system integrated with the aquaculture water purification system. The result is a fantastic crop of vegetables, healthy fish and more manageable water treatment and recycling processes which ensures that nothing is wasted.



So, not only is Wongutha CAPS providing quality education and training opportunities, it is putting the CAPS group of schools on the road to self-sufficiency in a way that is productive and environmentally friendly.



Many Years of Service at ACC

After eleven (11) years of service at Aboriginal Community College Tanya Solig is heading off for Long Service Leave. Tanya is a keen horsewoman and will be able to spend more time with her horses. We wish Tanya all the best for a well earned break.

Change of Numeracy Consultant



David Hewitt has returned to AISWA to perform the role of Numeracy Consultant while Julie Campbell is away on Maternity Leave.