Editorial

This issue of *Curriculum Matters* showcases a number of special projects undertaken by educators in Catholic schools in the Brisbane Archdiocese. By sharing best teaching practice and celebrating achievements through articles in *Curriculum Matters*, educators are not only sharing knowledge, but also inspiring others to use their expertise and that of their school communities to create learning environments that reflect our overarching goal for learning.

The projects in Issue 4, come from diverse communities outside the Brisbane metropolitan area including South Burnett, Maroochydore and Nerang, as well as from schools within the immediate Brisbane area. The projects range from a variety of Religious Education projects co-ordinated by Kerry Rush, co-ordinator of the RE Focus Project Initiative, to a single school on-line project developed by Jodie Peete and Craig Acret for St Rita’s School at Victoria Point. I have been fortunate to be involved in a project instigated by Brisbane Catholic Education Speech Pathologists and involving BCE Curriculum staff that focuses on oral language development in Year One classrooms. The benefits of a collaborative approach to oral language provision has meant that three school communities have developed oral language programs that are responsive to their individual community needs.

In addition to special project reports, there is also an article about this year’s Science Teachers’ Association Conference as well as an account of an intensive training program for teachers of Japanese held in Japan.

Thank you to all the contributors in this issue and to those who have written articles in the previous three issues for interesting and inspiring articles. Best wishes for the Christmas season and for 2003.

Bernadette Barker
The Science Teachers’ Association of Queensland has been organising conferences for over 50 years, and has a reputation for providing diverse and stimulating professional development activities for all pre-service, early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary science educators.

On September 23 - 24 of this year, CONSTAQ, the annual state conference of the Science Teachers’ Association of Queensland was held at the Anglican Church Grammar School, East Brisbane. The theme this year was *Where the City Meets the Bush*, in line with 2002 being the ‘Year of the Outback’.

CONSTAQ was convened for the first time by two of Brisbane Catholic Education’s primary teachers, Susan Peatey and Judith Wilson, both of St. Columba’s Wilston.

This year’s program provided a great opportunity for teachers and pre-service teachers from all educational levels and systems to enhance their ‘educational toolbox’ in the area of science.

Keynote speakers Greg Lee, from the Department of Innovation and Technology Economy, and Darren Osborne, editor of *The Helix* (CSIRO’s science magazine) opened each day of exceptional science seminars and workshops. Mr. Greg Lee’s address on Day 1 spoke of the relationship between quality science education and Queensland’s ‘Smart State’ initiative, whilst Darren Osborne discussed literary techniques for engaging students’ interest and enthusiasm in science in opening Day 2.

These speakers were supported by a plethora of presenters whose proficiency transversed a wide cross section of the education field. Delegates were treated to presentations such as that by Scott Hocknull, the Young Australian of the Year, who discussed at great enthusiastic length his latest work ‘Digging for Elliot’. Other equally fascinating presentations covered topics such as: CSIRO by email; Where the Rainforest Meets the Classroom; Sustainability Science in and out of the classroom; Advanced Technology for the Middle School; Active Investigations; Constructivist Teaching and Learning; Learning through Agriculture; Biotech in the Bush; Employing GIS Technology; Water Purification; Online Biotechnology; Dinosaurs and Paleontology; Setting up a Waterwatch Group; Computer Interfaced Activities; Science Toys – Basic electricity; the Constructivist Classroom; Minerals Downunder/ Envirosmart … and much, much more.

Both days were complemented by relaxed, ‘special events’. The Hon. Anna Bligh, Minister for Education, closed the first day with an informal (but informative) talk with teachers over drinks. This informal interaction was much valued by both the teachers and the Minister. Ms.Bligh discussed her passion and commitment to ensuring Queensland’s education system meets the needs of our changing world.

A ‘Biology Breakfast’ was held on the morning of the second day, with Professor Hugh Possingham discussing *Decision Making and Biodiversity Conservation*. Professor Possingham holds joint appointments between the Departments of Zoology, Entomology and Mathematics at UQ. Attendees were fascinated by his talk about using models in solving ecological problems, as well as discovering that Hugh suffers from excessive bird watching (feathered variety, of course!).

Day 2 also saw a Fresh Science Forum with an interactive discussion lead by Stewart McGlashan of the University of Queensland on biodegradable plastics (followed naturally by drinks!).

Many delegates took up the opportunity to continue conversations, renew friendships or simply just to relax and enjoy a good meal at the conference dinner. A good time was continued on by many into the early hours!!

2003 will see the Australian Science Teachers’ Association Conference being held at Mooloolaba in July. CONASTA 52 shows every indication of being as productive and rewarding as this year’s CONSTAQ 2002. See you there!! (And stayed tuned for details of CONSTAQ’s return in 2004!!)
In January I was privileged to attend an intensive training program for primary and secondary teachers of Japanese. I was part of a 56-teacher contingent from Australia and New Zealand that spent three weeks in-country. We were based at the Language Institute in Urawa, Tokyo for most of the time.

The purpose of the program was to better equip teachers in their task of imparting the Japanese language and culture to our students. This was done in a number of ways. We attended classes, all of which were conducted in Japanese. We were placed into classes according to proficiency level. The classes combined methodology and language acquisition. The Japan Foundation, which sponsored the program, donated many resources to us. They also gave us money to purchase any resources we felt could be useful for our particular classes. We had time to plan what we wanted and where to go to procure these resources. We were placed in groups and a guide then accompanied us on our procurement expedition.

We participated in a variety of traditional cultural experiences. At no cost to us, we attended a kabuki performance and a sumo tournament. Ikebana, brush writing and tea ceremony lessons were conducted at the Institute. We also visited primary and secondary schools by bus. Before we left Australia, we had prepared a teaching session for a primary group.

Getting around on trains and subways in Tokyo is no longer a mystery. Many teachers experienced a homestay with a Japanese family for a weekend. Mine was cancelled due to family illness, so I went to Nikko to see the Toshogu Shrine. Nothing prepared me for its beauty. No postcard or picture does it justice. I also hung out at Shibuya and Harajuku, the main haunts on weekends of so many young people. Three of us got up particularly early one morning to visit the Tsukiji fish markets. Its size is staggering, and so were its contents. I had no idea there was such a variety of sea creatures. I'd expected fishy smells and sloshy floors, but neither was evident. It is an extremely busy place and the main smell is from the fumes of the small vehicles that hurtle around inside the main area. There were bikes at the Language Institute, so I regularly borrowed one and went exploring. Finding one's bike amidst hundreds of other bikes after a heavy downfall of snow was an interesting experience.

We were loaded onto a bullet train and taken to Kyoto after two weeks and did some hurried sightseeing at the Big Buddha in Nara on the way. In Kyoto we were put up in a traditional Japanese inn. Here we slept in futon on tatami mats, wore yukata, had a bath in the public hot spring and experienced a very traditional Japanese meal with karaoke afterwards. We did our own thing for one day in Kyoto. I caught a bus and found my way to a flea market held in temple grounds. It rained the whole time, but that didn't deter me from getting what bargains I could. After that evening I went with another teacher to the Gion area to find a geisha. We saw two. While I was in Kyoto I experienced my only earth tremor.

I was extremely grateful for the experience. It has given validity to much of what I teach, as I am now culturally "up to date". My resources are also authentic. Student interest and motivation have increased. I obtained demonstration cell phones at no cost. Students love "talking" on them. I have enough traditional outfits now for both my male and female students. My flashcard packs are constantly used. Students love the buzzer game and the magic paper, where they practise new kanji, which disappear when the water dries. I harassed many a person in Japan to obtain window display posters and advertisements from inside trains. I scrounged pamphlets about supermarket specials, rental accommodation, package holidays, department store guides, Subway menus and so on. They are excellent for classroom use. I confess to also bringing back some novelty items for "show and tell" such as loose socks and wet umbrella covers.

The Japan Foundation has been extremely generous in their support of Japanese teachers. I cannot endorse this particular training program highly enough. It has benefited me enormously personally. My classes and students and my school have also benefited.
Integrating computers into the curriculum in the past has virtually been non-existent as it has involved the use of CD-ROMs and basic word processing programs within skilled-based individual lessons. Now information technology had become a true partner within the curriculum as teachers plan units of work that focus on connecting the curriculum through the use of outcomes based education. Online learning has become a way for students and teachers to utilise the computer infrastructure at St. Rita’s Primary School.

Catering for the learning needs of students at our school has expanded to include many technological changes that are reflected in our society. Constantly creating new and exciting ways to stimulate learners can become tiresome as all of our creative juices are dried up trying to make our lessons interesting and motivating for learners.

Creating online multi-media learning environments is a way that we have discovered to reignite the motivation and interest in student learning. Our first attempt at creating an online learning environment began when we embarked on the Writing Online Learning Course offered by Education Queensland (www.education.qld.gov.au/learningplace/) in conjunction with Brisbane Catholic Education. Working through the course and developing our own online learning environment enabled us to cater specifically to our learners as we focussed on one year level as a target audience.

Our Reef Quest is designed for Year Two students who respond to simple, clear designs, stimulating and active animations and of course using computers. Students take on the imaginary task of rebuilding the database of animals for the Great Barrier Reef that had been lost due to a mysterious computer virus. While working co-operatively with a partner, students select an animal to research online using the links within the online module. Students also develop note-taking skills and then create a report as the culminating activity.

All students found this interactive learning stimulating, empowering and rewarding as they directed and monitored their own progress. Given the success of this online project, it is planned that online learning multimedia environments will be constructed through the entire school.

Please visit our school website (www.schools.ash.org.au/stritasvp) to see first hand our program Reef Quest.
Religious Education is alive and well if the RE Focus Project Expo on September 13, 2002 is any indication of the calibre of learning in schools in the Archdiocese of Brisbane. The RE Focus Project Expo was the exciting culmination of almost three terms of planning and implementing projects in thirteen schools within the Archdiocese. At the Expo these schools displayed their RE Focus Projects to approximately one hundred and ten teachers from schools within and beyond the Archdiocese. Participating teachers discovered new and effective ways to teach Religious Education through visiting displays, interacting with teachers and receiving helpful handouts throughout the exhibits at the O’Shea centre. A program of brief oral project presentations provided another mode for participants to learn and projects to be communicated.

In both 2001 and 2002, the RE Focus Project professional development concept has been used as an initiative of the Brisbane Catholic Education Religious Education team to encourage the peer professional development of teachers. Research on professional development suggests that the most effective way to bring about significant change in education is to foster peer professional development of teachers. This research evidence suggested that the culminating activity of the project should provide an opportunity for teachers to teach teachers. The RE Focus Expo became the opportunity for all funded, project schools to display and present their learning. Upon reflection and discussion with project schools and expo participants it was evident that the EXPO and the project process promoted Energy, eXcellence, Peer Professional Development and Originality in teaching and learning in the KLA of Religious Education, connected curriculum approaches and the Archdiocese of Brisbane Learning Framework.

Energy
Margaret Connors of St Bernardine’s, Regents Park was excited by the energy and interest students had for storytelling after Christine Carlton, storyteller extraordinaire, became the school’s storyteller in residence. A school’s storyteller’s festival followed Christine’s initial work at which students energetically engaged in the storytelling genre. Margaret and the teachers involved in the project believe the students gained a greater sense of the sacredness of story from this project.

Energetic digging and planting was all the go at Holy Rosary School, Windsor. The Principal, Phil Standon and the APRE, Dianne Penman spoke of the energy and interest students had for their Refugee “Vegie” Patch, the accompanying connected curriculum unit and the making of artistic paving stones for the school’s Peace, Harmony and Reconciliation Garden. Phil saw this year’s RE Focus Project work as the beginning of even better things to come. He spoke of his vision of spades digging and dirt flying as the school community works with members of the North West Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Community Association, Rainbow Enterprises, Refugee Claimant Centre and Northey Street City Farm. The final outcome will be a garden in the school ground that will be a tangible symbol of renewal that acknowledges the rights of the original inhabitants of this land. The energetic APRE Toni Waters, students and parents, planted another garden at St Francis College, Crestmead as their focus project. Local businesses were ingeniously encouraged to donate plants and equipment to this worthwhile project which was based on Franciscan and Creation Spirituality as well as recognition of the diverse cultural influences within the school. Together members of the school community turned a dead, useless area of the school grounds into a Harmony Garden. Gardens certainly were the go this year as St Brigid’s, Nerang embarked on planting a garden, this time a Spirit Garden project. Across the school students engaged inquiry processes in a connected, outcomes approach to work towards the design and construction of a Spirit Garden in the centre of the School. From evidence displayed at the Expo, St Brigid’s Primary School, Nerang is a school with spirit.

Dramatic energy emanated from All Saints Parish School, Albany Creek as Anne Frawley Mangan assisted students to move to a deeper appreciation of, and connection with, the sacraments of the church through drama. All Saints students’ enthusiasm encouraged expo participants to believe in the effectiveness of using drama to understand difficult religious concepts in an active, fun mode.

eXcellence
Anne-Maree Harrison, a senior primary teacher at Guardian Angels School, Wynnum commented that their project Ordinary People Doing Extraordinary Things became an, “Intense study for students that produced
high quality work.” She believed, along with her co-teacher Sue Raymond and Judith Melifont the APRE at the school that the project worked well on many levels. It gave students an opportunity to look outside themselves and discover extra-ordinary actions of significant people. Beyond this, students explored the subjective notion that with God’s help they too can make a difference for the good. It was obvious by the considerable number of students who presented at the Expo that they delighted in the opportunity to share their new knowledge with others. By exploring issues thoroughly Guardian Angel’s students produced excellent results.

Excellence in learning was also demonstrated in the project Creating a Sustainable School Community by St Anthony’s Primary School, Alexandra Hills. Drawing on the Roles for Lifelong Learning and outcomes from RE, HPE, SOSE and Science, Leann Bridge was very proud of the students active participation in the re-creation and co-creation of the world by devising ways for St Anthony’s to become a sustainable school.

Peer Professional Development

“This PD works!” was a 2001 evaluation comment from an expo participant. It works because of its credibility for teachers. Teacher comments reflect their sense of empowerment through witnessing the planning and products of peers. Anne-Maree Harrison commented, “The Expo provided an excellent forum for other teachers to critique teachers work. We don’t often get opportunities to do this.”

Another effective peer professional development mode that arose was geographic clustering of schools to learn together as they complete one RE focus project based on an identified need of teachers of religion at this time. Ingrid Clarke commented that the project was a terrific vehicle for professional and social networking when APREs and teachers across five Sunshine Coast schools used a collaborative, creative and connected approach to engage with the Draft Learning Outcomes in RE. Together they produced units of work across strands using an outcomes based approach. Ingrid stated, “The benefits of the project have been ongoing. For example, planning and preparing for Consistency of Teacher Judgement processes has been very easy as our networks and philosophies are so well established.”

Donna Castelli APRE of Christ the King School, Deception Bay and Kaye Beston APRE of St Eugene, Burpengary are long-term professional buddies. They have worked together on numerous collaborative personal and school projects and espouse the professional development benefits of working collaboratively on projects such as this year’s project Three Ways to Plan RE using an Outcomes Approach and RM Curriculum Manager.

Originality

Every project demonstrated its originality as it endeavoured to meet the needs of students in Religious Education in innovative ways. The following projects all used technology extensively in their original projects.

Michael Chambers took an innovative approach to teaching Christology for secondary teachers. Single-handed he developed an interactive CD resource for teachers to explore Christology. This project was identified by Michael as a definite area of need for professional development of teachers of religion. He sought to support this need by gathering information, readings and sites onto an original and teacher-friendly CD-ROM.

Two other teacher resource packages within this year’s focus projects were highly original. They were also identified as a means to technologically support the needs of teachers of religion. St Peter’s Catholic Primary School, Caboolture developed a project Reweb Source which was a beginning project of creating a web page resource for teachers linking the Draft Learning Outcomes in RE with quality relevant web sites. We agree with Peggy Rowe, APRE at the school and members of her staff that, “This project has got legs!” Its potential to link teachers with the final RE Outcomes is enormous. Another useful and highly original project has been the Liturgical Music Directory project of St Joseph’s, Bracken Ridge. This has been a continuation of the project begun in 2001 and joined this year with the BCEC Multimedia Centre to compile a directory linking hymns and other suitable music to relevant areas of the RE curriculum and common liturgical themes. This joint project is the brain child of Jan Smith and together with members of the BCEC Multimedia Centre she is endeavouring to discover ways of making this information more accessible to schools.

St Peter’s Catholic Primary School, Rochedale also used technology extensively in innovative ways as students explored the concept of social justice particularly in the context of colonisation and/or war and the displacement of persons. They also used the Roles for Lifelong Learning through a connected curriculum approach in this clever and original project titled Space Invaders.

In conclusion, the success of this Energetic, Excellent, Peer professional development Original initiative is also attributed to the organisational skills of the RE team’s secretary Enza Follari. Throughout the process she was on the hot seat, proactively pulling out all stops in her own quiet way to ensure success and support to RE Focus Project schools and Expo participants. Acknowledgements also to Greg Sunter, Education Officer RE Support Team, as assistant co-ordinator of the Religious Education Focus Project initiative.
Religious Education
Focus Project Expo 2002
13th September at O’Shea Centre

Michael Chamber - APRE, St John Fisher College, Bracken Ridge
and June Jorgensen - APRE, Siena Primary School, Sippy Downs

Dianne Penmann - APRE and students from Holy Rosary School, Windsor

Display from Guardian Angels School, Wynnum
Students from St Bernardine’s School, Regents Park

Students from St Peter’s School, Caboolture explaining their display to a participant

Display from St Bernardine’s School, Regents Park

Nurturing Spirituality through Story
In 2002, Year 8 SOSE students at South Burnett Catholic College were treated to an engaging and innovative series of learning experiences investigating their local area. The unit combined a number of approaches and perspectives to give students an opportunity to investigate the diversity within their own local area. The structure of the unit encouraged students to actively investigate a number of important and controversial local issues.

The College
South Burnett Catholic College is a P-12 college located in Kingaroy in the South Burnett. The College attracts students from a very wide geographic catchment area encompassing all parts of the South Burnett, including Kingaroy itself, Nanango, Blackbutt, Kumbia, Wondai, Murgon, Goomeri and Durong and surrounding towns. Since 2000, the College has had an increasing enrolment of Indigenous students from the community of Cherbourg. The College currently has over 15 Indigenous students in the secondary school. This increase has been the catalyst for a process of curriculum and pedagogical change and renewal across most key learning areas.

The Project
The unit *A Diverse Community: Local People and Local Government* was written as the basis of a *Discovering Democracy: Schools’ Initiative Grant Project*. A grant application was lodged late last year to write a unit that provided students with an insight into the geographical, historical, political and cultural diversity within the South Burnett Region. The application was successful and the project was undertaken throughout this year with the unit trialled to Year 8 students in Term 3.

The unit basically involved introducing students to the idea of diversity within the region of the South Burnett. Initially, students looked at the geography of the area and examined the extent of the area through a range of mapping tasks. Students then explored the ideas of diversity and community. They framed their own research focus which involved investigating an aspect of difference or similarity between the communities of Kingaroy and Cherbourg. This included investigating the geography, operation of local government, history or demographics of the areas.

Students were specifically asked to consider differences and similarities between the communities of Kingaroy and Cherbourg.

To gain information students undertook a range of activities including field trips to the communities, interviews and their own research. Students analysed and collated their own information, then negotiated the mode of presentation of their findings. The presentations took place at night with parents and members of both communities in the audience.

Pedagogical and Curriculum Approaches
The project gave teachers at the College the opportunity to write an innovative and engaging unit that applied current pedagogical and curriculum approaches in the area of SOSE, and that was relevant to students in the South Burnett.

The SOSE Syllabus
The unit was framed according to recent developments in SOSE curriculum. The unit also met the requirements of the Queensland

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<tr>
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<th>Cherbourg</th>
<th>Kingaroy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>12 000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Aboriginal Community</td>
<td>Rural Town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government</td>
<td>Cherbourg Community Council</td>
<td>Kingaroy Shire Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Local Government</td>
<td>DOGIT Community</td>
<td>Shire Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>‘Painful’</td>
<td>‘Proud’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services &amp; Businesses</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Wide Variety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Wide Variety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Wide Variety</td>
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Cherbourg & Kingaroy: a comparison
Schools Curriculum Council (now Queensland Studies Authority) 
*Studies of Society and Environment Years 1-10 Syllabus* (2000). The SOSE Syllabus states:

Studies of Society and Environment involves investigations of controversial and challenging issues and promotes critical thinking in the development of optimistic future visions. (Syllabus, 2000:1)

The unit specifically addressed the key values of Democratic Process, Social Justice and Peace. Students engaged in activities that promoted the value of Democratic Process as they discovered and investigated the structures and processes of local government in the region. The value of Social Justice was inculcated through comparisons and a sensitive understanding of the difference between communities, and between groups within communities. The value of peace was entwined within the entirety of the unit, through the promotion of the values of understanding and reconciliation.

The unit was framed within a learner-centred approach and encouraged students to engage in all seven attributes of lifelong learning. All four of the cross-curricular priorities of Literacy, Numeracy, Life-skills and a Futures Perspective were also developed.

The unit was geared towards demonstrating Level 5 outcomes and addressed three of the four strands within the key learning area of SOSE. The initial phase of the unit focussed on demonstrating Place and Space outcomes. Then, the investigation and research phase as well as the presentation phase engaged students in Time, Continuity and Change and Culture and Identity outcomes. Finally, the reflection phase engaged students in a Culture and Identity outcome. The specific outcomes covered in the unit are detailed in the Unit Organisation Table.

**Social Investigation Strategy**

The unit fostered the use of an inquiry approach and encouraged students to actively investigate the diversity within their region. Specifically, the unit was structured according to Hoepper & Land’s (1996) *Social Investigation Strategy*. The unit aimed not to be mere transmission of information, but to challenge students to actively investigate and construct their own understanding of issues.

Students were guided through the different phases of the *Social Investigation Strategy* but actively chose and investigated their own area of interest. This included students framing their own questions, seeking information, analysing and presenting their findings.

**Indigenous Perspectives**

Another objective of the unit was to engage students in Indigenous issues through the explicit study of the Cherbourg community. This gave our Indigenous students a topic of relevance and familiarity to investigate, and gave them an opportunity to help understand themselves and their own culture.

Investigation of the Cherbourg community also gave the majority of non-Indigenous students a sensitive and informed insight into life in the small community, and an appreciation of the diversity within the region.

This unit provided students with a sensitive and positive view of Indigenous culture and history and gave students opportunities to deconstruct and challenge racist discourses and ideologies, as well as foster a positive view of other cultural groups.

**Civics and Citizenship Education**

The unit had a civics and citizenship education focus by highlighting the differences in local government practices between Kingaroy and Cherbourg. The Cherbourg community is a Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT) community with an elected council that oversees the management of the community. The are 15 DOGIT communities across Queensland. These were set up after 1984 when Queensland established a system of community level land trusts, to own and administer former reserves.

The unit highlighted the differences and similarities between the government and administration of a DOGIT Community and that of a usual local government and engage students to consider these issues for themselves.

Students also engaged in examining citizenship education at a much broader level. Students not only examined the structures and process of local government, but engaged in...
## Unit Organisation Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHASES</th>
<th>PHASE DESCRIPTIONS</th>
<th>LEARNING ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>SOSE OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ASSESSMENT</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. MOTIVATE Week 1</td>
<td>Students Introduced to Concepts • Local area • Local government</td>
<td>Orientating Activities • Mapping the area • Descriptions of the area • Major towns in the area • Local government areas</td>
<td>PS 5.1 PS 5.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. EXPLORE STUDENT PERCEPTIONS Week 2</td>
<td>Students Consider Community • Definitions Students Consider Diversity • Definitions • Demographics &amp; statistics</td>
<td>Defining Community &amp; Discovering Diversity • Explore the word &quot;Community&quot; • Explore the word “Diversity” • Aboriginal experience • Investigate demographics &amp; statistics on area • Investigate diversity in the South Burnett communities • Investigate local government areas in South Burnett</td>
<td>PS 5.1 PS 5.4</td>
<td>Observation &amp; Work Samples from Learning Log (PS 5.1, PS 5.4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. FRAME QUESTIONS FOR INVESTIGATION Week 3</td>
<td>Students Ask Questions • Discovering differences Students Choose a Research Focus • Framing a question</td>
<td>Finding Differences • How are areas different? • Different history • Different geography • Different economics • Different local government Framing a Question • What do I want to investigate?</td>
<td>TCC 5.3 CI 5.1 CI 5.4</td>
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<td>4. ANALYSE DATA AND DEVELOP FINDINGS Week 6</td>
<td>Students Compare Findings • Similarities • Differences</td>
<td>Developing Findings • Summarise information • Compare &amp; analyse findings • Find relationships</td>
<td>TCC 5.3 CI 5.1 CI 5.4</td>
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<td>5. MAKING JUDGMENTS &amp; PRESENT FINDINGS Week 7 &amp; 8</td>
<td>Students Prepare Creative Presentation • Synthesise findings • Draw conclusions</td>
<td>Creating Presentation • Synthesising information • Planning presentation • Creating presentation • Rehearsing presentation</td>
<td>TCC 5.3 CI 5.1 CI 5.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. TAKE ACTION Week 9</td>
<td>Students Present Findings in Creative Presentation to Community • Presenting images of diversity in the South Burnett</td>
<td>Presenting Images of Diversity in the South Burnett • Presenting creative presentations to South Burnett community</td>
<td>TCC 5.3 CI 5.1 CI 5.4</td>
<td>Creative Presentation (TCC 5.3, CI 5.1, CI 5.4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. REFLECT Week 10 &amp; 11</td>
<td>Students Reflect on Learning • Letter of thanks to organisations that helped provide information or letter to the editor reflecting on community</td>
<td>Reflecting on Findings • Plan letter of thanks • Draft letter • Edit letter • Send letter Reflect on Readings • Charles Perkins - ‘Trying to change the world’ • Reflection upon Aboriginal issues</td>
<td>CI 5.3</td>
<td>Reflective Letter (CI 5.3)</td>
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and considered the issues involved in the building of diverse, tolerant and understanding communities.

This broader view of citizenship involved having students exploring issues of difference, those of similarity, and issues of great importance to their communities. Brady and Kennedy (1999:78) believe that citizenship education must be, "Inclusive and relate to the lived experiences of students."

Productive Pedagogies
Embedded within the unit was the deliberate application of suggestions from the Education Queensland (2002) Productive Pedagogies document. The document states:

'Productive Pedagogies' is a balanced theoretical framework enabling teachers to reflect critically upon their work. (Education Queensland, 2002:1)

The unit has applied 3 key areas of reflection outlined in the document; Intellectual quality, recognition of difference and connectedness.

The Productive Pedagogies document states:

Recognition of difference is perhaps the most theoretically and practically significant dimension for explaining how to systematically improve the achievement of students from scholastically disadvantaged sociocultural backgrounds. (Education Queensland, 2002:1)

This unit acknowledges the equality of all cultures and their value in society. It forced teachers and students, to reflect upon differences in cultural knowledge and group identity.

Finally, the unit was framed within a context of Connectedness. The unit is easily transferable across key learning areas and has clear links with students’ understanding of their local area. The unit has real links and connections to students beyond the classroom.

Unit Organisation and Learning Experiences
Hoepper & Land’s (1996) Social Investigation Strategy provides students with a purposeful and structured approach to their learning about their community.

The sequence of learning activities and assessment tasks is shown on page 12.

Assessment
The assessment opportunities outlined in the Unit Organisation were designed to give students a variety of modes of assessment.

The first phase of assessment involved observing students working in class and examining student learning logs. The tasks observed were a range of activities focussing on mapping activities and exploration of the South Burnett region. Students were issued with a comprehensive assessment task sheet during this phase of assessment with a clear outline of learning expectations.

The second phase of assessment involved observing students and examining their research notes as they framed appropriate questions and researched their topics. Again students were issued with a comprehensive task sheet outlining expectations.

The third phase of assessment was another opportunity to demonstrate the outcomes for the second assessment phase. This involved assessing demonstration of student learning outcomes in the final presentation of student findings from their research. Students presented their findings in a negotiated format, to a live audience made up from a range of school students, parents, and members of both the Kingaroy and Cherbourg communities, as well as other people from the South Burnett Region. The presentations took place at the college.

The final phase of assessment for the unit involved students writing a reflective letter of thanks to organisations that assisted in providing information to the class, or an open letter to the Editor of the South Burnett Times. Students were encouraged to reflect upon their learning throughout the unit, and consider their own experience. The letter was intended to be a reflective culminating activity, rather than just a polite response. Students were expected to demonstrate a core learning outcome in their letter.

Throughout all phases of assessment students were made aware of the core learning outcomes expected to
be demonstrated in each task, and the criteria that was to be used to assess the outcomes.

**Conclusions**

The project appeared successful in trying to meet its many objectives. All students seemed engaged in the unit, and all benefitted from opportunities to demonstrate the core learning outcomes in the unit. The unit provided students, staff and parents within the school community with an opportunity to come together and explore and appreciate differences and similarities across the South Burnett region. The unit provided students with a sensitive insight into understanding difference and this can certainly work towards creating a more tolerant, informed and supportive community in the future.

**References**


The Queensland Studies Authority has advised us that they are developing a new business education syllabus for Years 9 and 10 to teach students to be more effective and innovative business leaders.

The new business syllabus is designed to equip students with a fundamental understanding of how business operates, and focus on business and economic systems, business procedures, work environments, and understanding enterprise and new ventures.

The syllabus is in draft form but will be available for schools to use in 2002. It was prepared in consultation with subject experts, community and equity representatives, professional associations, and representatives of the three major schooling authorities. Consultation and feedback will continue during 2002. When completed, the syllabus will be optional for all Queensland secondary schools.

The business syllabus is one of five special syllabuses for students in junior secondary school, and provides specialized studies to prepare students for their post-school careers or their tertiary studies.

Content is based on four main strands:

1. **Business and economic systems**
   - the nature of business and economic systems
   - business systems and sub-systems

2. **Business procedures**
   - business accountability
   - records management for personal and business uses
   - technology and the nature of business information
   - using information and communication technologies to manipulate business information

3. **Enterprise and ventures**
   - entrepreneurial creativity
   - management of an enterprise or venture investigation
   - ideation
   - production
   - evaluation
   - impact and consequences of new enterprises and ventures

4. **Work environments**
   - the roles, rights and responsibilities in work environments
   - the changing nature of work
   - legal processes
   - design and management of workplace systems

ENDS

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During the last twelve months, three schools in the Brisbane Archdiocese have taken part in a collaborative project designed to promote oral language skills in the Year One classroom. Staff at St Francis Xavier Runaway Bay, St Mark’s Inala and St Joseph’s Beenleigh have worked together with Speech Pathologists and Brisbane Catholic Education Curriculum personnel to develop oral language programs in Year One classrooms that are responsive to the needs of each individual school environment.

The project has been designed for all Year One children in the project schools, to allow increased access to better oral language opportunities to improve literacy outcomes. This project has particularly advantaged ESL learners and language delayed children because teachers have designed their programs so that the links between contexts and texts were made explicit; language development was driven by purposeful language use and students were given more and varied opportunities for language use.

Teachers were assisted to identify, and explicitly promote oral language opportunities across all Key Learning Areas. Making oral language “part of the day” was the ultimate goal. Teachers were not given a program to follow, but were provided with a number of professional development opportunities and collegial support to enable them to enhance current knowledge, skills and understandings about oral language and resources to draw on. Staff at the schools planned collaboratively and developed oral language programs responsive to their own particular students’ needs. Consequently, each school and each teacher designed oral language programs that varied in focus, form and content.

The project originated from schools requesting assistance from the project team to develop the oral language skills of their students. Teachers recognised that students were entering Year One from increasingly diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. They identified that the oral language skills of their students varied greatly, and that they could no longer assume all students were ready for formal learning. In response, Equity and Curriculum personnel met to implement a strategy that would best meet the needs of the three different schools.

It was decided that the forms of support should be twofold. Professional development was provided in the form of workshops, network meetings and resources. Collegial support was in the form of network meetings and school visits to assist with planning and resources.

Goals for the teachers participating in the project were that they would be able to:

- enhance their current knowledge, skills and understandings about oral language
- increase the amount of oral language activities in their classroom
- use a variety of strategies to support children in oral language and literacy development
- work in collaboration with other project participants to plan, implement and review appropriate oral language programs for their learners
- design oral language programs creating an inclusive environment, appropriate to needs of the school community, catering to the diversity of learners and taking into account the understandings and skills of the students

These goals were evaluated through: a survey of participating teachers, anecdotal evidence, observations by oral language team members and testimonies of teachers.
The survey showed that all teachers had a greater understanding of oral language and had developed a better understanding of the link between oral language and learning. They also reported that they had spent more time teaching oral language than in previous years and had changed their views about the importance of oral language in the classroom. The teachers reported that they were now committed to continue to teach their students by "loading up" the school day with a variety of oral language activities and would be unable to go back to their previous practice which did not have such a focus on planning multiple oral language opportunities each day. School Principals have reported improved collaborative teaching practices, increased responsiveness to the needs of the students and more effective use of teaching time.

Indicators for success for students were:
- increased participation in oral language activities
- development of oral language skills so students know how purpose and roles affect the choice of language
- the ability to communicate effectively in a range of social and cultural contexts by using appropriate oral language skills

Student Outcomes were measured through the First Steps Oral Language Continuum and checklists, teacher devised checklists, anecdotal records from teachers and video recording of student activities.

When surveyed, all teachers reported positive changes in student oral language and communication. All teachers recorded positive changes in students’ active listening, responsiveness to questions, expressive language, use of description/recount/storytelling and in social interaction.

The survey showed increased student interest and participation in classroom activities as well as improved work practices in the survey. School Principals reported positive changes in student oral language and communication.

Teachers at all three schools believe that the project has been very successful and wish to continue to access support and network meetings next year. There has also been a very positive response to the project from other staff in the three schools who would like to extend that support into the Year Two classrooms. It is anticipated that more schools will join the project for 2003.

Students from St John Fisher College, Bracken Ridge participating in: (1) celebrations for St John Fisher Day (2) rehearsing for the big band tour (3) wall climbing (4) conducting an environmental impact study.