



Good Teacher Magazine

Term Three 2007

*The educational research
obesity epidemic*

The “I don’t have to work “ vibe

Level Three Guide

Home School Partnerships

Mystery School Competition

New Zealand’s teachers magazine

Subscribe now!

Ensure you receive your own copy of 

Do you want a copy for the staff library to maintain continuity?

Are you a teacher who likes to keep interesting articles to hand for future use?

While your school will receive free copies of  it is a good idea to take

out a subscription so YOU don't miss out ... when that copy vanishes from the staffroom before you are able to finish reading or even copy the article you want!

Subscriptions are \$31.50 (inc gst) per year for four copies (Subscribe now!)

This means:

Good Teacher Magazine is sent to you personally.

The cost includes gst and postage within New Zealand (contact us for overseas costs).

As a subscriber you will be given preferential entry in competitions and promotions.

Yes! I'd like my own subscription.

Fill out and send with your cheque to ed-media publishing, PO Box 5531, Mt Maunganui
or fill out and fax to 07 542 5258 and an invoice for payment will be sent to you.

Name

Address

.....

.....

School - (if it applies)

Curriculum area of interest

Phone email

I do not want any contact other than that regarding my subscription ☐

I would like to subscribe to  magazine (subscription for four copies starting with the next edition - term 4 2007)

Attached my cheque for \$31.50 made out to ed-media ☐

I would like my receipt included with my first copy ☐ posted direct ☐

I would like to be reminded when my subscription is due for renewal ☐

Information from subscription applications will not be shared with any third party and will be used only for the purpose for which it was obtained.

is published quarterly and distributed to every primary school, secondary school, and teacher education provider in New Zealand. Distribution is now being trialled to include early childhood centres so giving coverage to all learning centres throughout the country.

ed-media publications

Independent publishers of quality education media.

Advertising enquiries:
Rachel 027 322 0527
barisa-holdings@xtra.co.nz

Submitting material for publication:
barisa-holdings@xtra.co.nz
enquiries to 021 798 868
or info@ed-media.co.nz

fax: 07 542 5258
mail: ed-media publications
PO Box 5531
Mt Maunganui

ISSN: 1173-0499

Please keep a duplicate of text and illustrative materials submitted for publication. ed-media accepts no responsibility for damage or loss of material submitted for publication

The opinions expressed in
Good Teacher
Magazine are not necessarily
those of ed-media
publications

Winter is well and truly here. But we continually amazed by the enthusiasm which teachers and their children show. This term we have the delightful butterfly photo/poem pages from a school which decided to create a butterfly garden for monarch butterflies. This is echoed by the adventures of a disaster programme for children who negotiated building shelters and bartering for food, all in the name of survival - the skills that they showed and developed along the way were inspirational.

Gwen Gawith discusses education research, John Hellner looks at the need for students to be involved, and a relieving teacher voices the concerns of many of these essential assistants without whom schools - especially in the winter months - would not be able to run efficiently.

Lucy Literacy leads us through Level Three Guides and Andi Adder and helpers discuss the Home School Partnerships. Not forgetting of course Karen who is probably snow bound as this reaches you... and Lyn whose practical view of sustainability and educating people about change, is always refreshing.

This all leads us nicely to the book reviews which are a feature of the magazine. Keep an eye out next term for the competition with sets of Penelope Todd's 'Watermark Trilogy' as prizes. We are also planning to feature an interview with Penelope.

The Travelling Teacher continues to delight and infuriate our readers, we think he is entertaining and long may he continue to be politically incorrect and able to find the humour in almost everything! He is still travelling through Turkey and has a hair-raising tale this issue.

The other appreciated feature of the Magazine is the cryptic crossword which is tested in a staffroom to ensure it is as correct as possible (this one does not come from the internet! it's a genuine original specially created for you by Richard Crypt). The closest we have come to a correct answer is from Tawa this issue - and only one word was omitted! We are hoping to twist Richard's arm to get TWO crosswords for the term 4 issue to see enthusiasts over the Christmas break.

Don't forget to check if your school is one of the Mystery Schools on page 30 and enjoy reading about the children at Awanui in the Far North.

Please email if you would also like to see a sudoku included in the magazine - the addiction to these is increasing and if you would like one or two each term please email: info@ed-media.co.nz and let us know.

As always your feedback on the magazine is appreciated but for now ...
Enjoy

George Hudson and the GTM Team

Good Teacher Magazine covers tend to have the theme of 'reflection', whether that is visual or mental is for the viewer to decide. The Term Three cover is a winter stroll on the harbour beach as the sun is rising.

Index

Subscription Form		2
CANZ DVD now important educational resource	CANZ	4
The educational research obesity epidemic	Gwen Gawith	5
The "I don't have to work" vibe	John Hellner	8
The School Butterfly Garden	P McLeod and Wharepapa South School	10
There's no business like SNOW business!	Karen Bennett	12
Sounds good if you use this word nowadays	Lyn Rogers	14
Crossword	Richard Crypt	17
Level Three Guides	Lucy Literacy	18
Books and Things		21,22,23
Home School Partnerships	Andi Adder	24
On a Mission: Turkish adventure	Travelling Teacher	26
The Relievers Lot	CRT4ME	29
Mystery School Competition		30
Awanui School	Awanui Staff	30-31
Lambs Tails and Ducking Save the Day	Pauline McLeod	32

CANZ DVD NOW IMPORTANT EDUCATION RESOURCE

By John MacGibbon

The CANZ Resource DVD has become a valuable software resource for schools.

It started out in 2001 as a CD-ROM that contained a film about the CANZ programme, offline versions of CANZ case studies, the CANZ website, 'how-to' information about effectively using refurbished computers in schools and a great deal of educational and 'office' software that ran well on the slower machines then available.

Two updates have been released each year and at the end of 2006, with disk space running out, CANZ switched to the DVD format which had seven times the capacity.

The first DVD was useful in that it accommodated a small program overload, but the new edition really takes advantage of the new format, squeezing in many more programs and data files.

There are now 248 separate programs, for both primary and secondary schools. Application areas include astronomy, graphics, language, maths, music, science, social studies, multimedia, Internet and utilities. Many programs are carried over from earlier editions and 43 have been upgraded. There are 37 all-new programs.

Programs range from simple to large and sophisticated. Most are free, but some are try-before-you-buy shareware, or cut-down versions.

Most of the old-favourite simple programs are still there – often in updated versions. They include programs from Owl and Mouse, Adders, Riverdeep,

Schoolhouse Technologies, and 'light' MS Office-compatible suites that run better on slower computers than the full MS Office.

CANZ computers being bought by schools today are typically in the Pentium-4 class and can handle almost everything on the DVD.

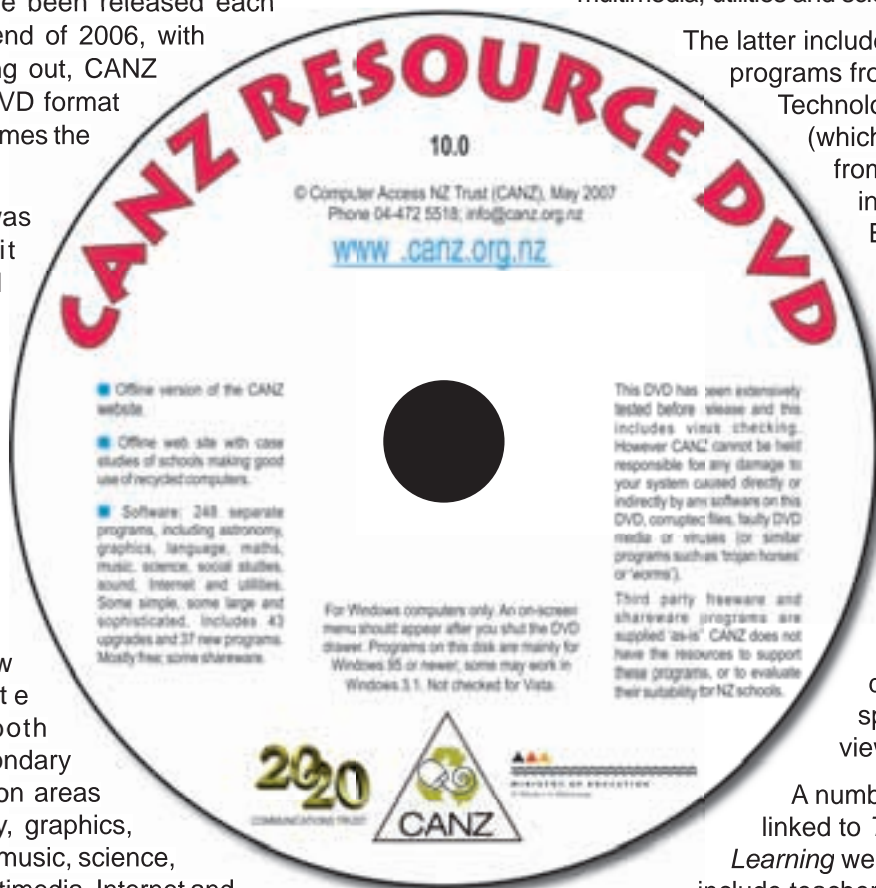
Program areas that have taken particular advantage of the additional space on the DVD include Internet, multimedia, utilities and science.

The latter includes two large programs from NASA Learning Technologies: *World Wind* (which lets you zoom from satellite altitude into any place on Earth in 3D, using high resolution LandSat imagery and SRTM elevation data), and *Virtual Microscope* which includes an electron microscope simulation program plus 1.2 gigabytes of additional downloaded specimens for viewing.

A number of programs are linked to *TKI Software for Learning* website pages that include teacher support material, screenshots and examples of how students are using the software in their learning.

Though the original CANZ film and some leaflets are no longer on the DVD, it still has offline versions of the CANZ website and web pages about schools using refurbished CANZ computers.

One copy of the latest edition was mailed to every school during May. Additional copies are available to teachers at no charge from the CANZ office.



CANZ REFURBISHED COMPUTERS

Contact CANZ (Computer Access NZ Trust) for details of recycling companies, specs and costs — and ask for our free **CANZ Resource DVD**, which has hundreds of education and utility programs, offline web pages about the CANZ programme and case studies of schools using recycled computers.

SUPPORTED BY THE
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Tel: 04-471 0815
Fax: 04-471 0816
info@canz.org.nz
www.canz.org.nz



The educational research obesity epidemic

by Gwen Gawith

Robert McClintock comments on the educational research obesity epidemic:*

...educational research accumulates in great, growing bulk, with all manner of contradictory findings, and no leverage by which to effect practice in any significant way. Better schooling depends, less on research, but on adequate resources for the job, human and financial, and lots of hard work, day by day, in an ethos of support and high expectation, in school and out.

He singles out one example – the AERA's recent Handbook of research on Teaching which weighs in at some 15 kilos, has some 1,300 pages, 51 articles by 85 authorities each on average discussing 160 research studies.

He asks, but not quite so blandly, what any practising teacher coping with the realities of classroom life might ask: 'What's the point?'

A Waikato worthy has just been given \$100,000 to do a PhD on boganism! Like me, you probably thought ruefully of what your school could have done with the cash. This is NOT suggesting that 'academia' is irrelevant to what happens in classrooms. All research is NOT equal. McClintock hits the nail on the head in saying, "perhaps direct application has not been the point."

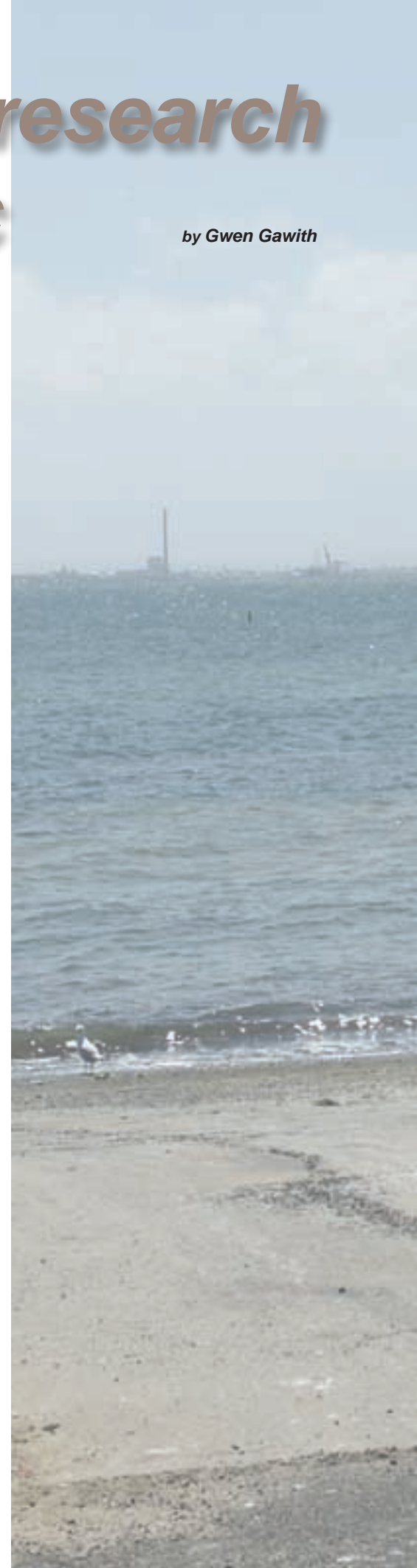
MY point is that direct application SHOULD be the point far more often than esoteric theoretical discourse. I have looked through (note, not read) previous editions of the Handbook, and what struck me was how little of the research was APPLIED classroom research – research actually saying useful things about how practising teachers can improve how children learn in real classrooms, working with real curricula and real daily pressures and demands.

But, like anything else, gold IS there if you know to mine it.

Think of two things, 1) how many pairs of shoes exist in the world, but somehow we find shoes to fit our feet in colours and shapes we like, and 2) the hoary old chestnut about whether you would like to visit a doctor or dentist who still used the same tools and methods as she or he used 40+ years ago?

By sailing on in our daily practice disregarding research completely on the grounds that there's such a lot of it, how do you know what might be relevant, is akin to the dentist saying "I have so many patients and so much pressure to do more that I simply don't have time to read research and practise with new tools, and anyway I think my work is just fine, and my patients like me." Yeah, right!

Secondly, no one is suggesting that you try on every pair of shoes in the world to find some that fit. You know what you need (size, fitting), you know the purpose and context (walking, jogging, comfy for school, dressy for going out) and you probably know makes you've had before and feel you can rely on and trust.



I am interested in what 'works', *why* it 'works', *how* it 'works', 'it' being, in my case LEARNING so I do *applied* research. Because I'm interested in how learning works, I'm interested in how teaching influences learning – hence my obsession (see terms 1 and 2 articles) with pedagogy. I remember researchers whose research is a good fit for my needs and contexts. This, plus the keyword, 'pedagogy', makes it relatively easy to find new research, search for the researchers and the titles they cite, and home in on relevant stuff. It's not just a question of selecting only stuff that fits what I already think – far from it. It's the challenge of relating research evidence to my existing practice, and that's often, initially, a very *uncomfortable* fit, and I really have to work at it. Also note, I said relatively easy, and not quick!

Am I suggesting that all teachers should do applied research? NO! NO! NO! Real academic research is *rigorous*. Calling observations of what goes on in a classroom 'action

research' – a recent teacher ed undergraduate innovation – really gets up my nose! It isn't action and it isn't research...

I see research and teaching as different but related fields of practice. When you think as a researcher you *have* to think differently from how you think as a classroom teacher where you are *paid* to make instant judgments and implement interventions that are pragmatic, even if they aren't 'evidence-based' or tested.

However, I think that teachers and researchers need to learn to *think* like each other, and explore the professional advantages of doing just that. Ideally I see it as a partnership. I also think that practicing teachers need bridges into the world of educational research to help them interpret and apply it.

My beef is different from McClintock's:

Beef 1: I encounter a few teachers who fit into the "I have so many patients and so much pressure to do more that I don't have time to read research, and anyway I think my work is just fine, and my patients like me" category. These teachers simply go on doing the same thing, year after year. Getting them to challenge their own ideas and try out new strategies is like leading the proverbial horse to water. It's not that what they're doing is *wrong* and what you're suggesting is *right!* You're asking them to try on new shoes, but they want to put high heels over their comfy old joggers – their model of teaching is *additive*. They have a repertoire of what 'works'. They see PD as selecting (reluctantly, because they don't have time) a few more 'tricks' to *add* to this repertoire.

Imagine a doctor or dentist doing all they used to do and then adding new 'tricks' and treatments on top!

Asking these teachers to challenge what they do already, *change* what they do, requires

their mindset to shift to one more characteristic of researchers than teachers – a 'what if?' experimental approach.

Sunny side up: In NZ we have NZCER and SET to provide a bridge into the world of research. SET's focus is pragmatic, tailored to the needs of classroom teachers. There's also the research produced by the MOE, I guess, though the flatulent 'eduspeak' used in the 'Curriculum Stocktake' to justify the badly designed curriculum statements was a timely reminder of the need for objectivity and political neutrality in research. ERO's studies? Some say that ERO sets out to get data to prove what they want to prove, but the ERO reports I've read have been interesting and worth reading. Even if you only read SET, you have a thin, manageable slice of that great obese world of educational research.

We also have some *good* PD available that is firmly grounded in applied research and designed to improve classroom practice.

So? So the main obstacle preventing many teachers from using applied research findings to explore 'best practice' and enhance their own practice may well be outdated mindsets?

Beef 2: It took YEARS to do the theoretically-grounded, problem-based, *applied* research needed to develop learning tools for *students* of all ages to use in the context of normal NZ classrooms with normal teachers and normal pressures. I'm self-employed so there's no tenure, no sabbaticals, no fat salary, no conference junkets... Economists would see it as the biggest investment of time, money and effort in my professional life with the least return. Why, then? Because I wanted to do solid, theoretically-grounded, evidence-based *applied* research into the pedagogy of information literacy. Like the cheese ad – good things take time!

'Theoretically-grounded' means that each tool has emerged from analysis of the theory underpinning specific areas of learning'. 'Problem-based' means that I focused specifically on what interests me most – the problems children have in learning from and with information, and developing tools and pedagogy for addressing these problems. 'Evidence-based' means that I tested (against other research and by doing my own) these tools for learning to discover what 'worked', why it 'worked', how it 'worked', when it 'worked'.



3doors to infoliteracy®

AIM CLAIM FRAME

3Doors® by email

3Doors® is a practical school-based course focusing on improving students' learning, thinking and information skills at all levels and in any curriculum area.

It offers: a comprehensive manual

- six workshops • individual email guidance to apply 3Doors with students
- flexible timeframe • opportunity to work co-operatively • no exams or essays*

*This course is not qualification-bearing.

For more information email **gwen@metacog.co.nz**

So this is why I have a beef with teachers whose instant response is to reject what doesn't fit with what they do already and what their mindset tells them is good teaching. To me it implies lack of understanding and respect for the time and effort that goes into applied research, and for researchers as professionals.

Sunny side up: But the up side is that there are many *more* teachers who trust good applied research and the researcher, take a punt, and gather and analyse their own base of evidence using the tools with their children in the normal context of their hectic classroom lives. They delight me!

If you are one of these teachers who think *like* researchers, great! You suspend your experience-based professional prerogative to make instant 'it works/ it doesn't' judgments. You don't just add 'tricks' uncritically. You look at the evidence you have gathered about students' learning, and you use this evidence to decide which aspects of your practice you will *change*, not just add to. You are the teachers who make the time and effort of applied research worthwhile.

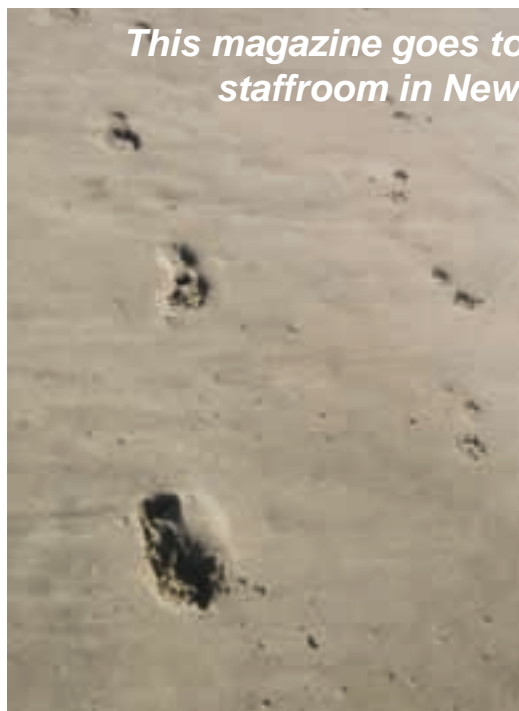
You are also the people who understand what I said in my last article about pedagogy being the *research-based and evidence-based science and art of teaching*, not just a synonym for teaching methods and tricks.

In short, I don't think the research obesity epidemic is a problem for NZ teachers. We just need to read SET and other *applied* research journals. And we need to choose our PD very carefully - PD based, not on snake oil merchants and merchandise, but real, solid *applied* research with a good academic pedigree (including, for example, recent excellent applied research-based PD from the University of Auckland, eg ASTLE). Then we need to consider carefully, with the mindset of a researcher, the implications this applied research might have for our teaching, and, more importantly for changing and improving how students learn in our classrooms.

Fantastic rant!)Flatulence? Never!
Applied hot air? Maybe...

Please comment:
gwen@metacog.co.nz

**Teachers College Record*, Date
Published: March 28, 2007
<http://www.tcrecord.org> ID Number:
13956, Date Accessed: 4/3/2007



*This magazine goes to every school
staffroom in New Zealand*

Would you like to
advertise with us?

Contact Sue:
email: sue@ed-media.co.nz
fax: +64 7 542 5258



For all your Design, Print and Digital
requirements phone us today

kaleprint&design

TAURANGA p 07 578 7506 f 07 578 5059
e kale@kaleprint.co.nz w www.kaleprint.co.nz
219 Cameron Road, Box 13039

The “I don’t have

*Good teaching,
rapport with students,
a sense of humour,
being respected and
delivering interesting
learning activities,
remain timeless
motivators for young
people.*

*Focussing learners
on a vision or a goal
– even just keeping
parents off their
backs – can help.*

*But ultimately, I had
to admit: I didn’t have
the “quick fix”.*

Jamie, year 12, leaned back on his chair and did nothing during class: not disruptive, just yawning. Later in the lesson, the teacher approached him and said, “Do you understand what I have asked you to do?”

“Yes.”

“So why aren’t you doing anything at the moment?” the teacher asked.

Rolling his head and smirking Jamie said, “The topic is boring and I’m not interested. I don’t really care if I pass the standard or not.”

“Why not?”

“Listen, I’ve got my 80 odd credits for this year and I know the basics of this anyway, well enough to get an achieved if I want to and so why should I bother too much if it doesn’t interest me?”

Jamie paused and explained, “I can get the same amount of credits by getting an achieved and scraping through on this one as if I tried for merit or excellence - so what’s the point?”

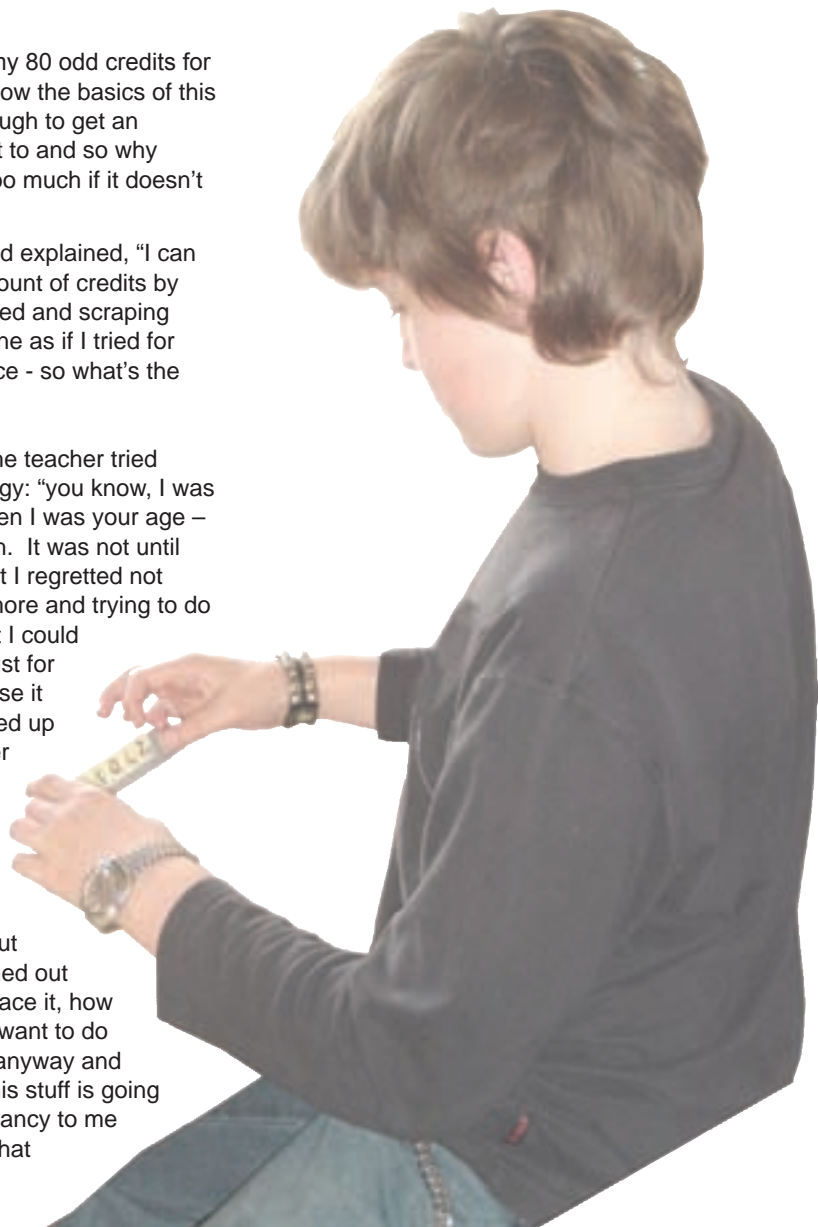
Mildly stunned, the teacher tried reverse psychology: “you know, I was a bit that way when I was your age – just doing enough. It was not until later on in life that I regretted not pushing myself more and trying to do the very best that I could have done, not just for myself but because it might have opened up more options later on in life.”

Pretty convincing, she thought.

Nonplussed, Jamie replied, “But Mam, you’ve turned out alright, and let’s face it, how do I know what I want to do in 10 years time anyway and whether any of this stuff is going to have any relevancy to me then or at all for that matter.”

Pretty convincing, she thought.

As a teacher and as a parent, seeking to help young people to maximise their potential, it proves vexing to hear a student say, “I’ve got my 80 credits, so why do more?” or, “Achieved is good enough – it gets me my credits.” As a professional educator, I wonder if NCEA undermines the motivation to excel.



to work" vibe

by John Hellner

As a tutor of pre-service teachers, I can only provide my training teachers with hollow sounding, pious, yet true, platitudes to "fix" the problem.

*Try something;
then something else*

With my own children, both much like Jamie – one assessed under the norm reference system and one under the NCEA standards based/credits system – I tried everything: money; threats; pleading; noble appeals; ingenious strategic suggestions for motivational approaches and topics. I tried the same with my school students. Nothing really worked.

I never screamed and yelled or became angry; I always gave them some space and tried to nudge them along. I never judged, nor condemned. I couldn't get too upset: they are just like me – still trying to get motivated to do what I know I should do and I still don't know what I am going to do when I grow up: "insanity is hereditary, you get it from your children."

Good teaching, rapport with students, a sense of humour, being respected and delivering interesting learning activities, remain timeless motivators for young people. Focussing learners on a vision or a goal – even just keeping parents off their backs – can help. But ultimately, I had to admit: I didn't have the "quick fix".

Maybe "quick fixes" don't exist in the murky affairs of managing people. American President, Franklin Roosevelt, gave his cabinet members this advice about finding solutions to the social problems of 1930's depression American: "try something, and if that doesn't work, try something else, and then something else again."

Roosevelt never really found any definite answers, but he made incremental progress. His progress lead to further progress by those who

followed him. FDR was hailed as a great president: not because he succeeded, but because he was proactive in trying to succeed.

On a lesser scale, the motivation problem resists simple solutions and teachers only attain some success, some of the time, but the continuous quest to find solutions is one ingredient delineating the good teacher from the mediocre teacher.

Wider perspective

To minimise frustration with "minimalist" students and children, keep a few thoughts in mind:

In the 20th century, high school used to be the last place we learned: in the 21st century, high school is the entrée – grooming young people for the next stage in a journey of life long learning. Literacy, numeracy and other basic skills will remain important, but for most students the days of high stakes assessment at age 15-18 will mean less: several times in their lives they will be inherently motivated by the demands of career change and further learning. They're not broken, they just aren't ready.

Although "achieved" is enough for credit and the 80 credit cut off does little to inspire students to aim high, the same conundrum existed in the old system as well: sometimes scraping through was a petty cool hand and some students raised it to an art form. Don't blame NCEA: all that has changed is the assessment system.

After the dust settled, my own "minimalist" kids found their own very different pathways, as they grew older and found something to catch their fancy.

With reflection, maybe maintaining a good relationship with them proved the best move I made: they do listen to me now – a bit, I think.

Maybe that proved more important than doing it my way when they attended high school. They survive with positive and independent approaches to whatever they encounter that they deem important.

Also keep in mind something that GB Shaw once said, "nothing anyone does before the age of thirty is seriously going to affect the world."



In April 2006, John presented to the "Making a Difference" symposium in Wellington.

A 45 minute audio-video CD disc of John's presentation, entitled "Classroom Fun", is now available. For information email kobrien@waikato.ac.nz

John's books on: building interpersonal relations in the classroom; using humour in the classroom; what makes a good teacher and relief teaching are available from "Essential Resources" in both New Zealand and Australia.

The website is: <http://www.essentialresources.co.nz/>

You can read blurbs for the books and the CD on John's website: www.johnhellner.co.nz

The School Butterfly Photo/poetry



I was standing in the Garden.

I was standing in the garden,
Not doing any harm.
Along came a butterfly
And landed on my arm.
It took me round the garden
And rang the door bell.
Along came a caterpillar
Who took me to my cell.
I woke up in the morning
And looked up on the wall.
The caterpillars and butterflies
Were having a game of ball.
The score was five to nothing
The butterflies were ahead.
The caterpillars scored a home run
And knocked me out of bed.

Ollie aged 7

(adapted from a class poem "I was standing on the corner.")



Butterfly Butterfly

Butterfly, butterfly, why are you crying?
The sun isn't out and I can't go flying.
Butterfly, Butterfly, I have no wings.
So let's play a game of diving for rings.
Butterfly, butterfly, with colours so bright.
Play with me, dance with me -
Until it is night.

Emily age 7



School Garden: memories



The Butterfly Family

There is a butterfly family
That lives at Wharepapa South School.
They fly around the school
And make the school cool.
They are not very cheeky
But they can be very sneaky.
They pump their wings but -
They don't give you stings.
They fly very gently
And come fluttering past.
Daddy has two spots on his wings
Mummy has none at all.
Baby is an egg-so small
Oh, so small.
We love our butterfly family.

Helen age 7



Butterfly

Butterfly, butterfly, why are you crying?
I can't go flying-
Cos my wings are drying.

Keith age 5



With thanks to Wharepapa South School

There is no business like SNOW business!

by Karen Bennett

Hinds School is situated in the heart of Canterbury.

It is one of the largest rural Mid Canterbury Primary Schools, a farming area which was hugely affected by the June 2006 snowstorm.

Here is a poem one of my students wrote about the snow;

See Ya Snow!

*See the pretty snowflakes
Falling from the sky
On the wall and housetops
Soft and thick it lie.*

*On the windowsills
On the branches bare
Now how long it's lasting,
Filling all the air.*

*Look into the garden
Where the grass was green
Covered by the snowflakes
Not a blade is seen.*

*Now the bare black bushes
All look soft and white
Every twig is loaded
What a pretty sight!*

It was 4am and the security light had gone on. What on earth could it be? Was someone, or something, sneaking around the property in the wee small hours? No, it turned out to be landing on the property, virtually every square centimetre of it, and it certainly wasn't sneaking, it was coming down in a full-blooded torrent. It had been raining until late the previous night, big, pregnant drops slamming into the windows, but to wake up to discover the rain had turned to snow - deep, wet snow - overnight was nevertheless a shock.

When Ashburton was hit by heavy rain on the evening of Sunday June 11 2006, who was to know that the children, teachers and families of the area would wake to find snow surrounding their properties the following morning. The community soon realized that the snow was not going to be a short-term event, and from that moment action was taken. All hands were on deck. At this time I lived in the Hinds School house literally 10 meters from my classroom. It was here that I was witness to the week of white.

Were we prepared? I sure wasn't. I was a reasonably lame excuse for a 22 year old teacher. I quite enjoyed the first day of the snow, it was very exciting I had wood to keep the fire warm, and enough food, no work for the day so life was peachy.....until 5pm rolled around and I had no power, candles, phone and was alone in the dark. So bed it was.

I was soon rescued the following morning by the loving families of Hinds. And hence I experienced the warmth of a small town rural school community. There is something quite special about how in times of need people pull together and

take an event such as this in their stride. Education that week, for the students of Hinds School, and in fact all students of the greater Canterbury region was something I like to call real life (heard of it?). You can't actually get closer to understanding an event such as a snowstorm, than you can by being in one and being involved in the affects it has on everyday 'convenient' life. Well that's what sort of life we have really ...*light* by a switch, *heat* from a switch, *food* by a switch and *entertainment* at a switch?

It was really fun when all the students came back to school after the snow week. **Wow** they were all buzzing about the experiences they had had. For some, it was awesome, fun and a happy change to normal routines and for others it was exciting up until the point they realized "we get all this time off school and I can't play the play station?"

The Mid Canterbury district received the largest snowfall on record. The following weeks stretched our communities resources while response, the clean up and the rebuilding of core infrastructure, particularly power and telephones was carried out. It was particularly pleasing to see how the community rallied around in difficult circumstances. There were many volunteers who assisted to alleviate the hardship many were going through. This snowfall was a timely reminder of the preparation we must all do in case of adverse events like this.

The snow was as deep as the July 1945 snow storm which produced very heavy snowfall down to sea level. In some places, the snow storm was even deeper. Ashburton had the greatest maximum snow depth on record and the lowest June mean temperatures in more than 50 years were recorded.



"I can't go to school today Miss, my bike has been snowed in"

The snowstorm hit Canterbury over 11-12 June, producing snow depths of 15 – 90 cm. There were numerous broken power lines and poles. The roofs of several buildings also collapsed, due to the weight of snow and many motorists were stranded in the snow, and many roads were closed.

Farmers in South Canterbury and inland Canterbury had to push through heavy snow to reach stock in what they described as the worst snowstorm they had experienced at this time of year. This affected so many of the Hinds school community for the weeks that the snow sat around. On the bright side, this event set Mt Hutt ski field up for a very good season.

The snow storm reminded me of the Hinds Schools Ski Trip during 2005 my first year teaching. We took around 80 children and their parents up to Mt Hutt for the day.

It's always 'a bit touch and go' with ski trips "will we go, it's open, great let's do it" everyone meets down at the school in the early hours of the day to travel up the slopes. This day started well the students all had successful and unsuccessful lessons in skiing, snowboarding and you could say bottom-boarding. At midday we had most of the group having a ball. Shortly after that the clouds rushed in and slowly began to blow us off the mountain. We had many freaked out kids and parents and I think we managed to discourage a third of the

students from ever trying skiing again. It could have been worse though, no one got any serious injuries.

By the time the ski trip was on offer the next August following the excitement of the 2006 June snow we had all forgotten about the bad experience the year before and put our best skis forwards.

Mt Hutt is located high in the Southern Alps, Canterbury's Mt Hutt Ski Area receives some of the lightest and driest powder in Australasia. It is renowned for its laidback and rural atmosphere, and Mt Hutt is a family and beginner friendly mountain. We find it the perfect mountain to take School ski trips to.

Fortunately, there have not yet been any suggestions of a repeat snow storm, and for the sake of the communities living in the affected area, hopefully it's at least 60 years

before another such storm hits. But of course there's no guarantee of that. It could happen at any time. Hopefully the experience of last year has ensured that if it does, we're better prepared to deal with it.

This year the Snow storm was remembered by the Ashburton Guardian a year on. The Guardian read:

'From foothills to sea, residents awoke to the white and silent world of a massive snowfall. Many also woke to a cold and dark world, a world without power.....Disaster brings out the best in people and across the district countless stories began to filter out about people helping others, doing whatever they could – labour, food, accommodation, goods.'

This is all good stuff! And I think I've mentioned it before, it takes a shock to the system, a mistake, a depressed time or a 'I've Hit the Wall' day at work to realize there is a need for a bit more love in the world.

This has been a piece from the Plains
Karen Bennett



Mount Hutt and the rural beauty of Mid Canterbury



"Could do with some warm milk for these straw-bix" munched Daisy



It sounds good if you use this word nowadays

by Lyn Rogers

“Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”

(World commission on Environment and Development 1987)

“Sustainability relates to the continuity of economic, social, institutional and environmental aspects of human society, as well as the non-human environment.”

(Wikipedia)

What is all the fuss about sustainability? Sustainability is a word I seem to hear bandied about almost everywhere lately: councils; newspapers; politicians; business people and educators are all using it. But what does it mean?

There is no universally agreed definition, but it sounds good if you use it.

“Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World commission on environment and Development 1987)

“Sustainability relates to the continuity of economic, social, institutional and environmental aspects of human society, as well as the non-human environment.” (Wikipedia)

The word sustainability seems to imply thinking about the future; the environment; the impact of human activities; global issues like climate change; resource management; carbon credits; consumer choices; tree planting etc, etc. Everything actually seems to be considered nowadays in terms of sustainability.

There is a growing public and political awareness of sustainability and related issues, if the headlines are any indication.

A snapshot of the headlines lately demonstrates that sustainability is being considered in all sorts of contexts.

Sustainability key for NZ tourism: minister
NZ students head to Bangkok sustainability forum
New Zealand carbon neutral by 2020
Government goes for green homes
Don't be fooled by food miles
Sustainable Living In NZ Just Got Easier
Dinosaurs Must Stop Robbing Sustainability Budgets
Drastic Change Needed to Achieve Climate Goals
Council Agrees To Carbon Neutral Vision
NZ Windfarms share offer closes fully subscribed

If we are talking about the choices that future generations will be able to make, and the future health of the planet as a whole (independent of human needs) then we are going to have to do something about our actions, now! How we live, the choices we make as individuals, communities, nations and as a global community will have to be considered in terms of future consequences.

It is big picture stuff! Long Term!

There is lots of doom and gloom around about it too! There have been reports, treaties, agendas, protocols etc. for years, involving different nations, with different focuses and varying success in bringing about significant change on a global level.

Underlying all the agreements however, is the understanding that changes need to occur, and also that **education is a key component** required to effect those changes.

Well thank goodness, because that is something we can do!

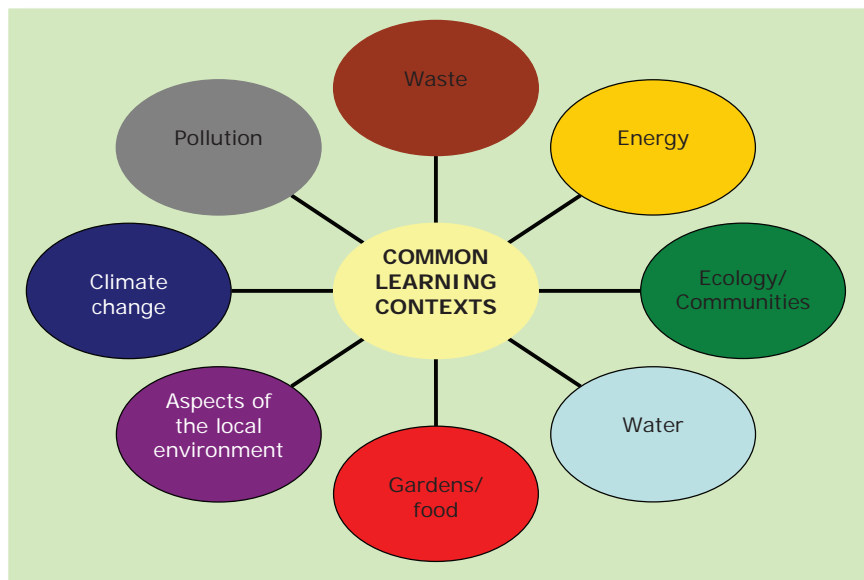
Educate!

After all, its pretty hard as an individual to go about effecting global change!

But we are educators, it's what we do.

Coming to my mind is the slogan (original source unknown)

"Think Global, Act Local"



Now this is a key! We can make changes at an individual level; at a local level, and influence change at regional and national levels too! This is stuff we can do!

We are talking about creating changes in attitudes, awareness and behaviours. These changes need to be based on good information, with regard to others as well as the environment, and with an understanding of the consequences and implications of any changes made.

In 2004 the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment put out a report called "See Change: Learning and education for sustainability". It outlines in depth aspects of education for sustainability in a variety of contexts. It is well worth a read.

I want to outline how some teachers are responding to growing public awareness about sustainability and the ways in which they are helping their

students make sense of sustainability issues.

Waste is a great place to start.

So many schools are starting here! Build a worm farm!

No, I hear you cry, not another nice story about a worm farm!

Well let's look at that through a different lens.

Is it just about the worm farm itself?

No...

It is about changing the way we view things; changing the values position that waste is something we throw away, towards the view that waste is something that can be returned, or put back in.

There is actually no such thing as waste!

Did you know that at Scion (the old Forest Research Institute), research by ENSIS is well under way that will see worms dealing with the waste

produced by a whole abattoir; the solid waste from a whole city or a timber mill. Millions of worms are already dealing with tonnes of industrial and human waste, returning the products as useful additions to the economy.

Who would have thought this several years ago?



From Top: Vermicast liquid worm wees. School composting. Trying different worm bins

Continued on page 16

Continued from page 15

So... the worm farm is an excellent example of changing our perspectives, and it is **something all of us can do right now!** Our students can get this happening, in their classrooms and at home!

Education for sustainability is also about the **process of learning**: in action, through action, and about action. The learning about waste in context offers many benefits.

In the example above (building a worm farm), waste is managed more sustainably; it is viewed as a resource and students are empowered and upskilled to take sustainable action in other contexts as well. The

learning can spin off into all sorts of other learning directions. For example the production and use or marketing of

"worm wees", "worm tea" and compost links easily into enterprise; horticulture; healthy foods; etc.



Community event recycling

So... education for sustainability can have amazing educational, as well as sustainable outcomes.

Strategies that can empower students to become responsible citizens, who can make sustainable choices, and who can take appropriate sustainable actions, are those that involve student decision making throughout the learning process.

The waste example above is a great illustration of programme design utilising inquiry processes, relying upon co-operative learning and including experiential learning strategies.

This type of learning, through action, allows students to critically inquire, develop deep understandings of facts, alternatives and consequences, and to reflect.

This model of learning involves students shifting their perceptions, making changes, and applying their new framework of thinking in other situations, such as at home. The students become the teachers here, modelling sustainable practices for their whanau.

The model I have outlined not only satisfies outcomes in terms of sustainability but in terms of the skills and attitudes toward sustainability that society will need when facing the challenges of the future. These skills and attitudes have been identified in the new draft curriculum as the values and key competencies that students will need as lifelong learners in the 21st century.

jacknobi's Motion Books

environmental

Make environmental education easy and fun!

- Interactive educational software for children aged 8 - 12.
- 4 fully narrated and animated Motion Books which cover environmental problems and offer ways for children to help the environment.
- 25 extra activities reinforce the learning in a fun way.
- 39 interactive word hints + extra tips and tricks
- Helpful links for extra research

www.jacknobi.co.nz
(07) 846 3930

Covers: Recycling, Wormfarming, Saving energy, Conserving water, Global warming

There are a number of great support materials for teachers wanting to embark on a waste education programme, or to build worm farms. One useful place to start is the Wastewise website:

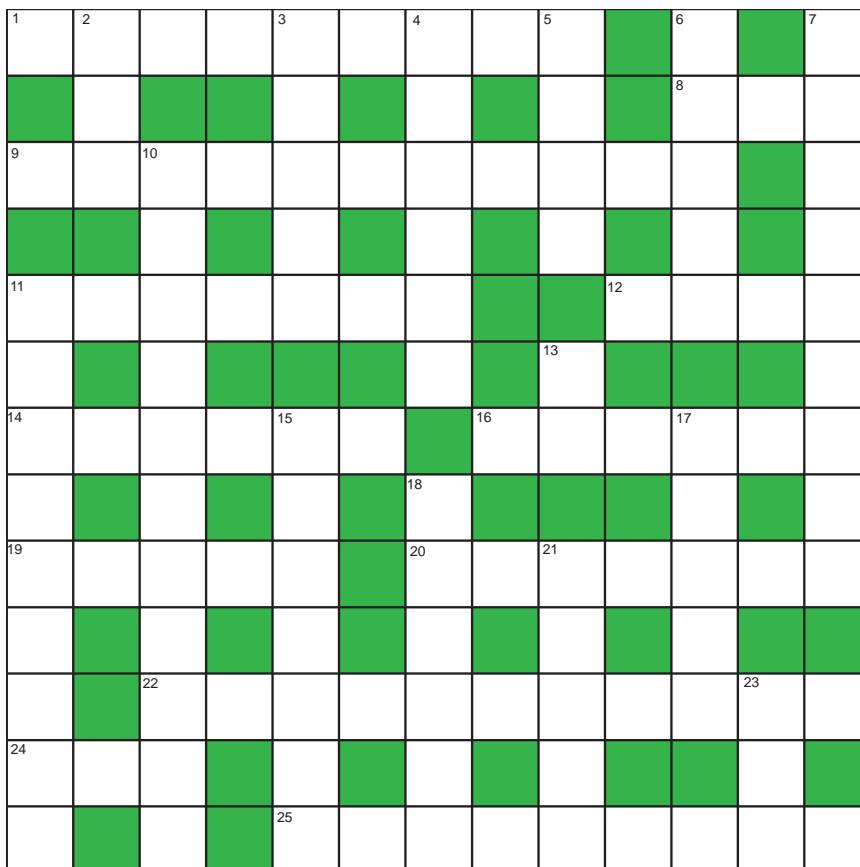
www.wastewise.org.nz .

Opinion piece: this represents a personal view and is not written on behalf of any group.



Good Teacher Magazine Crossword

created by Richard Crypt



Across

- 1 Can tally. A pleasing result (9)
- 8 William titled alot of this about love (3)
- 9 A flag for the Nautilus? Under par.(11)
- 11 King Kong eating vegetables to calm (7)
- 12 Loudly sick. To the brim. (4)
- 14 Soft and angry buccaneer (6)
- 16 Stick advertisement in this place (6)
- 19 Goodbye for Pierre (5)
- 20 Anaesthetics. Digits (7)
- 22 Inhale stain, disrupts and wipes out (11)
- 24 Even without angry leader it is still very long (3)
- 25 This non-metric standard is still used (9)

Down

- 2 Initially get no understanding for this beast (3)
- 3 Former spouse stands on backward painting. Additional (5)
- 4 Sth African embraces Aotearoa, that's great mate! (6)
- 5 For example, short promotion. Yikes! (4)
- 6 Circle Members (5)
- 7 Do back inside those who shout. Alpine warblers. (9)
- 10 Bar pianists play for a double collusion (11)
- 11 Cleopatra's nemesis stopped. Paved (9)
- 13 I would be one of Sigmund's words (2)
- 15 Away from school will come from racy nut (7)
- 17 Troubled flier may need to do this (5)
- 18 Part of the ranch or restrain a ship (6)
- 21 These could be good for a thousand beers (5)
- 23 Alien ton and so on (3)

Please photocopy and attempt this crossword ... this ensures it can be enjoyed by, or can frustrate, more of you!

Answers will be published in Term Four Good Teacher Magazine

Those of you who enjoy a challenge might like to send your completed crossword to Good Teacher Magazine before the 30th of May.

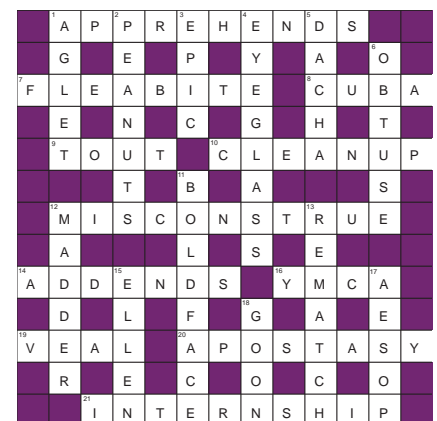
The first correct one pulled from a hat wins a small prize and the dubious honour of acknowledgement.

It was great to get a copy of the Term two crossword from Lucas in Tawa, who only omitted to answer 18 down.

Well done - they're meant to be challenging!

Good Teacher Magazine Crossword

Term Two Answers



Query: are there enough Sudoku enthusiasts out there to warrant a sudoku each magazine?

If you'd like to see this please send an email to info@ed-media.co.nz and we'll see what we can do.

Here goes Lucy again...

Three Level Guide

by Lucy Literacy

It's always a bit of a challenge to find a comprehension activity that gives students the opportunity to think deeply about the meaning of the text. The Three Level Guide is an activity that engages students in thinking at different levels of thinking about a text

The model was devised by Herber (1978) and developed further by Morris and Stewart-Dore (1984)

So... how does this all work?

A three-level guide consists of a series of statements, about a specific text, presented at three levels of thinking

The discussion that follows is a vital part of the three-level guide strategy. The guide identifies statements that are important and then encourages students to think them through and expand their ideas. The text is processed again and again as groups of students read it aloud to each other and pick out sections which justify particular conclusions. (adapted from ERICA – Morris/Stewart-Dore)

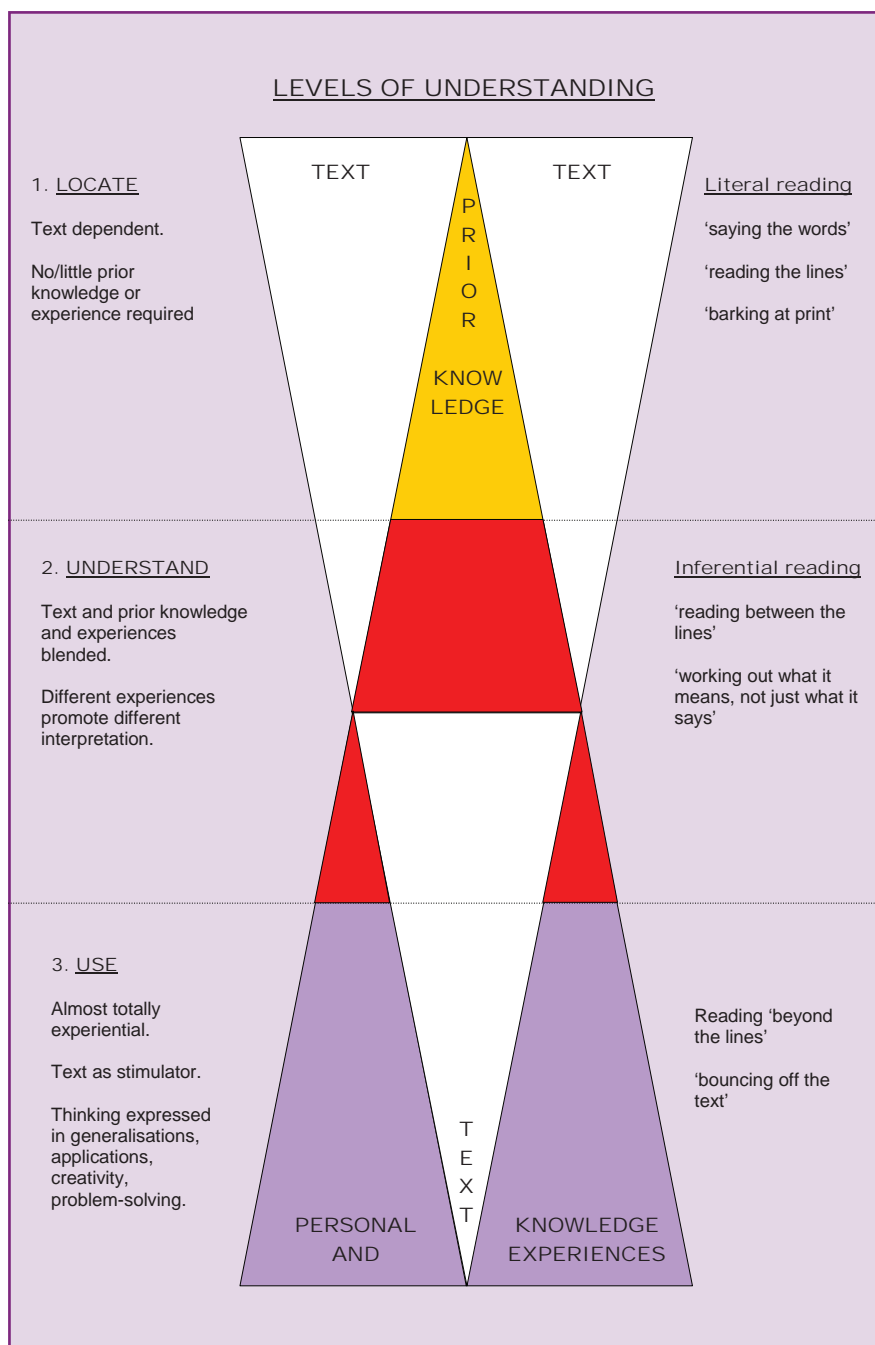
This strategy encourages students to become active readers, engaging with the text and responding to the ideas presented. It also gives the teacher evidence about how well the students are understanding the texts they read.

Effective Literacy Strategies in Years 9-13 A Guide for Teachers, NZ MOE, 2004, pp 91-93

The use of three level guides encourages the participation of students of different reading ability in a non threatening situation.

This is what readers do ...

- Readers check the text.
- Think about it critically.
- Evaluate it so that they can respond to all the statements in the guide.
- As they read the text and work through the three-level guide, they focus first on the actual information in the text.
- They then think through this information, making links between ideas and interpreting the author's thoughts.
- Finally they consider the implications of the ideas, making generalisations and critically evaluating the arguments. Students discuss the relevance of each statement on the three level guide. Statements are ticked off when there is a consensus.



Here's an example, give it a go...

Read the text below and then complete the tasks

When the man finished his meal of bacon and eggs, he walked out of the restaurant and left his umbrella behind.

Level 1

Tick the numbers of the statements that say what the story says. The statements *may be worded differently, but they should mean the same thing.*

Make a note as to where you found the answer.

- 1 The man had bacon and eggs for a meal.
- 2 He left his umbrella behind.
- 3 The man was going to play golf without taking his golfing umbrella.

When the man finished his meal of bacon and eggs, he walked out of the restaurant and left his umbrella behind.

Level 2

Tick the numbers of the statements *which you think are true from what the story says.*

Be prepared to give reasons for your answers.

- 1 It was quite late in the afternoon.
- 2 The man was quite hungry and ate all his food.
- 3 It was raining all day.
- 4 He forgot to pay for his meal.

When the man finished his meal of bacon and eggs, he walked out of the restaurant and left his umbrella behind.

Level 3

Tick the numbers of the statements *you think the writer would agree with.*

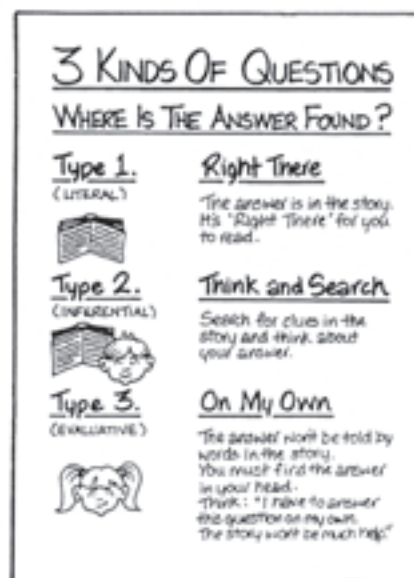
Be prepared to provide evidence and reasons to support your answer.

- 1 People will eat at a restaurant for convenience.
- 2 "Bacon and eggs" is a typical Western Country meal.
- 3 Countries become well known for the traditional dishes they serve.
- 4 Restaurants open to serve evening meals.

Working in a group to construct a three level guide can be helpful. It's great to bounce ideas off each other.

When constructing a three level guide it is important to:

- Determine the purpose of the three level guide – what do you want the students to get from this text?
- Begin with the level three statements. These should reflect the main idea, major concepts and generalizations - 'beyond the text'
- Now work on the level one statements. These should contain literal information – 'on the lines'
- Finally construct the level two statements. These should help students to draw inferences from the text – 'between the lines'



Adapted from Raphael, Tally E., 'Question Answer Strategies for Children', The Reading Teacher, November 1982, pp. 185-90 © The International Reading Association.

Try this twist to this activity:

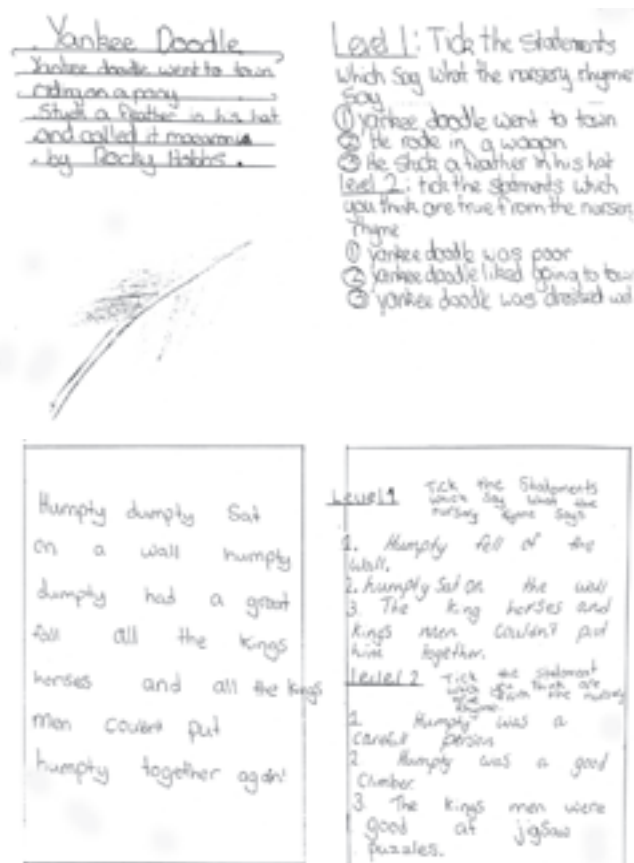
Ask the students to construct their own three level guides.

I had the opportunity to work with some year 4 and 5 students who were up to the challenge.

Each student chose a familiar nursery rhyme to base their three level guide on.

As you will notice from the examples we only managed to work on the first two levels.

We will give it another go to see how we get on!



Continued on page 20



Hickory Dickory Dock
The mouse ran up the
clock,
The clock struck one,
the mouse ran down,
Hickory Dickory Dock

Level 1 Tick the statements which
say what the Nursery Rhyme says

1. ☐ The mouse ran down the clock.
2. ☐ The clock struck none.
3. ☐ The mouse was grey.

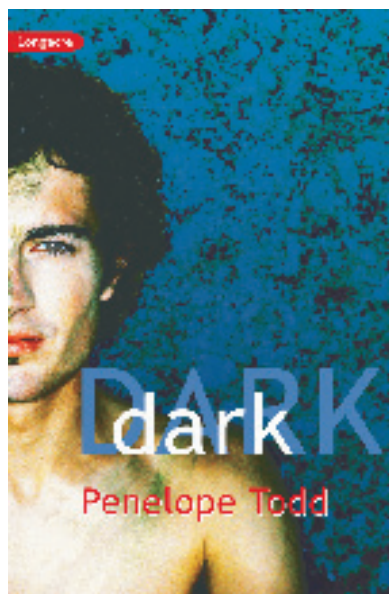
Level 2 Tick the statements which
say what is true from the nursery
rhyme

1. ☐ The mouse was fit
2. ☐ The clock wasn't ticking.
3. ☐ The clock was tall.

If you would like any more information about
three level guides please feel to contact
Lucy lucy@ed-media.co.nz

Grateful thanks to:
Fran Edwards and Sylvia Hill – Learning Through Language
Marion Evans Secondary Literacy Adviser

Coming in Term Four ... *booksandthings* **Competition** for secondary and tertiary readers



Three sets of
Penelope Todd's 'Watermark Trilogy' to be won
Good **Teacher** Magazine will also feature an interview with the author

books and things

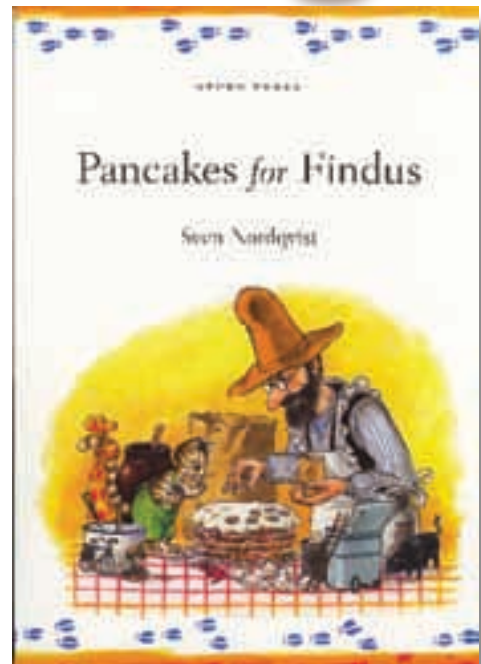
Pancakes for Findus
by Sven Nordqvist

Gecko Press

Reviewed by Miles Ford, Age 6.

Pancakes For Findus is about a farmer and his talking cat Findus. Findus gets three birthdays a year and the farmer always gives him pancakes. They gave Findus three birthdays because it would be more fun. One birthday he wanted the pancakes to come quicker so he did things he thought would make them come quicker but really they caused a lot of funny trouble. When he realised it might mean no pancakes he helped the farmer and it has a happy ending for both of them.

I really liked the story because there were funny pictures, and Findus was silly in a funny way. There are lots of little things to see in the pictures like a giant boot in the forest with a tree sticking out of it, and giant mushrooms growing out of a stone. This is one of the best picture books I've read lately, and I would recommend it for children aged 6 and up.



The Visitor
by Sonja Bougaeva

Translated by Monica Smith

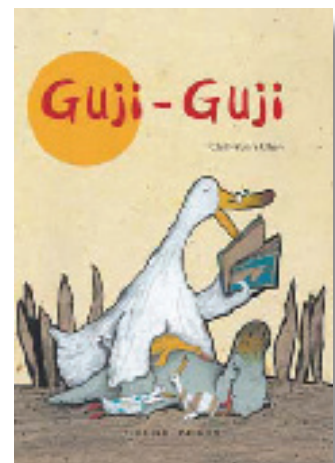
Gecko Press

Reviewed by Miles Ford, age 6.

This is a book about two sisters who live on a little island. One day their cousin comes to stay. Before the cousin came to stay the sisters liked it because they could do whatever they wanted. They could eat pancakes for breakfast and the animals could stay inside. At first when their cousin came to stay they liked it because he fixed things for them. But after a while he made them eat muesli for breakfast instead of pancakes, and he made the animals go outside, and the sisters didn't like this. They didn't know what to do, but luckily it all ends okay.

I like this book because the pictures tell you as much as the words. My favourite picture is the one where the cousin has cleared up the whole garden and is just about to cut down the last plant with flowers on. He put up signs that say no dogs and no cats. I don't think that's much of a garden.

I would recommended this to children aged 4 and up.



Guji-Guji
Chih-Yuan Chen

Gecko Press

Reviewed by Catherine George

If you are looking for a beautifully illustrated ugly duckling story with a twist, then look no further! Guji-Guji, by Taiwanese author and illustrator Chih-Yuan Chen, is a sweetly encouraging story about identity and family.

Guji-guji is a crocodile raised among a family of ducks, and is quite happy with his life despite looking nothing like his brothers. As he grows older, some of the crocodiles try to convince him to trick the ducks into becoming crocodile dinner...

The muted drawings are in beautiful shades and colours, and the story manages to deliver themes of peer pressure and belonging to a family in a subtle and humorous way. Great for unconventional families, or anyone who feels they don't always fit in.

I loved this story, and would highly recommend it as a read aloud book for children 4 and up.

books and things

Night of the Fifth Moon

Written and illustrated by Anna Ciddor

Published by Allen and Unwin

RRP \$18.99

Reviewed by Catherine George

In the time of the druids

Deep in the forest

Six seek the power

But only one can be chosen

Anna Ciddor is the award winning author of the popular Viking Magic series. In *Night of the Fifth Moon* the author takes us to pagan Ireland in 415 AD. Ket has strong family reasons to want to become a druid, but must compete against five other fosterlings for the honour of becoming an anruth, or apprentice druid. Each new moon one of the competitors is sent away, and by the end the final competitor will have had to work out a message set in Ogham runes on a stick.

The historical aspect of this book has been thoroughly researched, including the runes, the legend of the Battle of Moytura, the roles of druids in Irish society, and how children were fostered out at about age seven to create strong community ties. For this book, the author journeyed to Ireland from her home in Melbourne to search for the lost, pagan world of druids – even climbing into real burial mounds at night. I particularly enjoyed the strong female characters, reflective of women's roles in the communities of the time.

Magic is taken for granted, and a strong subtle emphasis placed on writing and learning, and the privilege and power of education. The story has a fantastic pace, and was devoured almost in one sitting by each of the readers in our house!

Highly recommended for ages 8 and up.



Reviewed by Seamus Ford, Age 12.

This magical book is set in ancient pagan Ireland. It is about Ket, who is competing with five other children to become an apprentice to the druid. At each new moon one of the competitors must be sent away, until only one remains. The druid has written a message in runes on a piece of wood, and the competitors have to try and unlock the secret of the message – only the one who can will stay to learn the secrets of the druid.

Ket struggles each moon, as he is not the fastest or cleverest or best at anything. However the competitors learn lessons each moon of friendship and rivalry.

The character of Ket was so real that I felt I could understand how he felt and thought. The author went to Ireland to research the book, and that showed in the writing, as I could hear and feel the settings through her descriptions. I have read her previous books, the Viking Magic series, which while they are set in Norway, have a similar mystical feel.

This book really grabbed my attention from the beginning, and I couldn't stop reading it. Towards the end I wanted to read faster and faster but not miss anything – and at the end I wished it was longer because I didn't want it to finish.

I can't recommend this book highly enough, it will be enjoyed by readers who enjoy magic and mystery. I would suggest it for readers of age nine and up. My brother Gabriel is nine and he loved it and wanted to review it but I beat him to it!



Seacastle: The Lost Shimmeron

By Tansy Rayner Roberts

Published by ABC Books

RRP \$12.95

Reviewed by Gabriel Ford Age 9.

Seacastle is an easy to read chapter book that will be the first in a series about the Lost Shimmeron. This book is about a boy Thomas and his brother Nick who find themselves plunged into an underwater

world, through their purple lake, Lake Shimmer. Once there they join forces with Catya who is a half mermaid (she has legs, not a tail) who has been the only one that can communicate with the Beacon. The underwater people don't know, but we find out, that the Beacon is part of the Shimmeron.

The story had a simple plot, but always had lots happening. It had a few weird things happening that kept it interesting, like talking gardening tigers. There were quite a few funny bits, and colourful descriptions (like the rainbow talking gardening tiger!)

Because this book was easy to read and quite a simple story I would recommend it for boys and girls ages 7 and up. I will definitely read more of the series.

Who is this New Zealand author?

Read the interview and enter the competition for Secondary and Tertiary readers in the Term 4 issue

of **Good Teacher Magazine**

books and things



Rubies in the Snow
By Kate Hubbard

Published by Short Books (Allen and Unwin)
RRP \$18.99

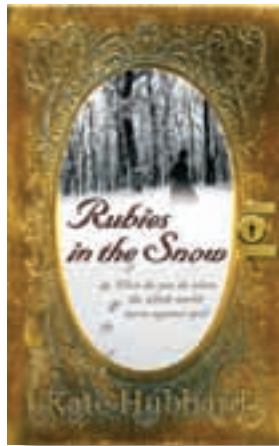
Reviewed by Seamus Ford, Age 12.

Rubies in the Snow is a fictional diary of Anastasia Nicolaevna Romanov, the youngest daughter of Nicholas II, Russia's last Tsar. It is set between 1911 and 1918, starting when she is 10 and receives the diary as a birthday gift. At the beginning she lives a life that is full of parties and luxury, and as a reader you think it would be nice to live that kind of life. However, life for Anastasia gradually changes as the peasants revolt. The Royal Palace becomes a prison when they are placed under house arrest, and they aren't allowed to leave it unless they are accompanied by soldiers. Her life just get worse and worse after this.

I thought it was written in a way that was easy to read, though the style of writing didn't change as she got older, and I thought it would have made it more believable it had – at the end she still seemed like she was ten years old. What had changed was that she'd lost some of optimism, and you get a really good sense of her feelings of despair at her father's behaviour. She can't understand that someone who she thinks could be taking care of them is letting the family be hurt.

I felt that by the end I knew a lot more about the Russian Revolution, and it was interesting to read it from the side of the Royal family. It was easy to follow with a character list at the front (there were so many characters you really needed this!) and a glossary of Russian terms at the end.

I would recommend this for ages 12 and up. Even for good readers I wouldn't recommend it for younger children. If you were involved with the characters and the story it was hard to read about the terrible things that were happening, and the end was really shocking and quite blunt. I do think that it was a really good book, as long as readers are prepared for the unhappy ending.



Reviewed by Catherine George

'Today is my birthday. I'm ten. It is also the first day of this diary, a present from Papa and Mama. My name is Anastasia Nicolaevna Romanov . . .'

It is June 1911. Ten-year-old Anastasia lives life as a whirl of parties, strawberry ice and skating on the palace lake. Irreverent and charming, Anastasia is the naughty one of the family who quarrels with her siblings, is atrocious at spelling and loves practical jokes. But this is where the fairytale ends. Anastasia's beloved Russia is a country in turmoil and the common people are no longer enchanted by their princess. Her world is about to change forever.

This fictional diary of Anastasia's life is a compelling read, which very descriptively places you in the time of the revolution. The characters are strong, though perhaps somewhat stereotyped. It is a well written introduction to the historical events that would give readers a really good grasp of the issues of the time.

My main reserve with the book is the suitability of the material for the age the book is recommended for. It is written in a very easy to read style and vocabulary. However, while the book is recommended for ages 8-12, I would be cautious about giving it readers at the younger end of the scale. My nearly nine year old read the book before I did. He is a very thoughtful and competent reader, and was incredibly upset by the content. He actually decided to stop reading halfway through (unheard of for him) because "everyone is dying!" He was quite conflicted about the book, and wanted to keep reading it because it was really interesting, but it was rather harrowing (and he didn't even get to the tragic ending). This is a reflection on the standard of the writing, and how convincing the characters and story were. I also agree with Seamus that the ending was perhaps not paced as well as it could be – I would have preferred more of a build-up to the ending, though maybe the author wanted readers to feel the abruptness of the massacre.

So, highly recommended for older preteens, but with a recommendation that thought given to preparing sensitive readers for the themes of the story.

The Inventors

by Alexander Gordon Smith and Jamie Webb

Published by Faber Children's PB
RRP \$18.99

Reviewed by Gabriel Ford age 9.

The Inventors is a great story written by two brothers, and one of them, Jamie Webb, was only 11 when they wrote this book. Alexander Gordon Smith says that he's a rubbish (like not very good) inventor, and that his little brother Jamie is much better than him!

The story is about two friends, Nate and Cat, who love inventing. They win a scholarship with the worlds richest and cleverest inventor, Ebenezer Saint. With a group of other children they start a year long stay with him to invent many inventions. But Ebenezer has some secrets, and Nate and Cat have to find a way to stop him before he does something really catastrophic.

This was a thrilling and exciting book, that I didn't want to put down. It had lots of different emotions in it – funny, sad, scary, you name it, it was there. One of the sad things was that Cat's Dad had died, and because he was an inventor she liked the idea of being an inventor as well.

The scary bits involved Ebenezer, who is maniacal and crazy, and did things like showed Nate and Cat images of Hiroshima to show them the power of destruction.

I enjoyed the book, because as well as being an exciting story it made me think about the world. It was a bit frightening to think that things like that could happen in real life, but it was good to think that people who care about the world can stop bad things happening.

I would recommend this for children aged 9 and up. I wouldn't recommend it for younger children because some of the bombings and things might not be suitable.



books and things

Home School Partnerships: Numeracy

by Andi Adder and the
Waikato HSP Numeracy Team

The Home School Partnership Numeracy Programme is part of the Government's national Numeracy Strategy.

The programme aims to raise student achievement by training lead teams of parents and teachers to deliver sessions for other parents and families.

The goal is to empower parents to help their children develop strong Numeracy understanding. Parents learn to have fun with maths and find out ways of helping their children at home.

This year the Ministry of Education ran schemes in Home School Partnership across the country as part of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy 1998-2007. The Numeracy programme was primarily aimed at improving achievement in Numeracy for Pasifika children by involving their families.

Through its *Pasifika Education Plan*, the Ministry aims to achieve the following:

- raising teacher expectations and reducing disparity for Pasifika students
- promoting teacher confidence in teaching and assisting learning for Pasifika students
- identifying any language barriers which may be affecting the learning of Pasifika students
- involving Pasifika parents and the school community in Numeracy

The Ministry provided funding for the participating schools to contribute towards teacher release, lead parent costs, resources and refreshments.

The schools were selected through expressions of interest and Principal referral.

As the success of the programme has spread, principals are contacting facilitators directly to find out how they can become involved.

"A great back up to the school Numeracy programme." Lead Teacher

Training Structure

Numeracy facilitators trained the teams in clusters of three or four schools. The training involved four workshops followed by community sessions in each school. This was done to encourage networking and collaboration between schools.

The Numeracy Team for each school consisted of one lead teacher and three lead parents. The lead teacher role was critical in providing support, and sometimes tutoring the lead parents, particularly during the initial weeks of the programme.

"I found it great reinforcement with strategies and games, and an

opportunity to network with parents." Lead Teacher

Each training session had a theme. Sessions showed progressions through the stages in operations such as addition and subtraction, multiplication and division. The Numeracy Framework DVD was used to illustrate progressions of learning at both training sessions and community sessions.

Time was allocated during each training session for the Numeracy Team to plan their next community session. Facilitators provided planning templates and assisted with planning to ensure each community session incorporated a balance of maths content, discussion time and maths game playing.

"I learnt heaps about how kids are learning maths in schools and it helps me support the learning of my own children." Parent

Community Sessions

The community sessions were designed as a series of four sessions with parents encouraged to attend all four. Parents were invited using a range of techniques. Some of the more successful included: personal invitations, reminder notices on wrist bands for the students, school displays, notices, banners, and the offer of spot prizes. Some schools offered a major prize draw for parents who attended all four sessions.

The lead parents were encouraged to organize the structure of their meetings to reflect their own community. This included providing food and ensuring the venue was welcoming. Several schools also organized child care to enable parents to attend.



Each community session was an hour long and held at times that suited the school and the community. In many cases lead parents ran the sessions with support from the lead teacher.

The community sessions usually started with a warm up activity involving some maths, which required parents to talk to each other. Each session included information for parents on the progressions in Numeracy with Numeracy facilitators available to answer questions. Interspersed through the sessions were opportunities for parents to work together to solve maths problems and play maths games. In some schools, children were invited to participate in number activities with their parents, particularly in the final session.

The Numeracy DVD showing children at different stages solving maths problems was a powerful tool to demonstrate to parents how children approach problems in a variety of ways. Often parents adjusted their own mathematical thinking over the series of workshops as they extended their own knowledge and became aware of a variety of strategies for solving problems.

I have a different outlook on maths now and I have learnt a lot." Parent

Each parent who attended the community sessions received a take home pack of maths games to play with their children. New packs were provided after each session. Packs included instructions for games, dice and playing cards.

"I love practicing the games with my children at home. It seems to have made a great difference with my seven year old son." Parent



Highlights

- Parents feeling much more confident to come in to the school, and approach teachers about their children's progress in Mathematics.
- Parents developing a common language with teachers and students, including talking about strategies and stages.
- Homework became a lot less stressful for many families.
- Parents asking for more sessions to develop their own mathematics.
- Lead parents developing their confidence and leadership skills. In several cases, lead parents gained new jobs in the community.
- Schools starting up other initiatives as a result of Home School Partnership.
- Schools using the HSP model in other curriculum areas.

"I have gained more understanding of maths taught to my children." Parent



Next steps:

- Data is currently being collected to see if there has been any improvement in student achievement.
- Lead teachers and lead parents from the last two years are meeting together soon to discuss their progress.
- There is a demand for the programme to be extended to further schools in future.



On a Mission:

Turkish adventure

Isn't it amazing ...

that there are certain things that will bring tears to your eyes either with joy, sadness or laughter.

Things like a new born baby,

a painting by Gauguin, a beautiful sunrise over an azure sea,

an unresponsive computer that won't do what it's told,

a class of children in their best finery ready for action with their faces painted like Red Indians.

All of which leads me quite nicely into my next episode on travelling through Turkey. If you remember I had travelled down through Turkey having been to Troy, Ephesus, Assos, and having had a few challenges with the car and tires on the way.

As I arrived in Cappadocia with my newfound love of my life Finona, we had steeled ourselves to a life of austere deprivation. Having to drink Turkish wine was bad enough but living in a small village which lacked the basic essentials like a good cappuccino and excellent croissant was going to be a real challenge.

Which reminds me of a story about Marie Antoinette. I've just seen the most boring film ever made about her (the best parts were the views of Versailles, which I had visited a few months earlier. With no children you will be pleased to know) and I thought you would like to share a piece of history with me. Apparently Marie Antoinette brought the croissant to France when she arrived from Austria. The Croissant was first made in Austria to commemorate a battle in

which the Austrians beat the Turks (appropriate to my circumstances you would think). The story goes that the Turks or Ottomans as they were called in those days were attacking a walled city in Austria. The Ottomans were great miners and one of the strategies used was to dig under the walls of a city, build a large fire in the tunnel under the walls which would then make the walls collapse allowing the Turks to attack and raze the city. In this case the bakers of the city baking the daily bread at 2-3 am heard the Turks digging. They alerted the soldiers who then attacked the Turks and the Austrians won the day and eventually the war. This was the furthest that the Turks ever got to in Europe. Anyway because of this the bakers were asked to bake a bread to commemorate the victory. They came up with the croissant (based on the crescent on the Turkish flag). Apparently Marie Antoinette brought this bread to France, however the frogs weren't pleased enough to make an allowance to excuse her from her appointment at the hands of Madame Guillotine.



Goreme

Anyway on arrival at Goreme we were remarkably pleased to notice that indeed there were café's with passable Turkish coffee (strong enough to stand your spoon up in) and they also made passable Danish pastry.

So with this problem conquered we then set out to meet with the board of the local school. Obviously my reputation had preceded me as there were armed soldiers about every 50 metres along the road. On walking into the staffroom we were overwhelmed at the hospitality offered. Apple Tea was flowing like water, as were the names and phone numbers of the many relatives of the staff who just happened to have the best Carpets shops in the whole of Turkey. The

head teacher of the 5 staff was a fine looking man with an amazing handlebar moustache reminiscent of those Turkish men of the 1800's. Having battled our way through this and having persuaded them that Finona was almost as fine a teacher as I was, we found ourselves assigned to new entrants (Finona) and the equivalent of year 8 for myself.

As this story is all about me I will only spend a few short lines on Finona's teaching exploits. She prides herself on being a descendant of the kings of Norway and Sweden and has a lot of that Norse Pagan way of persuasion about her. If you can cast your minds back to the civilized way that the Vikings helped to repopulate half of the civilized world you'll know what I'm talking about. So the first task she was asked to accomplish (as she was dealing with new entrants) was to upskill on herding cats. You may remember in the last episode the farm of small furry things. Well it was a farm of cats and this was where the new entrant teachers were shown how to look after their new charges. Finona passed with flying colours and apart from the school having to repopulate the cat farm (Finona persuaded all the new entrant parents to take them home as pets) all was well.

Well back to the most important part of the story. ME.

My children were a lovely bunch, all keen and eager to learn. This to me is probably the biggest difference in the education systems of the civilised world and the so called 2nd or 3rd world countries. In NZ the children in the main, have little or no interest in education, as most know that it doesn't matter what they do when they leave school because Nanny State will look after them. The girls can have babies and go on the DPB and the boys can go on the dole. In a country like Turkey the kids know that if they don't succeed at school then it is almost literally a matter of life or death. There is no welfare system to speak of and they live by their own hard work and their wits.

This makes teaching them a real joy. Absenteeism is almost non-existent as the parents are determined that their kids will succeed. Because their trades revolve around tourism in the main they also speak very good English and

sometimes 2 or 3 other languages as well. They arrive at school having had some breakfast and ready to soak up every pearl of wisdom that I am prepared to share with them.

The teaching progressed well for a couple of weeks with all the usual matters being sorted out, like who sits where, how do we organize the room, who are the monitors and what do they monitor and learning all the names of these budding Atatürks. I have a special way of organizing my classroom. I put the children in a semicircle around my desk, as I am the focal point of the class. I divide them into two equal groups and run the class a bit like parliament, but without the lying, bitching and not answering questions that has developed to such a high standard over the last few years.

As you may have gathered my teaching style is based on a little bit of theory and lots of adventure and trips. One of the topics that I was asked to teach was cultures of the indigenous peoples of the world.

Having thought about this for a while and having had a charming weekend trip to a local township for some R&R with "my newfound love of my life Finona" I decided to cover the ways of the Red Indian of America. Now I only call these people Red Indians because that's what my kids know them as, having learnt a lot of the history of America from the movies especially the cowboys and Indians variety. Some of the best Westerns were actually made in Italy, as it was cheaper than making them in Hollywood thus coining the name "Spaghetti Westerns".

Finona and I had decided to go on a

little trip to a town nearby where there was reputed to be a really good pottery shop. We were looking for small pots for our flat to put some greenery in, as it is incredibly dry and dusty in this area. We arrived in the town and having spent some time trying to find a parking space (almost as bad as Queen St in Auckland but not as expensive) we set out to find the shop. A lot of these places are built in caves as the ground is made up of a top layer of hard soil with a very deep layer of volcanic ash. By deep I mean 20 or 30 meters. The hard top surface stops the ash washing away because it is quite soft. The ash can be dug out and makes very habitable living areas or shops. Once the ash is exposed to the air it hardens up and becomes a bit like a roughly plastered wall.

Anyway that's your geology lesson for the term.

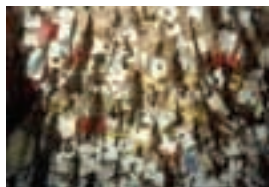
Finona and I eventually found the shop, which was very small considering all we had heard about it. It was only when we started exploring it that we discovered that the small cave that was the front of the shop was merely one of many that ran back into the hill. There were pots of every description and we realised after having listened to a lecture from a very well meaning and charming shop assistant (probably the owners 2nd cousin twice removed) that as well as Carpets this area of Turkey was very famous for its pots.

As we traversed our way deeper and deeper into this underground labyrinth we noticed this older sleazy looking guy following Finona around and looking at her hair. He actually came up to her and mumbled something in Turkish and touched her hair. Well

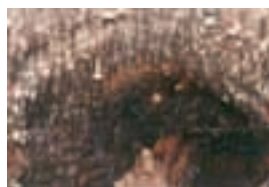


Goreme

Finona being descended from the Norse gods or their earthly equivalent (like King Vladimar the terrible) doesn't take this sort of behaviour lightly. I must explain that Finona's hair is like a verdant pasture, thick and healthy whereas mine is a bit like the same pasture after it has been mown and then partially plowed. So it appeared that this rat of a man wanted to take some of her hair. Finona in her typical and tactful Norse way told him to b****r off but to give him credit he stayed put and persisted. A bit like Gregan round the scrum, you just can't get rid off the little blighter. Anyway we were persuaded to follow him through into



the last cave. As we walked in you had to duck your head and as you raised your eyes it was as if you had walked into the lair of a very successful serial killer who collected the hair from his victims. This room (about the size of a large staff room) was covered from ceiling to walls with locks of people's hair, and when I say covered I mean you couldn't see the walls or the ceiling for hair. There were thousands of bits of hair everywhere. Each was tied up with a piece of ribbon and a card showing the date, name and telephone number of the lucky contributor. Well I am sure that you're asking yourself how could such a



shifty little man get people to give him their hair. Well it was almost like he mesmerised poor Finona. A bit like a king cobra and a mouse. It took only a few minutes of gesturing and mumbling and out came the scissors and he lopped off a good chunk of Finona's hair. I think he didn't approach me as he realised that what little hair I had left was fairly precious to me. Well before you could say "scalp a whitie" he had it beribboned, carded and up on the ceiling.

As we staggered out through the maze of caves Finona was wondering what had happened and I was thinking "scalping, red indians, indigenous peoples, new topic, wow."



So back to school ...

Well there I was on Monday morning explaining to my little treasures about this shop. Not surprisingly they all knew about it (the boys had probably sold their sisters hair to the guy) and as we talked about it, it didn't take too much of a stretch of the imagination to lead them to the wild west and the Indians. We talked about scalping and how it was done. A cut with a sharp knife around the top of the forehead and then down just above the ears and a quick tug and whacko the goose you have the need for a large hair transplant. I also explained to them that like other indigenous cultures a lot of these bad habits (if you can call scalping a bad habit) actually were behaviours that they had picked up from people who invaded the country. In this case the French (bless their devious little hearts) when they came into the American continent put a bounty on Indians and the means to secure the bounty was to produce a scalp to verify the kill. The Indians being quick learners thought this was a great idea and ran with it (as they say in the corporate world.)

So in the class we developed a strategy for putting our new found knowledge into practice. In the adversarial way that I had set up my class (2 competing teams) we decided that we would have a competition which would run over a week and the team which collected the most locks of hair (with no skin attached) would be exempt from cleaning the class room

for 2 weeks. (I forgot to say that with the schools being reasonably deprived we did our own classroom cleaning). So I sat them down and issued them face paint to paint themselves as Native Americans of the indigenous variety. (I was incredibly lucky as I had been rummaging through the 2 Drachma shop and I had come across these paints from China. Being a careful Kiwi I checked the ingredients and discovered that there was no flavouring or MSG just a moderate bit of lead so I bought them very cheaply)

With this task completed and with lunch around the corner I had them line up and collect their scissors. After the obligatory taking of fingerprints and getting them to sign a declaration to promise to return them I had them return to their seats and get ready for the break.

As the bell rang for lunch time, the kids were out of their chairs and off. They charged through the door like a bunch of Catholic's trying to get to the Sistine Chapel. An hour passed and back they came. What an incredible haul. I had all the cards and ribbons ready so that we could start to categorise all of our trophy's. I was amazed to see just what the kids had collected. Whole pony tails and locks of hair were everywhere. I did notice that some of the children were looking a little unkempt and some even looked as if they had been in a fight or two. Just normal behaviour I thought. Then I

saw a lock of hair which looked strangely familiar. Thick, greasy and redolent of Turkish tobacco. Where had I seen it before? At this stage there was a huge bang on the door and in marched a rather incomplete head teacher sporting a brilliant red face with a sadly diminished large moustache. (Did I forget to tell you that he had a siesta at lunch time.) Bugger I thought and then in the same breath what a brilliant accomplishment for one of the class... must find out who it was.

Well I was invited down to the office for a quick chat. It was suggested that it could be a really good idea if the competition was called off immediately if I didn't want to be assigned to a little school on the border of Turkey and Iran. They had an immediate vacancy as the last teacher had just been killed by friendly fire. (How can people be killed by friendly fire? Surely if it kills you it must, by definition, be unfriendly).

Well I declined the head teacher's very kind offer of an immediate transfer and we agreed that my little competition would cease. As I left his office I complimented him on his moustache saying that the one sidedness of it gave him a very distinctive Turkish look.

Anyway it is now 4am so it is off to bed for me and I look forward to catching up again next term.

Travelling Teacher

The Relievers Lot

“I wonder how many other people in the teaching profession see Relieving Teachers as parasites?”

*Let's say you attend your
old primary school reunion
and you meet up with the
old guy who used to be your
principal, when you were 10,
and he finds out you are now
a relieving teacher and comes
out with
“Relievers are just parasites!”*

You would feel somewhat taken aback wouldn't you?

I wonder how many other people in the teaching profession see Relieving Teachers as parasites. I certainly wondered where that comment was coming from.

Relievers do get paid good money (which by the way incorporates holiday pay because short term relievers do not get paid during the holidays). Sometimes the money is well earned, depending on whose class you have to teach that particular day. If the class is difficult, then yes, I do sit there chanting, in my head, “Ka-ching, ka-ching” (as in the sound of the “olden-days” cash register).

When I relieve, I act professionally, do as good a job as I can (with all care and responsibility), make sure the programme is followed (if that is what the teacher wanted), and leave the room in better shape than when I found it (if possible) with a note outlining what was covered and what sort of a day the class and I had had.

I do not know of any reliever who arrives at 9am and leaves at 3 pm on the dot. I make it my personal policy to arrive at least half an hour before school begins and stay until all tasks have been completed i.e. marking, notes, tidying up etc.

Ethics come into play too - Geez! I wonder what would happen if relievers grassed on incompetent teachers to their Principals.

I was relieving the other day and the morning notices came around from the office (only at about 8.30am I might add) and part of the notice read something like this . . .

“X rang in too late this morning for us to get a reliever so Y and Z will be having half of his class each for the day”.

There must be something very wrong with that school if the Principal can get away with not hiring a reliever for the day and teachers Y and Z put up with having to carry the can, so to speak.

I wonder what they do or don't do to any relievers they have had teaching in that particular school. Or maybe that

school just can't keep or attract many relievers?

Personally, my lot as a reliever has been pretty good . . . Until recently.

I began relieving when my child was young, wanting to keep my hand in, so to speak. I put my name down at a few local schools where I knew other teachers and began receiving work, mainly from one school. This suited me down to the ground because I would rather teach at a school where I know the teachers, routines, policies and procedures.

I picked up the odd bit of release time, plus relieved for teachers when they were at courses or sick. I thought there was a bit of loyalty going on between me and that school but recently I have had to revise my opinion.

New relievers turned up, put their names down on the relieving list and suddenly they were getting work at that school and I wasn't. I had deliberately **not** put my name all over town or at any other schools at the beginning of this year, thinking I would be phoned before any new people would be. But no!

I know! I know! Schools need to have a large reliever base because of CRT etc. Principals have to try out new relievers to see how they get on in class. But, hey, they shouldn't forget those teachers who thought they were valued and who have more than demonstrated their ability to work well and possibly go that extra mile.

In some areas relievers are “a dime a dozen” but when you find a reliever with integrity and high standards, who can supply a programme if teachers have not left any plan, let alone a timetable (heaven forbid) then schools should think about it a bit more and try to keep them close or risk losing them to another school who *will* value their competence and offer them work!!!

Perhaps Principals should be asking their valued staff, who they prefer to have as relievers in “their” classes or, heaven forbid, even ask the students.

Now, **that** would be interesting!!

by CRT4ME

Competition ...

Can you identify your school??

If you think **your** school is one of the two mystery schools pictured below ...

- a Write to us identifying your school
- b tell us some of the great things going on there (with photos if you like)

We will publish what you write in the Term 4 2007

Good Teacher Magazine and send you a book for your library.



Mystery School 1



Mystery School 2

Send your entries by 14th September 2007 to:
Mystery School Competition,
George Hudson
PO Box 5531
Mt Maunganui 3150

or email to:
georgehudson1@gmail.com

Competition result from Term two 2007

Mystery School 1 in Term Two was not identified. It was Raetihi Primary School

Mystery School 2... Awanui School



Awanui School is situated on State Highway 1 approximately 8 km from Kaitaia in the Far North. Our school history goes back 130 years when the School was a "Native School". We consider ourselves fortunate to have children of both Maori and European heritage and encourage a sense of belonging to our supportive community. We raise the NZ Flag daily to further encourage a sense of belonging and pride in our country.

We run many exciting programmes in our school for our Year 1-6 children plus a Pre- School Programme and Toy Library for our students pre-school siblings to prepare them for when they begin school.



We are also a Health Promoting School participating in the "Fruit in Schools Programme. Our children engage in daily "Jump Jam" fitness programme, which ensures our children are fit and healthy.

Being in the Far North we are aware of the danger of the sun so we provide as much protection from the sun as we are able. This year we were the first School in Northland to be accredited with the Cancer Society "Sunsmart Award" and only the 5th in New Zealand.



We are fortunate to be a “Duffy Books in Homes School” which encourages our children to read.

Awanui School has bright attractive classrooms, enthusiastic teachers and is very well resourced for exciting curriculum delivery plus complimentary programmes such as the Gifted and Talented Programme which concentrates on Language, Science, Social Studies and Art Work. At the end of last year one of our students won the National Mitre 10 Takahe Rescue Project competition out of 10,000 entries.

We have a fully automated, well stocked attractive library and computer suite, a colourful well equipped playground covered with huge shade sails and a well drained sports field for year round sports and athletic events. Our children take part in Mini Ball, Rippa Rugby, Kiwi Tag, Soccer and Netball.

Special Needs children are also a priority in our school and the culture of our school ensures the well being of these children. Our special needs children attend weekly Riding for Disabled which enhances their learning and well being.

Each school term we have a “Hangi” which our parents and community fully support plus an annual Triathlon which is very popular.

We are continuously working on improvements to our school for the enhancement of our children’s educational well being.

If you are ever passing Awanui School which is on the way to Cape Reinga call in and say “Kia Ora” to our very friendly staff and children in the Far North of New Zealand.

Staff Awanui School



Lambs Tails and Ducking Save the Day

by Pauline McLeod

For weeks the students had been researching how they would survive if a disaster struck their community.

Planning included building bivouacs on the adjoining property using natural material from the bush.

These had to be as waterproof as possible and stay up at least over night.

It was here, where the teachers began to see students working unprompted, helping each other with technical building advice, tying knots, chopping wood and sharing the gathering appropriate fallen debris.



And we slip into that fork in that tree

I arrived to heavy, cold rain which continued to pelt down all night with a significant drop in temperature. The Yr 4,5 and 6 students of Hiruharama School on the East Coast had planned a survival camp which was consequently postponed due to bad weather.

"But isn't coping with the unpredictable what a survival camp is all about?" grumbled the disappointed students.

Unaware of the postponement I arrived with the camp requirements of a sleeping bag, a suitable utensil (a sheet of plastic), 1 item of food (a large banana) - my mind raced too. The students assured me that they were well prepared and proceeded to prove this to me.

For weeks the students had been researching how they would survive if a disaster struck their community. Planning included building bivouacs on the adjoining property using natural material from the bush. These had to be as waterproof as possible and stay up at least over night. It was here, where the teachers began to see students working unprompted, helping each other with technical building advice, tying knots, chopping wood



Drew measuring up



Samuel clearing ground for his shelter



Kereru entwining an entrance



Jessie deciding which side to use



Not quite finished but big enough for the whole class

and sharing in gathering appropriate fallen debris.

They looked into ways of cooking if the power was lost and experimented with flint on wood, rubbing totara sticks together, and using a magnifying glass in the sun to strike a fire. However, matches did save the day when they lit the hobo wax stoves which they had made. I was lucky enough to be treated to the first cup of billy-tea.

Around school food didn't appear to be a problem. Students were looking at the natural food of the Maori. Briar roses which grow prolifically near the school and has edible shoots provided morning tea. A local flax and pikopiko fronds normally saved for very special occasions provided an entrée.

At lunchtime hungry students, not to mention myself, with no lunch, were grateful for the fire making skills and a thoughtful office lady who had appeared with a bag of lamb tails which the students capably cooked. I must admit this was my first experience of this East Coast delicacy. I lined up with my piece of newspaper which was used to strip off the burnt wool and hold the hot tail. Jostling children were asking for a second, and third helping. The aroma surrounding school was indescribable. This was a far cry from the camp plan that had been to gather food from the beach.

I left at the end of the day confident in the new skills these students were going to soon put in practice but with a sad heart knowing I wasn't going to be there to be part of the experience.

10 days later a well prepared group of Yr 4, 5 and 6 students were ready to face the challenge of a mock disaster ... no power, no food, no shelter. In groups they had to organize to bring one utensil, one item of food (just incase), the clothes they stood up in, a ground sheet and sleeping bag.

It wasn't only their skills that were going to be challenged in the next 24 hours. Communication, cooperation, thoughtfulness, leadership and interpersonal skills were going to be put to the test.

A local beach site Whareponga, had been chosen for camp. The shelter site was sloping but students shared their knowledge and filled up the hollow with leaves so they spent a comfortable night under the stars in their bivouacs. They had an option to sleep out or to stay in the local marae. But, they chose to stay with the challenge and brave the cold night.

During the planning for this learning the Whanau were doubtful as to the successful outcomes of this camp. "The children will be cold, they won't get enough to eat, they can't build fires and cook for themselves."

They watched carefully from a distance and were heard to say. "Look at the learning and social skills these kids are doing, they are really enjoying themselves and it didn't cost us"

Continued on page 34



A hard days work ... now we've got to find some dinner!

Teachers commented on seeing students who previously showed no leadership roles step up and take charge. "Students were so busy helping each other it was a delight to watch," commented one teacher.

However, at camp students had difficulty foraging for food. Many hadn't followed guiding instructions on probable foraging areas.

One student was heard to say, "I told you we should of followed the people who know, bro."

The eeling group had expected to catch heaps of eels and this wasn't so, the fishermen were also experiencing a rough sea and a lot of seaweed which blocked their vision as they searched for kina, pupu, paua, and crayfish.

Students bartered with each other and made sure everyone had something to eat.

Groups held discussions on the survival food they had brought and whether they would they be able to share this with others whose choice of back up food was scarce. (My banana wouldn't have gone far!)



Snug and cosy ... Nikau's group

Teachers commented on the air of compassion and cooperation they were witnessing.

A Pirates Treasure chest with food for breakfast was unearthed during the evening and students were heard to say, "Hey, we better not eat it now 'cause what will we have to eat in the morning?"

Next morning the teachers commented that the students couldn't stop talking about this experience.

Regrettably I had missed the real disaster camp so I interviewed the teachers on its outcomes.

The Principal commented it was an absolute joy and learning experience to hear her staff talking so enthusiastically about the learning that had taken place during the survival investigation.

Students demonstrated working cooperatively, thinking and solving problems, demonstrating leadership skills, the value of being able to improvise trash into treasure when they made the hobo stoves and bivouacs.

They learnt things we never predicted. We saw children who never shine become the shiners.



A roof and no sides but a sheltered location

The funniest thing that happened was when they were swimming in the lagoon a duckling was spotted and the students decided to catch it.

Hmm roast duck?

After a variety of problem solving strategies had been tried a team approach was adopted and a circle formed to trap it in the middle.

When pounced on the desperate duck dived down deep between their legs, popped up behind them and flew away.

You could have heard the laughter all the way back to school.

Survival beach cooking



E-PROMO web solutions

Website Hosting & Domain Name Registration

Features with all our plans:

- Free Anti-Spam software
- Free Chatroom
- Free Forum
- Free Shopping Cart
- Free Blogging Program

Plans start from only

\$8!

Discount offer for Students and Teachers - Enter this Discount code 'education06' when signing up to receive a 10% discount!

www.e-promo.co.nz