

The background of the cover is a photograph of a tropical landscape. In the foreground, there is a large, dense cluster of palm trees and other tropical foliage. A path leads through the trees towards the background. The sky is clear and blue. The title 'Good Teacher Magazine' is overlaid on the top left. 'Good' is in a red, cursive font. 'Teacher' is in a large, bold, black sans-serif font. 'Magazine' is in a smaller, bold, black sans-serif font. Below 'Magazine' is the text 'Term One 2008' in a small, black sans-serif font. On the right side, there is a red banner with the text 'Welcome to 2008!' in a white, bold, sans-serif font. At the bottom, there is a red banner with the text 'New Zealand's teachers magazine' in a white, bold, sans-serif font.

# *Good* Teacher Magazine

Term One 2008

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***New Zealand's teachers magazine***

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*Welcome to another school year.*

2008... it seems like it was just yesterday we were all worrying about what effect the millenium might have on our systems, or indeed on our lives. Funny how it all seems to just keep on puddling along isn't it?

Good Teacher Magazine is thrilled to have writers of the calibre found in this issue. We try to offer a balance of curriculum, management, controversy information and humour with just a little to keep you guessing. While we would like to cover every curriculum area in each issue it is not possible yet. We always welcome your contributions, whether they are researched papers and articles, photo-essays of something which was successful in your school or just something which inspires you and makes your working life even more enjoyable.

It's by sharing these that we all learn, and the post millenium world becomes just a little better ... It's all to do with community and the Good Teacher Magazine community is a vibrant, interesting and growing one.

While writing about sharing, this photo has to epitomise father/son bonding with a book - a pleasure to see in a local café - and one which had to be snapped!

Email us your snaps showing learning in action, we'll print the best in each magazine.

Enjoy .....

**George Hudson and the GTM Team**



*NB: Due to popular demand we are gradually uploading all the book reviews since Term 3 2006 to our website <http://www.ed-media.co.nz>*

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# The Watermark Trilogy Competition

Longacre Press gave *Good Teacher Magazine* sets of Penelope Todd's 'Watermark Trilogy' to be won by secondary or tertiary students. We asked you to write us a 'snapshot' about your favourite place.

The winning snapshots are completely different and are both notable in their own way.

Our congratulations to  
Jessie Smith from Tauranga and  
Samantha Nelms from Tokoroa.

## My Favourite Place

I opened my cupped hands and let the water slip between my fingers, dancing and shimmering, more exquisite than diamonds. My feet hung over the edge of the boat, caressed gently by the sea, and a trace of salt flavoured the breeze. I cast my eyes out over the blue expanse and let the vastness of it pull the breath from my lungs.

Leaning back I basked in a sense of freedom, the seascape is untouched, humans have not yet stepped here to leave behind their infamous footprint. I marvelled at the fact that beneath my submerged feet there thrived an undiscovered menagerie, another realm.

A gentle swell rocked the boat bringing a smile to my lips. Out here to ride the waves is to ride the very heartbeat of the earth, to feel the spray of restless waters, is to feel the spirit of a powerful ocean, to go below the surface is to sink into another world.

Yes, there is no competition, this is my favourite place.

Jessie Smith



## Favourite Place

One hundred and thirty two sisters, three mums and one dad.

This is who I live with throughout the week, one BIG happy family.

It may be torture at some times... no... A lot of the time but it's got to be my favourite place.

Sonninghill Hostel ....  
'Where girls' become women'.  
You see, this is exaggerated a bit but that's what makes the hostel so fun'.

You get to be yourself, that crazy person that's hiding away inside you. All hostels have one and it always comes out after a short time there.

The weekends are the best. Staying up late and running around, of course we're not allowed to but rules are made to be broken, aren't they?

So to round it up, the hostel's great. It's my other home. I live, sleep and eat there. It's like I'm having a big sleepover with all my friends every night and that's why it's my favourite place.

Samantha Nelms

# New Curriculum = New Learning?

by Gwen Gawith

***In Good Teacher Magazine  
Term 1 2007, I quoted what  
I wrote in Good Teacher  
Magazine Term 1 2004:***

***“...‘less is more’ with regard to***

***the obese curriculum...***

***the many***

***‘Yes, but HOW?’ emails got me***

***wondering whether***

***part of the problem is that***

***we’ve lost sight of the***

***centrality of LEARNING***

***in the whole school mix.”***

Now the national curriculum has been on a diet. We can enjoy a respite with this slimmer curriculum outline before the pendulum begins to swing the other way again.

Remember, the 1993 national curriculum was actually a slim, clearly focused document. What fattened it was the ghastly Curriculum Statements and how they were gestapoed by some ‘thou shalt’s’.

This 07 curriculum framework explicitly offers schools the opportunity to shape their own focus within the framework, but...

***Will an improved curriculum  
improve learning in your  
school?***

Clearly, as I have argued in the pages of GT on five previous occasions, a fragmented, incoherent, obese curriculum will have (and has had) an adverse effect on teachers’ teaching and possibly on student learning. However, the opposite does not necessarily hold true. A slimline, more coherent and less fragmented curriculum outline will make life a heck of a lot easier for schools and teachers, but will NOT by itself improve students’ learning.

My concern for schools and teachers for 2008 is that everyone might spend so much time obsessing about tailoring their own curricula that the focus will be on curriculum development to the exclusion of helping children to learn better. Will I be saying at the end of 08 as I did in 04 “we’ve lost sight of the centrality of LEARNING in the whole school mix”?

I’ve heard claims on the radio that teachers can’t implement the ‘new’ curriculum without significant time for PD. Sigh! I went back through every email received from teachers doing 3Doors this year and noted every topic their classes were learning. There wasn’t a single topic that wouldn’t slot neatly into the new curriculum! Good schools, in my experience, have already tailored their own curricula. Let’s see this curriculum for what it is –





a slimmer, more coherent and less fragmented outline which fits much of what we're doing already, not something NEW that needs some guru to come in from outside to prescribe the equivalent of curriculum statements and a heap of subject-specific teaching tricks. Bunkum! The curriculum is not a big deal. If you treat it like a Big Deal it will cripple learning like the Great Objectives Race did in many schools in years past. Why not, instead, treat the curriculum as an opportunity to bring LEARNING to the centre of the mix.

For me the key 08 question is not 'How do we teach the new curriculum?' but 'How do students learn the new curriculum?'

*The centrality of learning in the whole curriculum development mix*  
In GT T2 07 I quoted Fenstermacher

and Richardson's factors that contribute to good learning:

1. Willingness and effort by the learner
2. A social surround supportive of teaching and learning
3. Opportunity to teach and learn
4. Good teaching.

A new more coherent, more focused curriculum shaped by schools to suit their own needs and communities will contribute to the context for teaching and learning, the 'social surround', and enhance the conditions for better teaching, but, as F and R say:

"Just as teaching requires effort, competence, and forms of support, so does learning... Learning does not arise solely on the basis of teacher activity ...it follows that success at learning requires a combination of circumstances well beyond the actions of a teacher..."

*So what do LEARNERS need to learn better with the 07 curriculum?*

My research showed that children need two things:

Rules – rules for managing behaviour in the classroom and playground, and rules for learning. (We're good at the former but less good at the latter.)


Tools – tools for turning simple learning rules into actions – things that students know they do, and know how to do to learn. (We tend to have more rules and tools in subjects like maths and science but rely too much on setting tasks and hoping that students will learn the rules and tools for themselves by doing the tasks.)

The tools include:

- tools for taking responsibility for their learning,
- tools for literacy and numeracy, and
- cognitive tools for transforming information into deeply experienced personal knowledge.

This list may not be all that learners need but, to use trendy terminology, it's evidence-based and research-based so it's not just what I think. It's what I know because there's persuasive empirical and theoretical evidence to support my claim. I claim that:

- 1) Students learn better with an overview map of the topic rather than being asked to 'brainstorm' what they know about it.
- 2) Students learn better if they are asked questions (by the teacher) around this overview to elicit their prior knowledge. Then they are helped to formulate statements about what they think they still need to know – their infogaps. Students are clear about the gaps they're going to plug, and know the content criteria from the outset. (Much better than brainstorming > children ask random, unfocused questions and then set off in pursuit of answers to these questions.)
- 3) Students learn better if they can link the subject to themselves and their lives, see its relevance and authenticity to them. They also learn better if they know how they are going to apply their knowledge, and if they're going to interpret and apply it (rather than just 'presenting' it).
- 4) Students learn better if they use more than just print in books and print on screens, i.e. if they use visual infoSources, people infoSources, sources in their families and communities. And they learn better if they are encouraged to identify these infoSources for themselves.
- 5) Students learn better if they can visualize what they're going to do and when – if they have a timeline or learning gameplan.
- 6) Students learn better when they recognize that academic knowledge is grounded in evidence – that if they're going to claim something, they need evidence to substantiate the claim.



**3Doors<sup>®</sup> by email**

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

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\*This course is not qualification-bearing.

For more information email  
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# Agitated, Disruptive – Even Aggressive Students?

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- 7) Students need skills to be able to read, listen and look flexibly – to suit speed and technique to purpose – in order to comprehend. Students who understand least are those who drive on the highway of learning at a consistent 5kph!
- 8) Students need to be able to gut and strip information – analyse it by sorting, sequencing, comparing, listing, matching, working out cause and effect, problem and solution, etc.
- 9) Students, especially in this 'knowledge age' (MOE trendy - spare us!), need to be able to combine and synthesize information from different sources – electronic, print, person and visual.
- 10) Students cannot claim to be able to think analytically and critically unless they can interpret information and apply knowledge to different contexts and purposes.

*How do you know whether students know rules and tools for learning?*

Simply, translate them into competencies. If learners can do certain things they have the competency.

For most students rules and tools need to be TAUGHT clearly and explicitly, from the beginning of the year. So let's look at the competencies. I look for students who:

- can (always with teacher help) map the scope of their topics, work out their infoGaps, translate them into content criteria, work out the purpose of their learning and what they will produce, identify optimum infoSources for the purpose and product, work out how long they'll need and which tools they'll need.
- can use strategies to listen, look and read selectively, flexibly and 'mindfully' in order to select info to plug the gaps in their knowledge.
- can 'gut and strip' the information they retrieve, think analytically, recognize fact from opinion. Discern objective, balanced, accurate information from biased, unbalanced, inaccurate information and be able to ground what they write or say in carefully considered evidence.
- can interpret the information they retrieve, read 'between the lines', thinking critically and creatively, applying their knowledge intelligently and enjoying their

ability to make knowledge work for them.

It's not difficult – ask teachers who've done 3Doors. Students of all ages can do these things, but it takes time, consistent and continuous direct teaching, prompting and reminding. With consistent and continuous direct teaching, prompting and reminding I've not encountered a student who couldn't learn to use the rules and tools.

When children know the rules and tools of learning, a slimmer, more coherent curriculum outline will allow teachers to go slower and get students learning deeply instead of just skating over the surface of topic after topic.

Happy 2008 - a great year to use the 07 curriculum to become learning-focused.

Happy to respond:

[gwen@metacog.co.nz](mailto:gwen@metacog.co.nz)

*Reference:*

Fenstermacher, G. D. & Richardson, V. 'On Making Determinations of Quality in Teaching.' Teachers College Record Volume 107 Number 1, 2005, p. 186-213, <http://tcrecord.org>, Date Accessed: 2/8/2007



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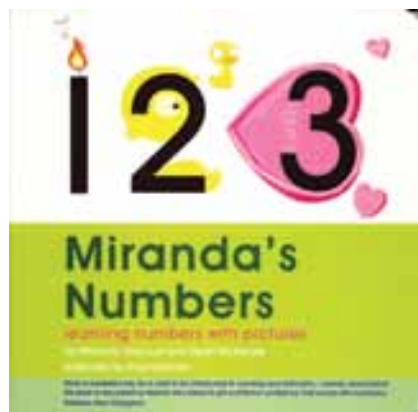
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# books and things

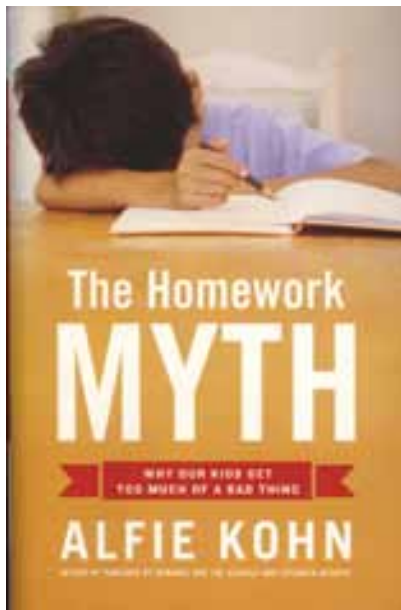


## *Miranda's Numbers: learning numbers with pictures*

Miranda Harcourt and  
Stuart McKenzie,  
Illustrations Paul Densem  
Published by Southe Coast Press.  
RRP: \$19.99

Miranda's Numbers - a new book aiming at encouraging children to count is by the same team as 'Miranda's Alphabet' one of New Zealand Listeners Best Picture Books of 2006. Miranda Harcourt uses the shape of each number to create a picture to encourage memory and learning.

Miranda's numbers will no doubt also be picked for use in kindergartens and schools as was the original alphabet book. This book does offer a New Zealand flavour and has a sense of community as Miranda has a party for her one year old Davida and introduces something new with the arrival of each new guest.



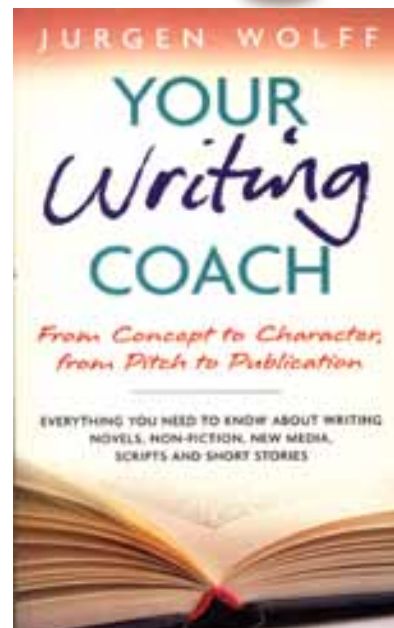
## *The Homework MYTH*

Alfie Kohn  
Da Capo Press  
RRP \$34.99

'A compelling expose of homework - how it fails our children, why it's so widely accepted and what we can do about it.' This is the introduction to the publicity for The Homework MYTH.

A thoroughly researched book (chapter notes and references take 51 pages) in which Alfie Kohn explains the latest research and why it makes sense, looks at common misconceptions, and suggests that homework may affect children's attitude to school.

An interesting book which will not be appreciated by all teachers but which perhaps should be read and considered by them all!



## *Your Writing Coach*

Jurgen Wolff  
Published Nicholas Brearley  
RRP \$32.99

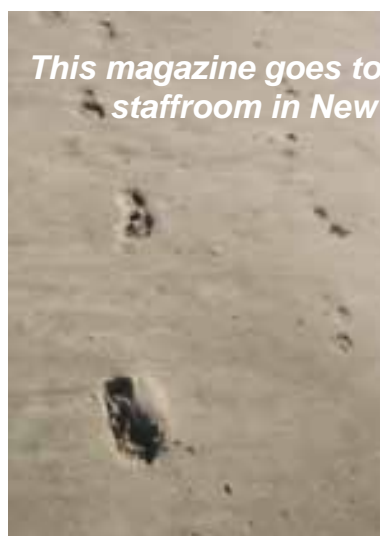
Apparently, surveys say that 81% of adults dream of writing but only 2% have actually completed a manuscript. Your Writing Coach offers techniques, and exercises that encourage and lead you through the process, whether you want to write novels, screenplays, children's books, short stories, articles or perhaps for the theatre.

Not only does each chapter have a key points section at the end but there is also a chapter bonus linking you to a website for online interviews offering deeper insight into the chapter theme.

The book offers advice on managing time, motivation, energy and support, marketing yourself and your work and exploiting the opportunities of new media - the internet, blogs podcasts, etc

The cover says 'Everything you need to know about writing novels, non-fiction, new media, scripts and short stories' and while the author is American he now divides his time between London and California so the information in the book could be considered international.

Your Writing Coach is a great resource book for any writer or potential writer who may be considering what area to write for and how to go about it.



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# ***“Border Towns***

***Teachers have class because:***

## ***“twworluup”***

One time I encountered a ventriloquist whistler. At random intervals the “whistler” would project a short, sharp “twworluup” from what seemed like a different quadrant of the room every time. It must have been the same “whistler” because each “twworluup” replicated the previous “twworluup”.

I smouldered; I bristled; I seethed; but, I wanted to appear unflustered. I read the riot act: “You people know the rules. No chair tossing, no claw holds, no Indian death locks. Three knockdowns and I step in to stop the match. Any whistling and you’re disqualified.” I wasted my time: “twworluup”.

One boy asked, “What rule about whistling?” A “twuorluup” sounded from somewhere. I continued to speak with a background “twworluup” cacophony. But finally, he or she simply surrendered in the end: I won the war of attrition.

## ***“bzzzzzzz”***

Another indignity I suffered at the whim of an ingenious, yet certifiably dysfunctional, individual who made the sound of any creature whose genus name I used while speaking. If I said “dog,” he barked. If I said “fly,” he buzzed. If was funny – for a while.

I fixed him. I avoided using the name of any living organism, which might make any sound transferable to the human vocal range. But, it is hard to avoid the verb, “to be”; especially when the culprit astounded me by demonstrating he understood the many conjugations of “to be”: be; being; have been. When I acknowledged his “gifted” capabilities in the arcane world of verb conjugations, he appeared dumbfounded him to such a degree he forgot to buzz.

## ***“tisk”***

I have been regularly “tisked” by students who simultaneously cluck their tongue between front teeth and gently intake air. The “tisk” is an idiomatic equivalent of the phrase “wow, you’re really an imbecile.” The “tisk” gains impact with the addition of a disdainful, resigned, whining and mock incredulous intonation of voice: “Oh reelly!”, or “Whaaat?”

Equal to the challenge, I prepared two responses, sometimes delivered in tandem – if I am in an expansive mood and unable to contain my mirth. In the first response, I describe the “tiskor’s” behaviour (“I noticed, you tisked loudly.”). I follow up by feigning incredulosity as I ask a selection of cunning rhetorical questions (“What does that mean?”; “Was that directed at me?”; “Does that mean I am condemned to purgatory?”).





# of Despair”

by John Hellner

Deploying my second, most preferred strategy, I ask the “tiskor” if I can “mirror” their behaviours – they always say “yes”. I say, “You pretend to be me and I will pretend to be you and you say to me what I said to you and I will do what you did to me in return. OK?” He or she says what I said to them in the first place and I mimic the “tisk”, only I grandstand it ten times over with well rehearsed and devastating expertise: “tisking” loudly, exhaling through my nose, shaking my head from side to side, double rolling my eyes, putting on a contemptuous expression and whining “Oh wow” – all synchronized.

By this time of course, everyone is either laughing or close to it. Then I deliver the verbal coup de grace: “During her teen years, my daughter “tisked” me on a regular basis. She did what you have just done only better, so if you think your ‘tisk’ is going to affect me, you better think twice – I have been ‘tisked’ by an expert and I’m immune.” I finish off with a tearful appeal to their nobler instincts, saying “do you see how painful that is; do you know how that hurts me; do I deserve that?”

## “faaa”

How about a little, under the breath, “virtual” swearing when I make a reasonable request to do something?

Me (outside the door): “Quickly now, line up my lovelies – single file – and prepare to enter the ‘Cathedral of Learning’, where you will experience the greatest learning curve, not only in your inconsequential lives, but in the entire history of education.”

Allan (from somewhere near the end of the line): “Faaaaaa” (barely audible, but definitely starting with the ‘F’ sound).

Me: “Allan, what was that?”

Allan: “Huh? Nothin’.”

Me: “Allan, I know I heard something and it sounded inappropriate.”

Allan: “I said, ‘Faaaa’ “

Me: “Faaaa eh? Right. What does

‘Fa’ mean then?”

Allan: “It’s short for ‘far-out.’ “

Me: (Pausing to gage whether Allan is truthful or quick witted).  
“Well, could you not use ‘faaaa’ from now on? It sounds a lot like something else.”

Allan: (Tisking). “Whaaat?.”

Me: “I notice you just ‘tisked’ me....”

## Boys can do anything

Trying to gain everyone’s attention; getting to the crucial moment when the noise level drops to 3 out of 10; just ready to dispense my pearls of wisdom; one of the lads breaks wind. Everyone laughs and snickers – the moment lost.

I know it’s crude and it’s mainly a guy thing, but it is international, it is timeless and it is hard to figure out who did it. But they all laugh. I can only cast a prayerful look skyward, with an ever so faint, little twinkle in my eye, begging salvation for a wayward soul.

Less coarse, yet more personal, males sometimes do little, invisible spits with their tongues while I offer much needed conduct training. The little spit looks and sounds as if they are relentlessly attempting to rid themselves of an unwanted tobacco strand or a miniscule chunk of blueberry muffin. In reality, the invisible spit represents a powerless person’s magnificent gesture of defiance: the intended effect is to leave the conduct trainer with the impression they are nothing short of a haemorrhoid.

“I notice you are doing little invisible spits. What does that mean? Was that directed at me? Can I show you what you just did?” Fortunately, I have a son too.

Lastly, for a real taste of refinement, try the smell of unwashed, sweaty clothing and threadbare socks worn for two consecutive weeks, also unwashed, in a close space, on a hot day, after a lunchtime playground romp.

## Resiliency

That’s teacher resiliency in the “border towns of despair” – the lonely junctions devoid of dignity – and most of it happens before I leave the staff room.

I hope I am as resilient in the classroom: teachers have class.



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](mailto: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](http://www.johnhellner.co.nz)

# Community Curriculum?

Lyn Rogers

***There has been a lot of discussion about the future of education lately.***

***The revised curriculum has been out in schools since November, and the discussions about its implementation have provided us with food for thought, especially about education in the future.***

***I believe the curriculum offers us an opportunity to radically rethink how we are going to cater for the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learner.***

***This is another catch phrase:***

***“The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learner”.***

***What does that mean?***

Well that's a whole conversation on its own, but everything I have read and the ideas generated in discussions with people wiser than me, indicate that we are going to have to do things differently in schools in order to equip our students for their future. The revised curriculum offers plenty of scope for the changes we might have to make.

A project called “Secondary Futures” has been underway for the last couple of years, visioning the future of secondary schooling by consulting widely in the community. The discussions here have supported the idea that schools and communities may well be much more integrated in the future, to cater for a wide variety of learning needs (many of which are likely unpredicted). An essential component for a school catering for the 21<sup>st</sup> century learner will be building community/school relationships, and having each group locate comfortably and creatively in the other's “territory”.

From my point of view (of course) sustainability education offers a framework around which this more holistic, inclusive, 21<sup>st</sup> century learning could be built.

One cornerstone of Education For Sustainability (EFS) is the community. To successfully integrate and maximise learning opportunities for students, involvement with the community is essential. “Becoming more sustainable involves understanding and supporting the interconnections and interdependence between all living things in our community.”<sup>1</sup>

International studies into implementing Environmental Education (EE) and EFS show that a successful programme happens when a school's curriculum administrators begin to think radically. Some examples given in those studies are below, and the ideas fit very well within the framework of the revised curriculum.

- taking the over-arching objectives of the national curriculum framework seriously
- actually acting on the often beautifully worded (but frequently quietly ignored) objectives in the school's mission statement;

- focusing on the needs of the school's learners;
- creating a climate of genuine collaboration within the school, and between the school and the community;
- taking a whole-school, holistic learning approach to the space within the school's boundaries: and include the through-flow of energy; the utilisation of materials; and the physical, social and cultural environment
- learning from the cultural and social diversity amongst the school's learners;
- engaging in collaborative local projects (both long and short term) involving the community, both within and out of the school
- encouraging enduring relationships

By and large, from my observation, New Zealand schools are pretty good at most of those things, and the word radical perhaps doesn't apply to those ideas here, but some are difficult to accomplish.

Due to the nature of EFS, and the projects and issues tackled within EFS contexts, teachers are often challenged to extend their own teaching skills. Encouraging students to explore sustainability takes teachers time, effort and confidence and requires students to have a greater range of skills than they need to develop in any one traditional learning area alone. It requires an integrated, cross curricular approach, and even then, the teacher may find themselves “...feeling isolated in preparing learning opportunities that sit outside the traditional.” This emphasizes a need to develop supportive links and networks. “...action projects involving specialists from outside the school also provided motivation and focus and opened up interesting possibilities for environmental learning”<sup>2</sup> This is particularly relevant if we as teachers are to focus on providing valid and meaningful contexts for learning.

“The development of partnerships between schools and other community members brings a range of insights and skills together. In our interconnected world we need the



power of shared insights and working together to effect long-term and significant change.”<sup>3</sup> Teachers, students and community all benefit from sharing their skills and learning from each other.

Accepting that having community involvement is desirable, many teachers and schools have difficulty knowing where to begin. Some

schools that have a natural advantage, in that they already belong to well defined communities, and many community relationships are well established. Larger, and particularly more urban schools often have to work harder to identify their community, establish networks and build relationships. Just like any aspect of sustainability education, new initiative or change, small successful steps are

probably one answer. As are taking advantage of relationships that already exist, and getting to know your students so you can build on the relationships and strengths that exist within their communities.

Schools are traditionally quite good at fostering relationships where the “expert” comes in, to inspire or share their expertise. Parents are involved in many aspects of school life, and are often involved in sustainability projects. Outside agencies including local and regional councils, DOC, NIWA etc. provide support and resources of a specific nature. All these groups/individuals are generally removed by a degree from participation in programme planning, or any involvement in decision or policy making with the school.

We are moving into a time where the involvement of community needs to be on a deeper level, and the traditional boundaries and relationships between school and community will be redefined. Some schools are already doing this, for example; Kura Kaupapa Maori and Enviroschools. Many other schools, syndicates and individual teachers also are involving their communities in this deeper way. The EE stocktake draft literature review, 2003, said the “importance of involving all participants and stakeholders in the planning and running of EE so that a negotiated shared agenda for setting and achieving clear goals for EE could be developed” . “Most successful results occur where policies encouraged, supported and sustained a network of teachers, schools and supporting organisations.” <sup>4</sup> Although the examples are EE and EFS, the principles could apply to any programme.

The photos depict several examples of community involvement and collaboration in programmes at Raglan Area School, where planning was based on looking at student needs and community skills.

The Hei Tiki was built by a group of year 9&10 boys, in collaboration with their teacher and two local artists. Firstly though, I’d point out that it is an imposing sculpture about 2 metres high, and very 3 dimensional, which the photograph can’t capture.





In terms of student learning, there were several predetermined learning goals achieved, several necessary specific skills learned, and a generous amount of incidental learning that occurred throughout the duration of the project. Apart from that, there were also numerous other ideas stimulated or represented by this project. Some of my personal reflections about the value of this type of undertaking are offered below as food for thought.

- The traditional (hei tiki) made from non traditional materials (Volkswagon parts and a ten speed bike) brings Maori and European together, welcoming or challenging us to embrace a new future that celebrates our dual cultural heritage. This also reflects the bicultural nature of the community and school.
- The sculpture is made of old vehicle parts, refashioned into something new and exciting, which fits very well with the concepts of sustainability that are important for both the community and the school.
- The role of the artists went beyond the traditional "expert" role, involving true collaboration between students, teacher, and where the "experts" became teachers.
- The project was co-constructed, based on the needs of the

students.

- To undertake projects like this, traditional ideas of where and how learning is to take place, and who is involved in the process are challenged, and allowing for this type of learning requires flexibility and compromise on the part of all parties, including the school.

The pizza oven (above) was built by community as part of a workshop, in response to a desire expressed by students in the total immersion unit at the school. It is used to cater for powhiri among other things, and is next to a permaculture garden the students designed and made, which provides kai for the students, whanau and for the pizzas! The learning involved in these projects for community members (experts and non experts alike) as well as the students, was huge.

The mere (right) was another collaborative project with a local stone carver, made of local stone.

There are many projects in schools and incorporated into learning programmes that are creating, building and nurturing relationships between school and community. There are numerous opportunities for teachers to provide creative and innovative learning. Involving community in this process not only enriches the learning for our 21st century students, but provides

the opportunity for us as teachers to step back and let others come forward, where although we still facilitate the learning, we don't always have to be the expert. In fact the concept of ako, where we all have the opportunity to learn from each other, will be increasingly relevant as education moves forward in New Zealand this century.

Achieving true consultation and involvement of community partners in programme planning may require dialogue, to clarify different values and priorities held by the groups concerned. Just to stay on my bandwagon, the examples I have given are sustainable examples, because the very nature of EFS provides opportunities for this dialogue to happen. So... providing opportunities to build relationships and for community to become involved meets EFS objectives, community needs and the needs of the 21st century learner all in one, and fulfills the intent of the revised curriculum to boot.

#### Endnotes:

- Enviroschools Handbook 2004
- Keown, McGee & Carstensen 1995, 1999, as quoted in the EE stocktake draft literature review, 2003
- Enviroschools Handbook 2004
- EE Stocktake 2003



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# Twice Exceptional

## Teaching Gifted Students with Learning Disabilities in the Regular Classroom

By Janet Bourne

***"Everyone in the school knows what I can't do; absolutely no one knows what I can do!"***

***A young middle-schooler.  
(Baum, Cooper & Neu, 2001)***

*Recognition of learning disabilities among the gifted can be extraordinarily difficult.*

*Identification of these students, sometimes referred to as twice exceptional or 2e, is a complex task because of the individual's ability to compensate, or solve problems in alternative ways.*

*(Silverman, 1999)*

Little is known about 2e students in a New Zealand context, but anecdotal evidence indicates that few are ever identified. To complicate matters, there appears to be no conclusive empirically sound guidelines for identifying 2e students. In 1997,

Ferri, Gregg, and Heggoy found that 41 percent of 2e students are not identified until they reach university. In 1999,

Mills and Brody expressed concern that many twice-exceptional students are never identified during their school years.

Others, such as Gordon et al. (1999), have reported on the possibility of misdiagnosis. Hence, issues of identification can be extremely frustrating and a major source of misunderstanding for both teachers and

parents, but nowhere near as frustrating as for the 2e students themselves (Coleman, 2001).

Should a child be identified as twice exceptional, what intervention strategies are achievable in a regular classroom setting for this student? First, we will look at the characteristics – both limitations and strengths – of these students and then at the strategies a classroom teacher can employ to help them be successful.

### ***Limitations of 2e students***

It is impossible to separate the cognitive (thinking), metacognitive (thinking about thinking), and the affective (feeling) domains in an individual. Nevertheless, they will be examined here as separate issues.

### ***Cognitive***

Among the cognitive characteristics of 2e students are these:

#### ***Cognitive Area***

#### ***2e Student Characteristics***

- | Cognitive Area | 2e Student Characteristics  |
|----------------|---|
| Spelling       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reversals in reading and writing letters</li><li>• Poor reading, writing, and spelling skills</li></ul>   |
| Written output | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Untidy handwriting,</li><li>• Difficulty getting thoughts down on paper,</li><li>• Difficulty with basic grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure</li></ul> |
| Reading        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Obvious inconsistencies when reading aloud (i.e., good comprehension but poor reading skills, or vice versa)</li></ul>  |
| Mathematics    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Possible numeric transpositions</li></ul>   |

*Stewart (1997)*

*This paper  
by Janet  
Bourne  
is a partner  
article to  
'Jacks Story'  
published in  
Good Teacher*

2e students often are more advanced orally with a more extensive vocabulary than their same-age peers. However, discrepancies emerge when they are asked to produce written evidence demonstrating their ability. They hand in incomplete assignments; or when they do complete written work, it consists of simple vocabulary and spelling that does not represent the student's full capabilities. "Twice-exceptional students more closely paralleled gifted students on measures of intellectual ability," stated Elizabeth Neilsen (2002, p 97). "However, their reading and written language ability is more reflective of the group with learning disabilities."

This contradiction between potential and demonstrated ability confuses the teacher who finds the dilemma puzzling. The disparity between apparent ability, often expressed verbally, and production, particularly in written form, is often attributed to lack of motivation. By some, it is interpreted as laziness (Sturgess, 2001).

### Metacognitive

The metacognitive factors carry over to all facets of a 2e student's life and have been described as follows.

#### Metacognitive Area 2e Student Characteristics

- |                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Organisational skills     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inability to locate appropriate materials</li> <li>• Failure to complete or hand in assignments,</li> <li>• Poor time management and concentration skills</li> </ul>   |
| Memory and sequencing     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term memory problems which can be exacerbated by anxiety in test conditions</li> <li>• Long-term memory problems,</li> <li>• Difficulties with rote memorization, sequential learning, and performance under timed conditions,</li> <li>• Difficulty remembering more than three instructions at once</li> </ul> |
| Visual motor integrations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clumsiness, poor motor skills</li> </ul>   |
| Visualisation             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learns more easily from visual presentation</li> <li>• Has trouble with auditory tasks.</li> </ul>   |

(Stewart, 1997)



### Affective

The affective factors of giftedness are strongly influenced by teachers, parents, and peers. Some commonly identified affective traits of 2e children include:

#### Affective Area 2e Student Characteristics

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Self-concept           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low self-esteem</li> <li>• Extremely high goals</li> <li>• Self-critical when failing to reach goals</li> </ul>   |
| Socialisation problems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both within the family and at school</li> </ul>   |
| Impulsivity            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotions sometimes overpower reasoning</li> <li>• Displays of behaviour associated with ADD</li> </ul>  |
| Aggression             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easily frustrated</li> <li>• Disruptive</li> </ul>  |
| Passivity              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty following directions and settling down</li> <li>• Severely inattentive</li> <li>• Constantly daydreaming</li> </ul>  |
| Negativity             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Often use high intelligence in negative ways such as loud expressions of boredom, attempts to divert to topics they are much more comfortable with, or down right refusal to participate in their weak areas</li> </ul> |

(Stewart, 1997)

It has been shown that 2e students feel like failures and feel less capable than learning-disabled peers who have only average ability (Baum & Owen, 1988). A research investigation by Reis, McGuire and Neu (2000), undertaken to find out compensation strategies used by successful 2e university graduates, found that all participants recalled negative primary and secondary experiences in which teachers accused them of being lazy and unmotivated.

### Strengths of 2e students

Not all is doom and gloom for 2e students who typically have many strengths, especially in nonverbal areas.

These students are able to think abstractly, learn complex ideas, engage in authentic problem solving, and communicate their ideas through a variety of means – just not in the traditional ways. (Baum, Cooper and Neu, 2001)

The adage "a picture paints a thousand words" is extremely relevant. According to Linda Silverman, 80 percent are strong visual-spatial learners, who "remember what they see and often forget what they hear....the trick to teaching them effectively is showing them, rather than telling them." (Silverman, 1997, cited in Stewart, 1997, p. 72)



Stewart (1997) lists the following cognitive, metacognitive and affective strengths of 2e students:

### **Cognitive Area 2e Student Characteristics**

- Oral Expression • Excellent communications skills
  - Above-average vocabulary
  - Superior abilities in class discussions
- Spelling • Learn visually
- Specific aptitude • Display great knowledge for a subject,
  - Have a wide range of interests and intellectual curiosity
- Mathematics • Exceptional skills in mathematical reasoning, geometry and science
  - Superb spatial abilities
  - Keen visual memory
- Computing • Logic of computing suits them
- Creative, technological, or emotional giftedness
  - Strong artistic, musical, or mechanical aptitude

### **Metacognitive Area 2e Student Characteristics**

- Thinking skills and problem solving abilities
  - Superior reasoning abilities in complex concepts, lateral thinking, abstract thinking, and problem solving
  - Ask astute questions
  - Have excellent comprehension, flexibility, and fluency in generating new ideas
- Divergent thinkers
  - Unusual, original, imaginative, and creative thought processes
- Intuitive thinkers • Arriving at the correct solution without writing down the basic steps taken
- Generate complex ideas
  - Able to grasp complex relationships with a sophisticated sense of humour,
  - Understand satire, metaphors, and analogies
  - Appreciate adult humour
- Systems thinkers • Take a holistic overview
  - Are comfortable with complexity and pattern seeking
  - Learn complex systems easily but struggle with easy work

### **Affective Area 2e Student Characteristics**

- Productivity and motivation
  - Display amazing productivity and motivation – especially when person interests are involved
- Work style • May work best individually
- Sense of fairness • Have a strong sense of fair play and justice

## **Teaching Strategies**

What are the educational implications of twice exceptionality, and what can a classroom teacher realistically do? Teachers need to view these students first as gifted learners because 2e students are likely to be overlooked for any special provision (Mather & Roberts, 1994; in Stewart, 1997). If they are identified, few specific programmes have been developed for this particular population (Brody & Mills, 1997).

One successful program is Project HIGH HOPES. (Baum, Cooper and Neu, 2001) Rich in inquiry, experimentation, and discovery, the program offers students strategies for addressing learning problems while simultaneously exposing them to real challenge through advanced-level content and authentic problems. The result of using this integrated approach enriched the school experiences of 2e students qualitatively and, as a result, the students' motivation increased.

However, there is no single best solution for meeting the education needs of all 2e students. Some creative experimentation with a variety of teaching strategies may be necessary to find out what works for a given student. Over the last two decades writers (such as Maker & Udall, 1985; Stewart, 1997; Silverman, 1999; Nielsen, 2002, & Winebrenner, 2003) have offered some strategies to classroom teachers for addressing cognitive problems. These include:

- Design curriculum that enhances different or multiple intelligences and learning styles.
- Teach to the student's strengths.
- Allow students to self-select projects.
- Allow students opportunities to conduct in-depth exploration within interest areas.
- Permit choice in selecting work areas, as sensory challenges may present a problem.
- Teach how to set realistic short-term goals and give credit in stages.
- Offer a variety of pre-test opportunities to determine prior knowledge, and accelerate to more challenging content.
- Tie past learning to new content using graphic organisers, charts, graphs, timelines and similar tools.
- Present material in a variety of ways – visually, orally, kinaesthetically – that are not always dependent on reading and writing.
- Give students opportunities to share knowledge in different ways from written reports (tapes, oral tests, projects, videos, etc).
- Give realistic deadlines for completing assignments (often longer than for other students).
- Use contracts to communicate and record expectations.
- Place the student where the teacher and board can easily be seen
- Make eye contact before giving instructions.
- Expose the student to abstract, complex concepts (critical and creative thinking), even if the easy sequential material has not been mastered.



- Avoid timed tests.
- Grade for content; avoid penalizing for presentation.
- Let students discover their own methods of problem solving and do not insist that students show their work.
- Use the sight approach to reading rather than phonics and use books rich in visual imagery.
- Give them the big picture before the details because many of these students are “whole-to-part” learners.
- Use open-ended community of inquiry and open-ended questioning techniques.

Also critical to the well being of 2e children is early identification. Intervention strategies should be based on nurturing the student's strength, while simultaneously teaching the student to compensate for weaknesses. In a university LD programme undertaken by Reis, McGuire, & Neu, (2000), participants all reflected on how useful it would have been if they had learned certain compensation skills or strategies earlier in their lives.

With access to technology, 2e students are able to produce work much more rapidly and begin to view themselves as successful learners (Baum, Cooper & Neu, 2001).

Many writers (e.g., Maker & Udall, 1985; Silverman, 1999; Nielsen, 2002 & Winebrenner, 2003) have documented a variety of compensation strategies to teach 2e students. These include:

- Teach typing and computer literacy.
- Encourage the use of calculators, computers, and tape recorders.
- Allow students to take tests in a quiet setting.
- Teach organisational techniques (colour-coded notebooks, two sets of texts, etc) and problem-solving strategies.
- Try teaching calligraphy to improve handwriting.
- Engage a tutor to help the student learn visualisation techniques.
- If the student has difficulties with motor or processing speed, recommend a psychologist's visit so that teachers know to make allowances for the weaknesses.
- Allow a reader/writer to record for the student.
- Recommend a visit to a counsellor who may be able to generate strategies and solutions to combat weaknesses.
  - Break down assignments so that students are not overwhelmed.
  - Avoid excessive worksheets.
  - Accompany oral directions with written instructions to which students can later refer.



After years of persistent failure, 2e students often lose confidence in their own ability to succeed academically (Baum, Cooper, & Neu, 2001). They become frustrated and confused, which can lead to feelings of failure, depression,

self-loathing, and anger. Over time, this situation can deteriorate until the social and emotional well-being of these students is at risk. The use of Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences (1983) is one way of allowing 2e students to use varied means to demonstrate what they have learned, helping to avoid feelings of self-doubt. Baum et al. (1995) found that success in school boosted 2e students' self-efficacy and self-perception as a learner. Once they viewed themselves as competent learners, their reading and writing also improved.

There are many interventions appropriate for meeting the affective needs of 2e students. Among them are:

- Teach all students to appreciate individual differences and value diversity.
- Reduce academic pressures as a way to lessen frustration and lack of motivation.
- Use values clarification and role-playing activities.
- Use games such as The Ungame to encourage students to talk.
- Hold class meetings to discuss feelings and problems.
- Bring successful 2e adults into the classroom to serve as role models.
- Explain what it's like to be 2e.
- Work toward having the 2e student learn to value himself as intelligent.
- Use humour frequently.
- Engage 2e students emotionally through encouragement.
- Assure 2e students that they will get more successful as they get older because most 2e students find fields in which they can succeed.
- Provide an emotionally safe environment where students' ideas and feelings are accepted by teacher and peers.
- Enhance and build on students' leadership skills.
- Develop students' collaborative skills.

(Maker & Udall, 1985; Silverman, 1991; Nielsen, 2002 & Winebrenner, 2003)

Smaller than average student-to-teacher ratios are also recommended, plus the use of well-trained teachers (Fall & Nolan, 1993; Hishinuma, 1993; Thomson & Watkins, 1990; all quoted in Stewart, 1997). Barriers to implementing sound practices nationwide in New Zealand appear to be similar to those in Australia, which are cited in the following quote: “Answers such as lack of teacher knowledge about the specific requirements of 2e students, large classes, exhausted teachers, heavy workloads, and a reluctance to take on anything more all spring to mind” (Stewart, 1997).

To prevent negative consequences, it is imperative that parents become vocal advocates for their 2e children, accentuating the children's strengths rather than weaknesses.

Too often, the gifts go unrecognised, are ignored, are put on hold, or used to remediate weaknesses rather than developed or nurtured in their own right (Baum, Owen & Dixon, 1993). Teachers need to listen to parents, who have a variety of opportunities to observe their child's behaviour and hence are critical in the identification, intervention, and the assessment procedures.



## Conclusion

2e students, like other gifted students, need differentiated opportunities for their exceptional intellectual abilities and talents. In contrast, however, when learning becomes a challenge due to the student's learning difficulties, the students need to learn compensation strategies to increase their ability to demonstrate what they know and to succeed. (Winebrenner, 2003)

A regular New Zealand classroom teacher, in consultation with the 2e student and parents, has the ability to meet this challenge and provide increased quality educational opportunities. A successful approach will be holistic and learner-centred, accentuating strengths and valuing interests – this is simply best practice and effective for all students.

In failing to identify and provide for 2e students we are neglecting an “invisible” segment of the school population, one that has huge potential to contribute to society. Success in the real world does not solely depend on reading and writing, but on many different areas of skills, knowledge, and expertise.

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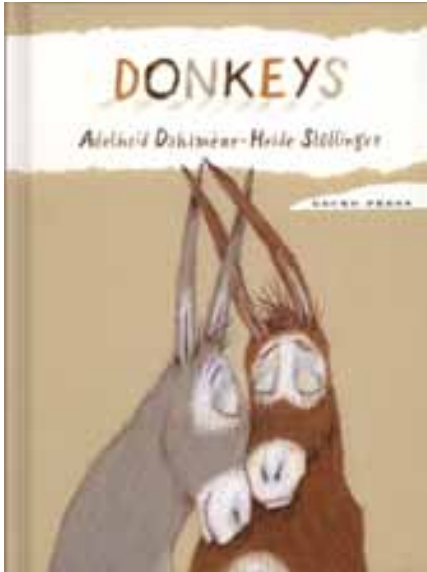
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# books and things

by Catherine George

**Well it's been very hard to get the children inspired about writing book reviews in the school holidays, so this term I'm resigned to having to do them myself. A lovely round up of children's picture books through, so it hasn't been too much of a hardship!**



First up is a reprint of a book that has all the makings of a classic.

## *Donkeys (mini version)*

Written by Adleheid Dahimene  
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Gecko Press  
RRP \$14.99

"Donkeys" is a charming picture book, translated from the original German by Catherine Chidgey. An old donkey couple (who, being typical donkeys, are very stubborn) have a tiff and set off to find new partners. Both are sure they'll find a partner who will fit them just as well, but they soon discover it's not easy to replace a lifetime of love. While ostensibly a children's book, this has become very popular for wedding and anniversary presents!

Award winning in its original home of Austria, this gentle and beautifully illustrated book is highly recommended for all ages. This new hardback edition is a great size, and represents the usual high production values of Gecko Press.

Another update of a favourite from Gecko Press is a new pop-up version of:

## *Who's Driving*

by Leo Timmers  
Gecko Press  
RRP \$29.99

Now the original "Who's Driving" (previously reviewed in Good Teacher Magazine) is a firm favourite with my 9 month old niece. The illustrations in the original already popped out from the page, with solid, bright coloured backgrounds. It's full of bright, onomatopoeic language, and highly entertaining.

This pop-up version will be a hit with older preschoolers, as the animals in the vehicles popup to answer the question of "Who's driving the.....". A play on the fable of the hare and the tortoise, this is another highly recommended book, both in its original and this updated version.





### *I am so Strong*

(and its sequel)

### *I am so Handsome*

By Mario Ramos  
Gecko Press  
RRP Both \$17.99

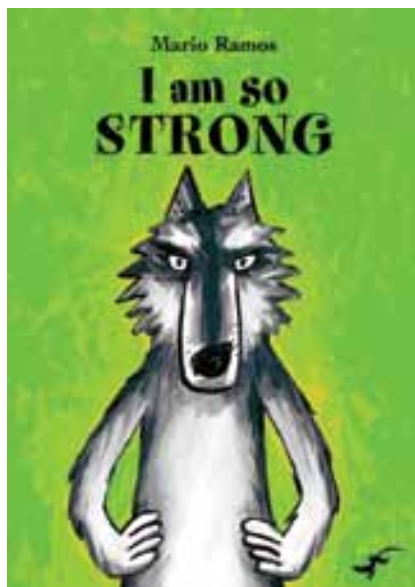
"I am so Strong" and "I am so Handsome" are two hilarious books from the very talented Belgian writer and illustrator Mario Ramos.

In "I am so Strong", the rather self-confident wolf of the title strolls through the forest to aid his digestion, and asks everyone he comes across "Who is the strongest in the woods?" There are very cute references to the fairy tale characters he encounters, such as the three little pigs:

"Hello, what have we here?  
Three little pigs, a long way from home. That's a bit careless. Tell me, little bacon bits, who's the strongest in the woods?"

Of course all is not as it seems, and the wolf gets a dose of his own medicine at the end of the story.

In the sequel "I am so Handsome", the wolf's confidence appears to



have returned, but once again he gets his comeuppance from an unexpected source.

The books have been translated from French by Jean Anderson and edited by Penelope Todd, and happily have retained wonderful language that will keep early readers entertained. The books are suitable for older preschoolers and up, and my seven and nine year old children giggled,



smirked and snorted while reading them. I loved the humour and the language that doesn't shy away from more complicated vocabulary that can make a book stand out as a favourite for children who love the "grownupness" of new words.

As Mario Ramos says on his website, "With a crayon and paper, anything's possible. It's magic!"

### *The Surface of the Sea*

Encounters with New Zealand's  
Upper Ocean Life

By Iain Anderson  
Reed Publishing  
RRP \$44.99

In this book, Iain Anderson (PhD, ME, BE) studies, photographs and explains how, why and what exists within the top strata of the ocean surrounding New Zealand. It looks at the relationships different species have with each others and how they survive at their place on the food chain.

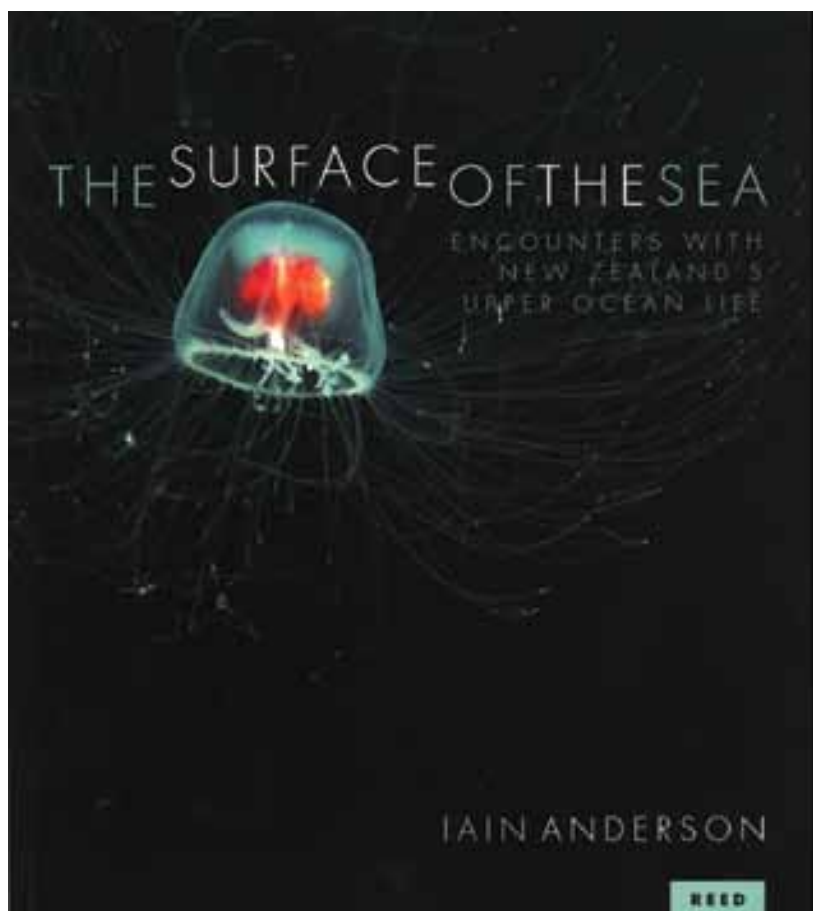
Anderson is a keen and experienced underwater photographer and photojournalist, and the photography of the underwater creatures is stunning. He has written the book in a personal style that makes it accessible to those not familiar with marine biology (e.g. me!), and this would be a great book for teens with an interest in the underwater world. Visually stunning and packed full of detailed information, this would be a great addition to a school library.

*Good Teacher Magazine has 2 copies of The Surface Of The Sea to give away.*

*Send in your photo, poem or drawing of what the sea means to you to be in the draw to win one of these books.*

*Send your entry to:*

*Good Teacher Magazine  
The Surface Of The Sea Competition  
PO Box 5531  
Mt Maunganui 3150*



# books and things

# Stage 5? Stage 6?

## What's the difference?

by Andi Adder

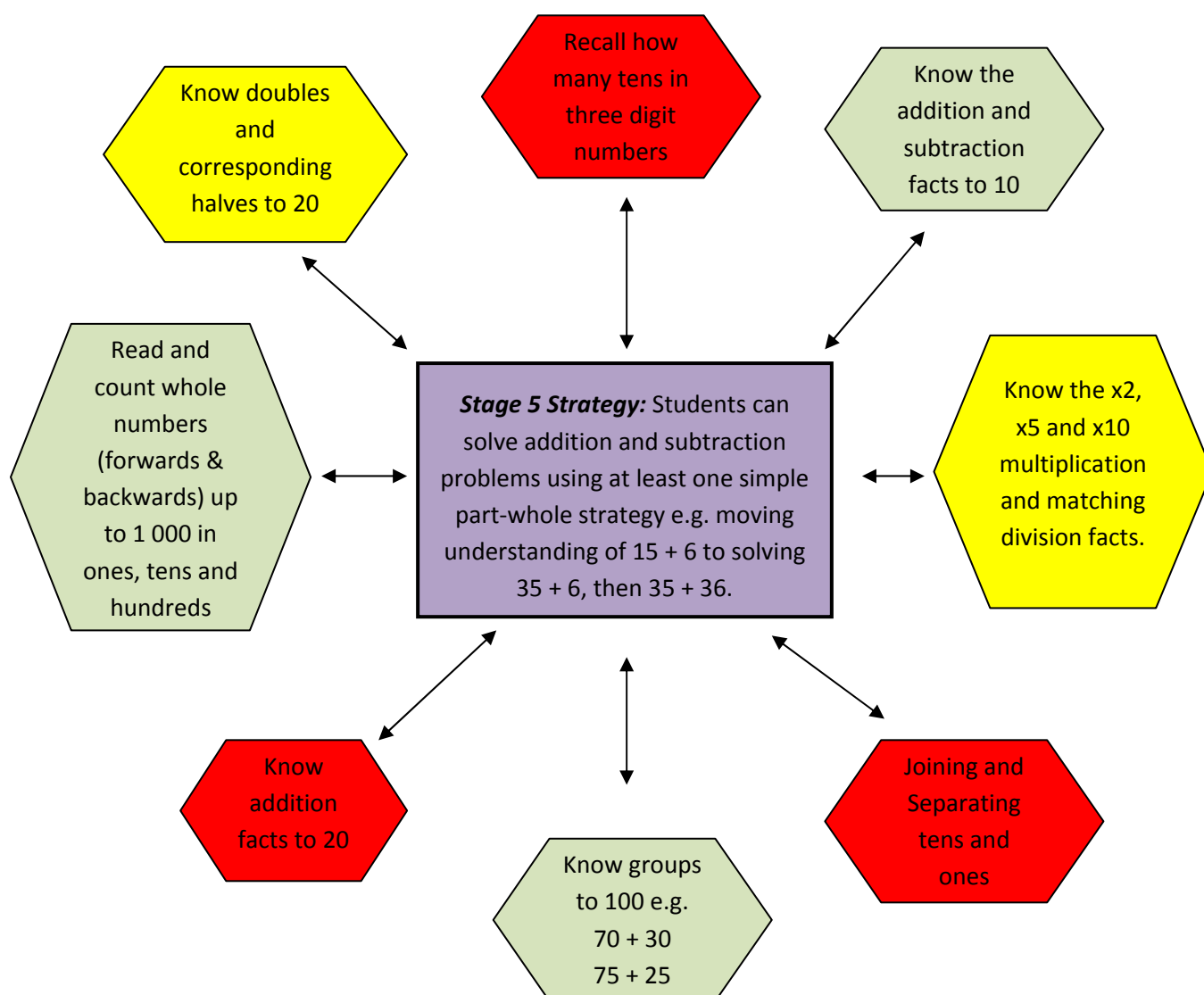
*Frequently many teachers ask the question,*

***“What is the difference between children working at stage 5 and stage 6 on the Number Framework?”***

For children to be working at stage 5 there is core knowledge that is required. This includes: basic facts to ten; how many tens and ones in numbers to 1 000 and forwards and backward counting of whole numbers.

As strategies develop, further knowledge is required to support the learning.

For example:





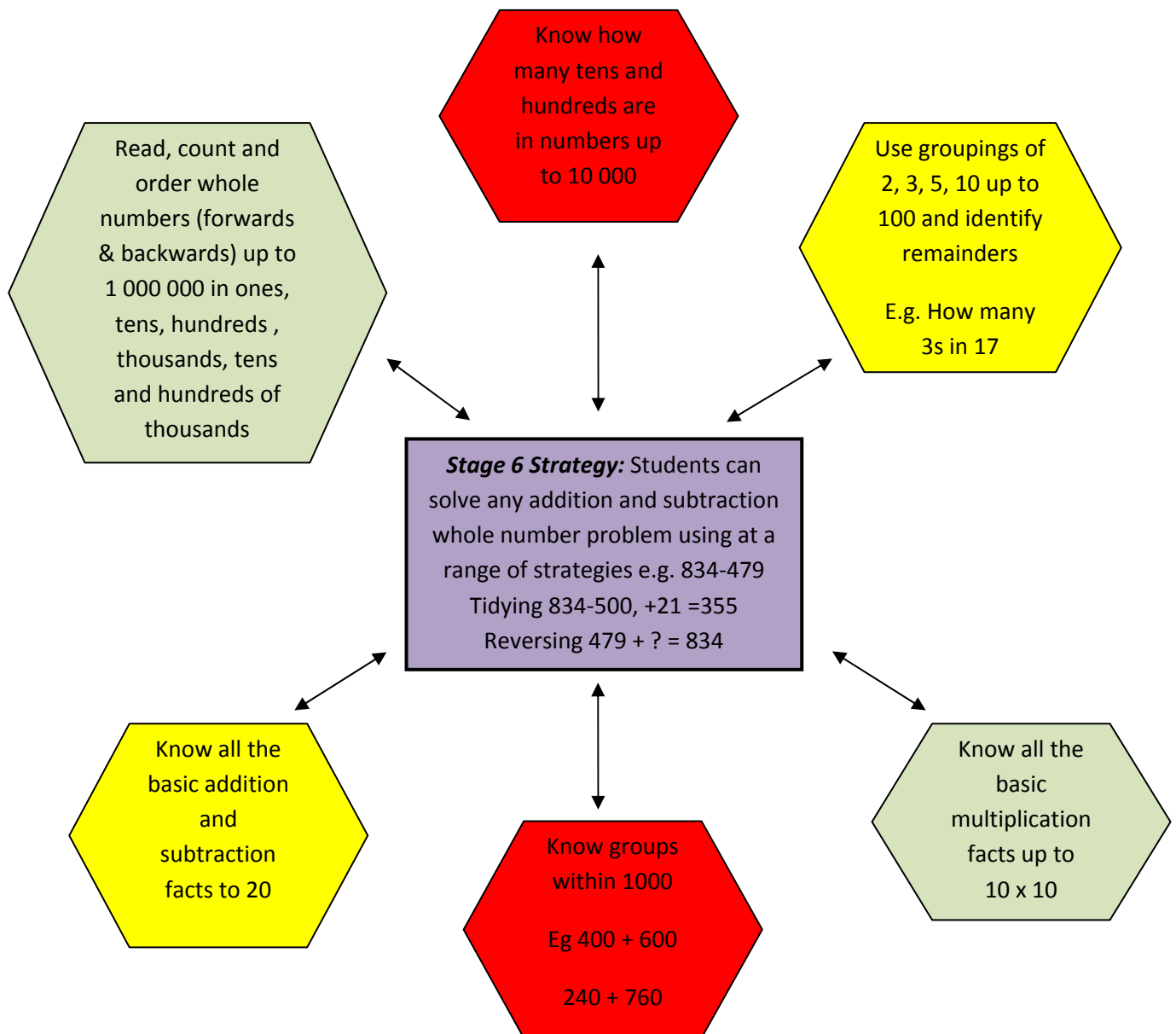


In order to move the students from stage 5 on to stage 6 where a range of strategies are available for use, further knowledge is now developed.

Children need nested knowledge of place value and an in-depth understanding of all whole numbers.

E.g. In 264 there are 26 tens. They also need the ability to transfer and use this knowledge in a variety of contexts.

For example:



**Students at stage 6 will choose the most appropriate strategy to solve a problem from a range of known strategies.**

Here goes Lucy again...

# Personalising Learning in

*It seems to me that teachers are spending a lot more time talking and thinking about how to make the most of each learning experience – in terms of the needs of the learner and the context in which the learning happens.*



Some of you may have read a recent publication from the Ministry of Education - Let's talk about: Personalising Learning.

The booklet talks about the 21st century education system that must be responsive and flexible to ensure every young person can achieve their potential and be set up for lifelong learning. Teachers having high expectations of every student; knowing how they learn and how to adjust their teaching to meet individual students' learning needs.

One school I worked with recently raised an important question in the minds of the teachers – “If we are good readers, why are we not so good writers?”

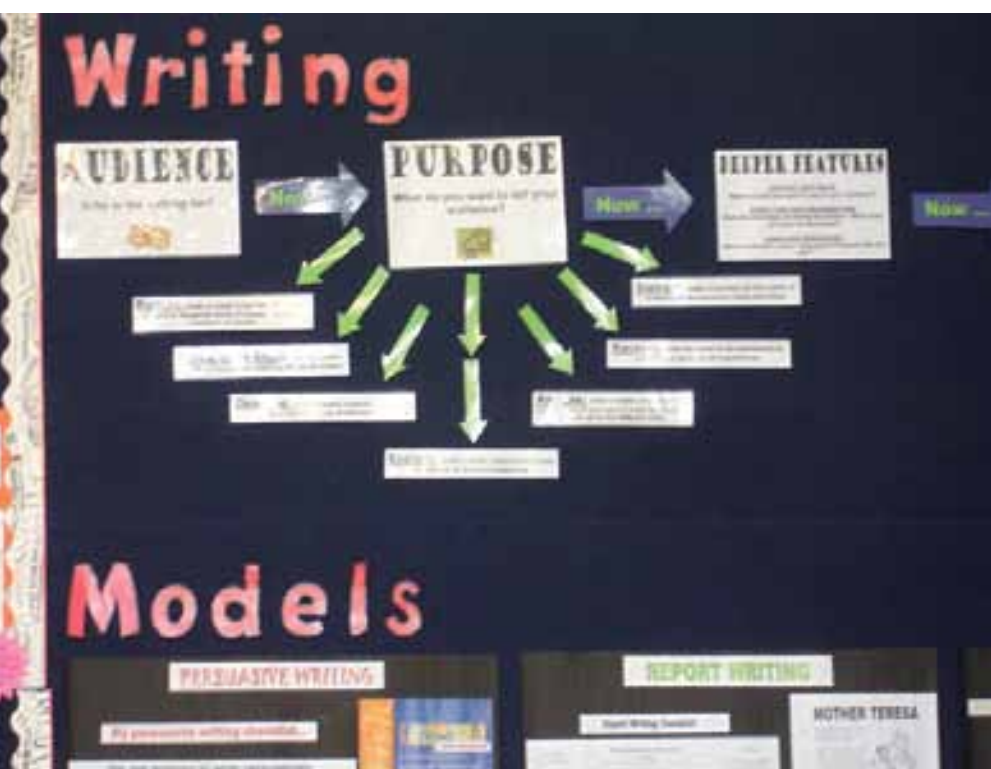
To answer this question the teachers engaged in some professional learning about writing – sharing the learning and identifying the next learning step and they soon discovered as one teacher commented “Sometimes when students have met all the success criteria, I have trouble with the “where to next”.

## Kylie's story:

Kylie, a young teacher in the senior school was keen to challenge her teaching practice and look at ways of personalizing the learning for her students. She introduced Workshops for Learning.

“I am trying out a new strategy – I group my students according to need but they don't know what group they are in. I run mini workshops that I ask specific students to attend and offer an invitation to anyone else who would like to join us. Students appear to feel more in control of their learning and it is centred on a learning need.”

The workshop system is based on quality assessment information that helps her understanding the next step learning needs of her students. From this information she can then plan the learning focus for the workshop to meet those needs with the



# a Writing Context

by Lucy Literacy

achievement criteria often co-constructed with the students.

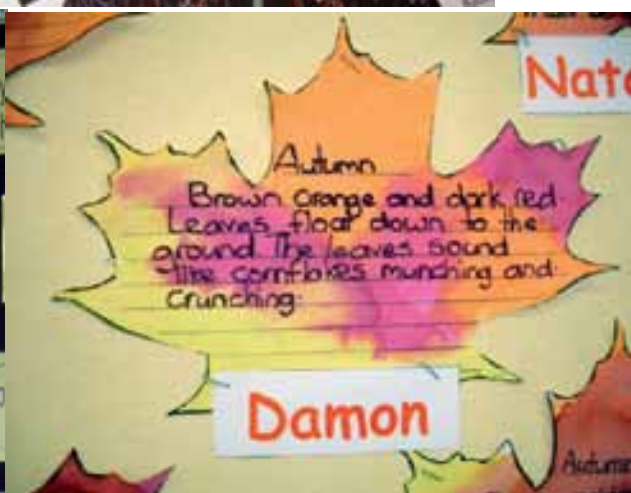
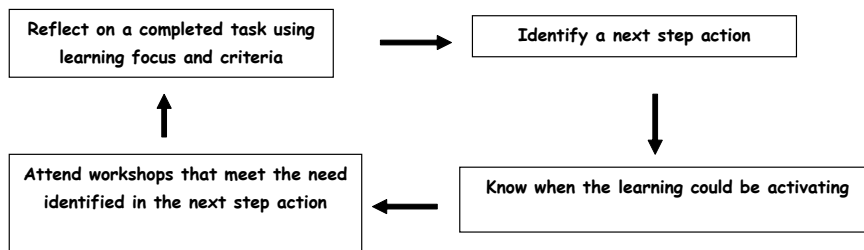
It was interesting to see that in the early stages everyone wanted to stay for the workshop however, it didn't take long before the students were making informed choices linking their own learning goal and criteria with the content of the workshop. Some chose to stay while others went off to work independently.

As one student said:

"When you get asked to go to a workshop you know that the teacher thinks you need help and you have to be honest with yourself and go."

"Sometimes I just choose to go to the workshop just to check if I had forgotten something"

A highlight of this strategy was that even though the teacher was grouping her students for writing, the students were unaware of being in a group. They were all learning at their own pace meeting their own learning goals.



If you would like to find out more about these learning workshops, please feel free to contact Lucy via the editor!!!



# Xmas in Turkey

## Travelling Teacher

Xmas was fast approaching, as was the end of year xmas concert.

Now you may be wondering why I am using the word xmas rather than the other word that denotes that it is a religious festival. As you probably know Turkey is not necessarily a Christian country although there are a lot of Christians in the country.

Not wanting to annoy anybody who's name starts with Osama or some such who may be lurking in the caves that surround Goreme I decided to use the more usual version which denotes that it is just a shopping festival.

Now the Turks can understand that, as their whole lives revolve around the fact that shopping is a good, if not a sacred, pastime. This is as long as you're buying my or my brothers or cousins or cousins-cousins carpet, Turkish coffee set or backgammon board or whatever.

After reading about that poor teacher in the Sudan who allowed her pupil to call a teddy bear Mohammed and who got chucked in prison for it, I was a little cautious about allowing any of my pupils to go home extolling the virtues of the Christian xmas just in case one of the parents got the huff and came looking for me with one of those trusty scimitars that the Turks had back in the old days.

So I racked my brains for an item for the xmas concert. It was advertised as the end of semester concert but I knew it was really a Christmas (damn,

that one slipped in) read xmas concert.

All the kids and I sat around in the classroom and had a brainstorming session. If you have read any of my previous stories you will remember how I set my classroom up. I have my desk in the centre at the front with all the little dears in concentric circles around me. Its like I'm the nucleus and they are charming little electrons chasing each other round the cosmos which is what the classroom is like a lot of the time, come to think of it.

Which reminds me have any of you seen certain Bishop's number plate. You know the Destiny church chappie. I was sent a photo of it by friends back home. His number plate reads "Proton". For all you non science teachers a proton is a positively charged particle. Cute eh! Personally I would have thought that BLKHOL would have been better. My online dictionary says it means "a celestial object or dark region in space, perhaps formed by the collapse of a large star, with such a great mass that its gravitational field will not let even light escape.

Anyway back to the story.

With me in the centre of the class I was able to control the ebb and flow of the discussion as we went from: the fact that the three wise men probably came from Turkey or came through Turkey at any rate (that was rejected as we didn't have any camels and they're smelly); to the baby Jesus in a cradle. We could use one of the many babies in the village (just contact Rent a Babe we thought. Well we rang them and discovered that the agency is for babes a little older than baby Jesus. They told us we needed Rent a Baby). After ringing them and deciding we didn't want a Croatian baby for the weekend we gave that idea away as well. Also Jezebel's mother (a not too PC family) has a donkey, which is not very nice at all. Fairly incontinent so I've heard. One young biblical scholar thought that Jesus on a cross would be good. I told him the story of Easter and he just said that he



*Jezebel's mother's donkey*

thought the sight of nailing somebody's hands to a cross would look great. I couldn't disagree but as nobody volunteered we gave that away as well.

We tried to look at the Muslim idea of Xmas (whoops I put in a capital letter there. That's probably worth 20 lashes of the whip.) What do Muslims associate with xmas. I do know that they consider Jesus a prophet although not as good a one as Mohammed.

Interesting enough when I was in Istanbul with Lomfl we went to the Sultans museum and discovered that they had the cooking pot of Abraham, the staff of Moses with which he smote the sea to make it part and the arm of John The Baptist. So obviously they do hold some of our beliefs in reverence. Maybe they just bought them at a bloody good price in exchange for a couple of old carpets.

So I thought to myself what would a country of itinerant salesmen find exciting about our xmas?

A couple of weeks before I had been to one of the sporting highlights of the winter season in Goreme.

Now you have to realise that the cradle of civilization is only 2 hours drive away from here. They are surrounded by and live in caves and phallic shaped houses and sit on top of underground cities that are 3000 to 4000 years old. It's enough to turn even the sanest person into someone with ideas that are slightly different from the norm.

The sporting highlight of the season was curling. They had built this largish ice rink in the square and the idea was





*Planning for the xmas concert*

to throw your stone into the middle and get as close to the bullseye as you could. Like normal curling you used brooms to smooth the ice so the stones would change course or go further. The team throwing their stone was allowed 2 minutes to confer with their stone and tell them what was expected. I'm hearing a gasp of incredulity here. Did I not tell you that the stones they were using were dwarfs. This is a sport that has grown in popularity since the All Blacks visited Europe over 20 years ago. The Turks, have a great affection for everything NZ'ish (probably because of Gallipoli) and they follow the All Blacks with great passion. They also research other sports played in NZ and that was about when Dwarf tossing entered the pub scene. The Turks of Goreme thought this was a great idea and merely changed it a little to suit the conditions.

So there they were tossing their dwarfs across the ice and it was really rewarding seeing the dwarfs actually doing their bit for the team. The rules allow a moderate amount of kicking and elbowing but biting and eye gouging are strictly forbidden. They get a red card and are tossed in the bin. No, not the sin bin, just the bin.

Any way having seen this amazing sporting highlight it came across me like an epiphany as we were planning our party.

Why not dress up as elves I asked the kids. Elves are funny, they are non religious, they make the presents and help Santa deliver them. Well the kids were delighted.

Another decision that they had reached themselves with only a little help from me.

The next thing to arrange was the costumes and what would they do. The boys were no problem. Digging was something that elves did and digging was a very old tradition in this town. Here if you wanted a house or a house extension you had to dig it.

The girls were a little more of a problem. What could they do? Then Charlotte put up her hand and said her mother was a dancer and she could teach the girls to dance. Well I had seen Charlottes mother and she was a stunner so I agreed whole heartedly. With the concert being the 7 days away (the following Friday) time was of the essence. I arranged for Charlottes mum to come to school the following Monday morning.

She arrived bright and early in her dancing attire which did seem a trifle brief, but who was I to complain. When the kids arrived she started to explain to them what dance was all about. She talked about the expression you need to put into the performance, the energy and how you need to connect with the customers. Audience I corrected. No No she replied. The customers. Well to cut a long story short she worked at the local bar as a pole dancer.



*Charlotte's Mother*



*Charlotte's Mother demonstrating, please excuse picture quality... camera shake*

The idea of teaching the girls pole dancing seemed a bit risqué but having seen papers from NZ where women have dancing academies where they teach pole dancing I thought well why not. Also I suppose it's a little like belly dancing only the belly is gyrating around a chrome pole.

So we set to work. I left the girls to the tender mercies of Salome (probably her stage name) and the boys and I went to work on the rest of it.

My thought was to have a panorama of small sets showing the xmas story at its best.

The first one would be of a child writing a letter.

Second would be an elf receiving the letter and then typing into a computer. We didn't have one at school so we were going to use my laptop.

Third would be boy elves digging up the minerals to make the presents and other elves with hammers etc making them up. We had a slight accident with the boys on Tuesday where one clonked another (accidentally of course) with his shovel. We immediately got rid of the shovels and got the kids to pinch their mothers gardening trowels instead.

Fourth would be some girl elves (the ones who had 2 left feet and didn't like to dance) wrapping them.

The fifth and final would be Santa and Mrs Claus, suitably attired (Lomfl and myself) being entertained by the dancing elves.

Well we had to get a large number of the local fathers in to prepare the set but by Friday it was ready.

We were going to run it like a mini movie and with the discreet use of lighting we would illuminate one set at a time. The ideal was to have each set illuminated for as long as it took for all the parents to see their little dears performing and for them to clap politely.



The time for our little set piece arrived quickly. Lomfl and I had to race to the back of the stage and don our best made up santa costumes. Lomfl had scoured the shops and had found some brilliant cheap red fabric. Having no sewing machine I thought like a teacher and we stapled all the bits together. Cotton wool and lavish coatings with the glue stick provided the hair and beard and before you could sashay a pole we were dressed and ready to roll.

With a little organisation we were all in place before the lights went on.

Unfortunately I had misread the enthusiasm that the local parents would exhibit when they saw their kids. There was no polite applause but deafening cheering and whistling. I was keeping an eye on the headmaster while our little pageant was being performed and he actually wasn't watching, being in a very close conversation with Salome. However when the last scene was lit up and the cheers became deafening at the sight



of 5 young ladies pole dancing he turned around. I could see his face change from sickly yellow to Puce in an instant. His scream broke through the rest of the cheering like a hot knife through butter. The kids froze.

Then amazingly the crowd of parents obviously thinking the heads screams were of approval and excitement, broke into even more rapturous applause. And my little troopers

continued their pageant.

Well suffice to say that the pageant was an amazing success. The head had to swallow his pride and agree that what the kids had performed was pretty amazing, although he did talk of an incredible opportunity in a school down by the Iraqi border that he would like me consider. I assured him that I was very happy in Goreme and went back to my little hovel with my beautiful Lomfl. I wrote a poem to commemorate the night.

Tw's the week before xmas  
And all through the town  
The elves were all waiting  
Waiting to dig down

The big night arrived  
Lomfl was oozing with charm  
She came and she showed me  
my suit on her arm

With the lights at the ready  
And the kids on the ground  
We got the show started  
As the Head turned around

The kids danced and they dug  
Just as well as they could  
But the Head was beginning  
To look very odd.

There's an almighty commotion  
His temper flared like a flame  
Then all of a sudden  
The kids started again.

The parents applauded  
Increasingly loud  
Because all the kids  
Were looking quite proud

Tw's the night before xmas  
And after the show  
The children were dreaming  
Of presents you know!

*For privacy reasons all photos are merely representations of the people mentioned in this story. The Editor takes no responsibility for the Travelling Teachers meandering mind!*



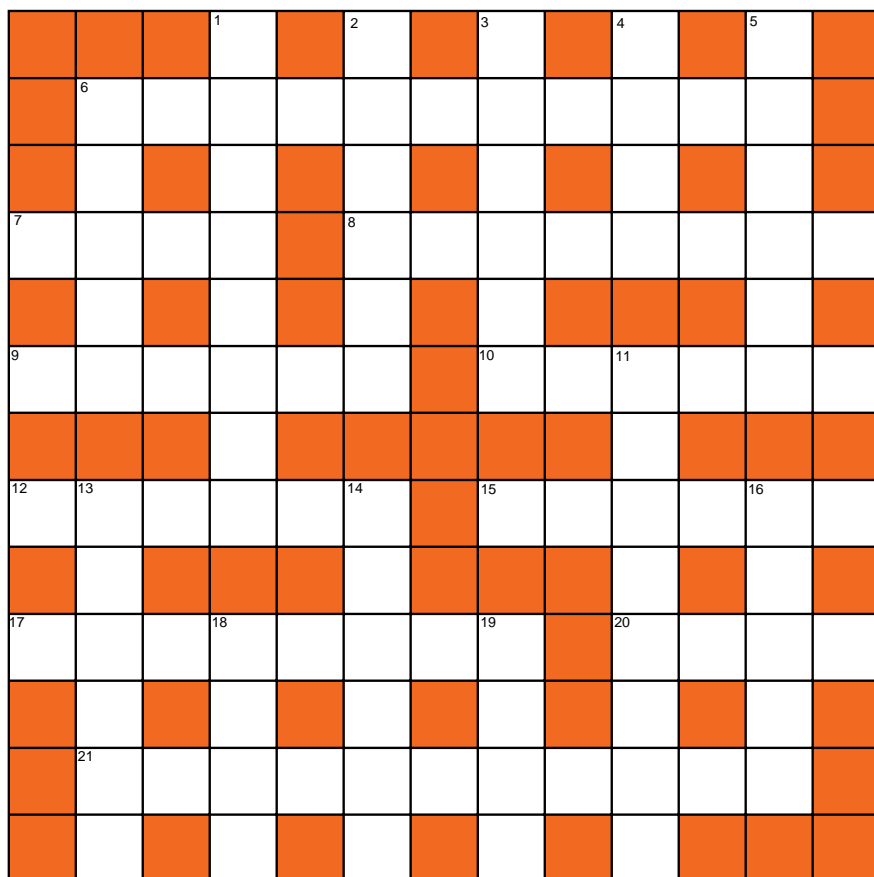
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# Richard Crypt's challenging crossword and Mike's number puzzles



## Across

- 6 Short term worker locks sirens (11)
- 7 There's usually no wading in this (4)
- 8 Loot bees broken and out of date (8)
- 9 Undress point streak (6)
- 10 Points vehicle right is sexless (6)
- 12 Morning finishes reparations (6)
- 15 In church, inside is a waif (6)
- 17 Tree people or councillors? (8)
- 20 Love mate gives precious stone (4)
- 21 Needing cast possible or milieu for single people? (6,5)

## Down

- 1 Before noon small part and particle show a desire to succeed (8)
- 2 Holy person, garment and flashing light (6)
- 3 Condiment for time of year (6)
- 4 Misplace return, initially for non-native English speakers (1,1,1,1)
- 5 Sleep maker. Double square points fly (6)
- 6 Go to a street for breakfast (5)
- 11 Raw, United Nations Captain Edgar (8)
- 13 Mum, A woman, is a disease (6)
- 14 A simple lad to a point reveals his feminine side (6)
- 16 That is outside deserter and very angry (5)
- 18 Measure inside points newts (4)
- 19 Directions to a road for home (4)

9		5				7		
	4			8	7	1	6	
7			3	6				2
5	1				2			3
4		6	1					7
	7	3	9			6		
		8	7				1	4
	3			4	6	8	9	
2		4			5			

To the right the answers from Good Teacher Magazine's term 4 crosswords, unfortunately no one was brave enough to send in completed crosswords. Have a go at the one above and see how 2008 starts! To the left two sudoku puzzles, one easier than the other but both solveable.

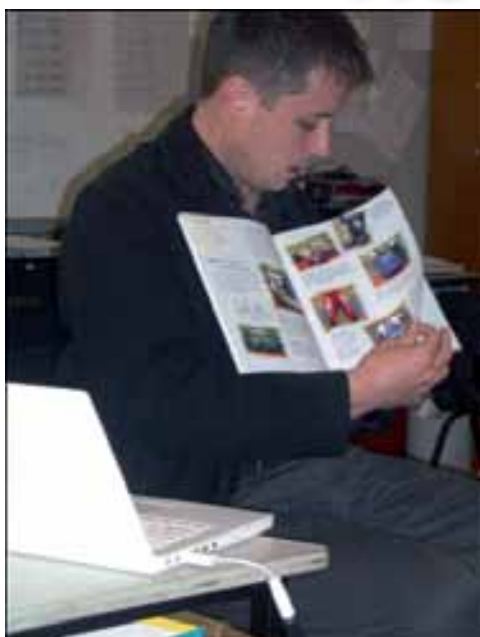
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			6			1	5	4
4	1			3	2	9		8
8		9						
		8						2
			3		7	6		
3	4			6	8		1	
		2	1	5	3	4		7
								1
	3		8				2	

1	T	I	M	P	A	N	I	S	T	S	A	S				
	R		L		I		T		T	W	E	L	V	E		
12	C	A	M	E	L	L	I	A	S	O		E		A		
				D				M		P	R	A	X	I	S	
13	E	N	I	G	M	A	T	I	C		D		A		H	
				E				N				S	I	N	G	E
14	A		T		M		W	A	S		M		D		L	
15	P	L	U	S	O	N	E		T	H	E	B	E	L	L	
	I		R		C			B	U	Y		N		R		S
16	A	R	N	I	C	A		N		B		K		D		
	R		O		A			A	D	H	E	S	I	V	E	S
17	I	N	V	E	S	T		R		E		M		P		
	S		E		I			B	E	E	T	H	O	V	E	N
18	T	Y	R	A	N	T		S		L		N		N		
	S		S		S			A	S	T	E	R	O	I	D	S



# Notes and pictures from



Andrew King

Year 6 class, Teaching 9 years,  
10 computers in the class, 23 kids  
in the class, Tahatai Coast School

## Reading and Writing

Theme developed around a  
book that would appeal to boys  
not interested in reading.

Selection of text available for  
those not interested in that topic.

## Ancient Civilizations

Theme used by syndicate.

Topic decided by teacher.

Continues across Terms 1, 2 and 3

Ancient Civilizations

Housing and buildings

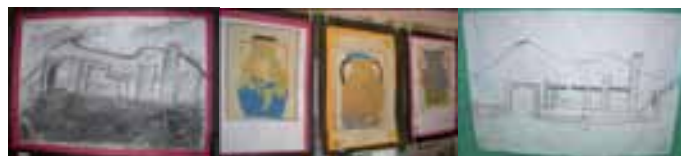
Fashion

Food

Sport

Schools

Transport



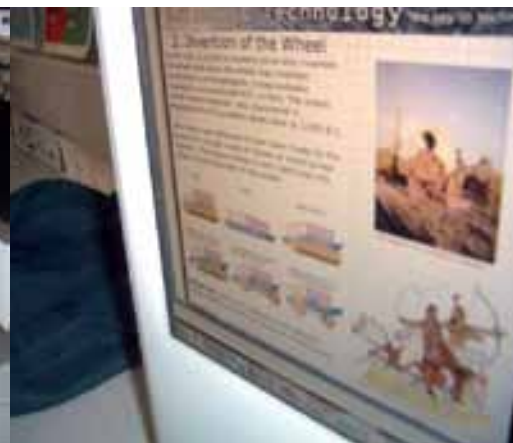
## Organised Chaos



The Internet gives students information that cannot be  
neatly divided up into curriculum areas (Drake, 1998).

## On task!

## Big discovery.





# working to a theme

Knowledge being constructed by many minds working together (Stoll, Fink & Earl, 2003).

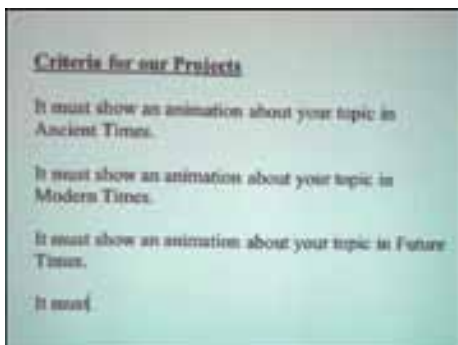
This demonstrated the value of 'making connections' to build on existing knowledge and not afraid to venture on the information super highway (Stoll, Fink & Earl, 2003).

"...It is imperative for students to be computer literate in the 21st century" (Drake, 1998, p.13)



## Reality check

The use of ICT by the teacher and the presence and continual of computers, video and digital cameras in the classroom embedded the assumption that technology is a valuable tool that can and should be easily and effortlessly incorporated into every day life (Drake, 1998)



## Criteria

...a curriculum generated by the student's questions? (Beane 1995, as cited in Drake, 1998)

No... Not really

Multi disciplinary to Interdisciplinary (Drake,1998)

Term One: Teacher directed

Term Two: Teacher-Student directed

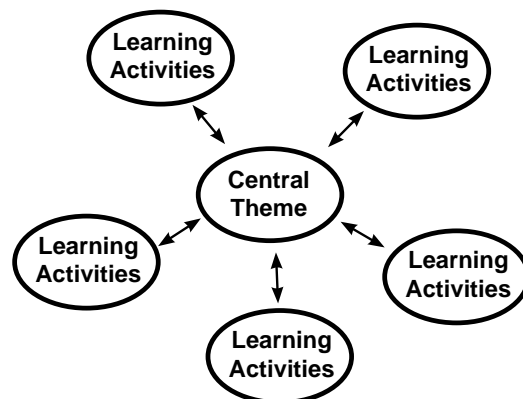
Term three and four: Student directed

This relates to the chosen area of topic however, not general classroom life

....students and teachers identify important concepts or topics related to a theme and select/ design appropriate and interesting activities? .... Yep.

Curriculum Integration Continuum

Thematic (Nolan, Massey University)





## 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 2 2008

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



### Competition result from Term 4 2007

One mystery school from Term Four 2007 was identified, it was Malfroy School in Rotorua (see right)

The other, which unfortunately didn't recognise itself, was Gisborne Girls High



Send your entries by 21st March 2008 to:  
Mystery School Competition,  
Good Teacher Magazine  
PO Box 5531  
Mt Maunganui 3150

or email to:  
mysteryschool@ed-media.co.nz



# Malfroy School



**Our mission statement:** We strive to do our personal best and help to make a happy caring school.

The main features of our school Malfroy are:

A known and practiced mission statement that proudly stands for its cornerstone values, of respect, responsibility, kindness, compassion, honesty, consideration, duty and obedience.

Teaching staff who model the values of our mission statement and who focus on children's individual learning styles

Support staff implementing special needs, remedial and extension programmes.

A strong positive behaviour programme focusing on student well-being and restorative practices.

A modern library and ICT Centre that provides opportunities for students to think, create and learn with the future in mind.

An EnviroSchool committed to safe guarding our planet.

A community minded school which offers mainstream, bilingual and Montessori classes from Year 1-6 age groups

An after school programme Kidz after Three and a pre-school transition class complete the learning experiences offered to our community.





# The Ultimate Day



*Most students entering school today are competent users of digital cameras, cell phones and computers.*

*It is said that photos capture the moment but wait..... there is more. Imagine what happens when you add a bit of text, movement and music, and it's zipped across cyber space to family and friends. The most supportive interactive and powerful audience our students could ever have.*

*Our 21st century students are surpassing their parents when it comes to using social software to enhance their learning.*

*Blogging, wiki spaces, photo story movies and shared digital stories are only the tip of the digital wave our young students starting school today can be engaged in.*

*As we begin 2008 let's take a peep inside our student school world and see what they could be doing!*

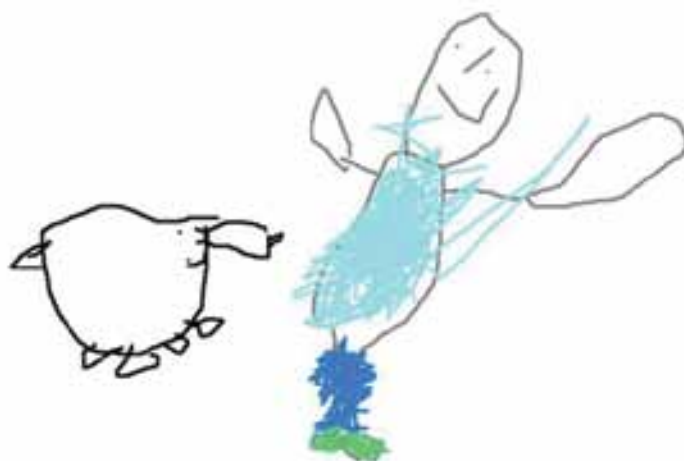
Classroom exteriors are still covered in colourful art work which may be digitally enhanced and captioned. Computer published stories adorn the walls along with a computer or two. Six colourful hats representing De Bono's thinking hats have a place of their own. Teacher's desks have moved to the nearest power outlet to accommodate a laptop computer attached to a data projector available for all day interaction. Students' desks are grouped or non-existent as working together gives opportunities for social and cooperative learning to take place.

*So what could an ultimate day look like?...*

Before school a group of students might be gathered around a computer or two discussing photos on slideshow that they may have taken, or they could be centred on a collection of images. Adding their latest piece of writing or diary entry onto their blog, reading their class or school news off the school wiki site, or checking if an email requesting information has been replied to. Some may be updating their personal e-portfolios with work they have completed and a record of reflections on current learning.

Once the day begins, nominated students share selected world and current events to be discussed from off the internet for example (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews>, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/>, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/waikatetimes/?source=waikatetimes>) via the data projector onto a

**Pauline McLeod**



Harrison went to the zoo and saw a rhino.



**Yr1 students illustrating their trip to the Zoo stories**

whiteboard or interactive board. Google Earth helps identify where this news is taking place. An opportunity arises to use De Bono's hats to look at different perspectives within the news. On screen graphic organisers allows students to sort out their ideas, values and opinions. Many news sites have a "send us your view" blog so immediately students can be linked to a global world to have their say.

At morning tea, one teacher comments that her reluctant Yr 4 writers are now blogging as soon as they





come into the classroom. "What have you changed?" I asked. "All my students have access to a class blog site where they can respond to each others work."

In addition to this we have given our passwords to parents and grandparents to comment on their work," she replied. "This gives them an instant audience and approval from people in their lives who matter most. They are writing to share with others, not for me as their teacher. Peers comment on their work giving them positive feedback, asking them questions about their postings and encouraging them to dialogue again. Handwriting is not an issue and spelling can be easily corrected. Oh and what's more we have begun pod casting The students themselves are driving it. They won't accept anything they can't hear or understand. This morning a group re-did theirs 3 times 'till it was accepted by their peers!"

As the day progresses, students have an opportunity to engage in personal writing, share ideas through class wiki or blog, communicate with others through an online discussion, or creatively publish their written work. Students needing help can be assisted by others more familiar with the procedure. There are opportunities to publish through a blog or a wiki. Formats could include

***A series of pictures taken from Yr 1&2 students at Bethel Christian School creating an animated digital story using clay figures.***





a visual image collection of photos through PhotoStory3 (<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/>), Bubble Share (<http://www.bubbleshare.com/>) or Flickr (<http://www.flickr.com/>), or a comic presentation using auto shapes from Publisher or PowerPoint. Some may make a small movie or a pod cast (<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>).

Students gather together to read their digital stories alongside commercial stories and stories made up on previous occasions and to share these with others along with commercial interactive CD's and DVD's, not to mention online reading sources such as the National Library (<http://www.natlib.govt.nz/collections/areas-of-focus/childrens-literature>), Starfall (<http://www.starfall.com/>), Scholastic ([http://teacher.scholastic.com/clifford1/flash/story\\_4.htm](http://teacher.scholastic.com/clifford1/flash/story_4.htm)) or Reading Planet ([http://www.rif.org/readingplanet/content/read\\_aloud\\_stories.msp](http://www.rif.org/readingplanet/content/read_aloud_stories.msp)). Preparing illustrations for further published work could be being done using Tux paint (<http://www.tuxpaint.org/>) or Microsoft Paint. Web quests ([www.i-learnt.com/Creating\\_WebQuest.html](http://www.i-learnt.com/Creating_WebQuest.html)) may be an activity for one group of students while another may be looking up or emailing for information for a research question.

Math's time may see groups of students working on a statistics project gathering and analysing data and presenting this in Excel. Students may be reinforcing learning by playing commercial CD's, or games on line such as <http://www.gamequarium.com/wordfun.html>, or <http://www.nzmaths.co.nz/BrightSparks/>.

Lunch time comes and children go out to play, interact face-to-face with their friends and return ready for more learning.



**Graphic organiser completed by YR1-3 students at Wharepapa Sth School**

A group of students have used their lunch time to take photographs of shapes in the playground and to practice their camera skills.

This afternoon, information literacy skills are being used to research information regarding an inquiry students are

**Teacher Carolyn Knight sharing a blog entry with a student.**



working on. The internet may be being used, faxes and emails may be being sent off. Students may be interviewing via an audio conference or using Skype to speak with an expert, gathering information, discussing and planning their next step. **New knowledge is being generated as students sort and sift through gathered information to come up with ideas, hypotheses, possible solutions and even more questions.**

The day is almost over and home work is already organized on the class <http://del.icio.us/> site. A school trip is planned for next week so a wiki has also been set up for the class to have their say in planning the event. Students can access this from home, involving parents in the planning also.

"Yeah!" said a group of students as they went out the door – "this is the best way to do homework. No homework books to be handed in, forgotten or lost. I can even text my friends to work online at the same time." Our online friend has done it again. All homework is digitally accessible and if we are lucky it has its own built in marking and evaluating system as well!

The day is over and teachers gather in the staffroom for a coffee and reflection time before returning to plan another day.

# Teacher Ideas

## Things that work for me!

Send Good Teacher Magazine any neat ideas you use that **WORK** and which you would like to share with others to: [teacherideas@ed-media.co.nz](mailto:teacherideas@ed-media.co.nz)

*It's always great to find new ways of doing things or to get a new idea which you can take, develop, expand on and make your own.*

*Perhaps send a link to your wiki or blog so we can list them for others to check out.*

### The front page of Carolyn's Blog

## The Livewires

The Livewires

Welcome to our blog. We are a Year 3 and 4 class at a rural school in New Zealand. We hope you enjoy our blog pages. Click on Livewires 2008 on the right hand side (green) to find this year's student blogs.

by Carolyn Knight

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### Related Links

- [Livewires Wiki](#)
- [SaluteToSeuss](#)
- [Springdale School](#)
- [Area 11, Perth](#)
- [Mr Smith's class, USA](#)
- [Mrs Rice's class, Canada](#)
- [Mrs Bashour's class, Lebanon](#)

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### Teacher Assignments

10/24 Zoos

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### Teacher Entries

12/19 [Happy Holidays](#)

List 5, 10, all

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### Student Entries

12/12 crime fighters	CS
12/3 Underdog take outs.	F
12/3 Zoo Visit	H
11/27 HANNAH !	H
11/27 zoo visit	X
11/27 all about my PS2	CH
11/26 Zoo visit 2	JS
11/26 lightning strike	I
11/25 Zoo visit	I
11/22 Rainy day	JS
11/16 the haunted house	I
11/15 DID YOU...	F
11/15 Zoo visit	C
11/15 Camouse	C

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by Carolyn Knight

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### Today is January 15, 2008

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### Happy Holidays


The 2007 school year finished today. Well done Livewires on all you have achieved this year. You have all improved your maths, reading and writing skills as well as LOTS of other skills. Your singing and class item ([Snoopy's Holiday](#)) in our school concert on Friday was just great. You all deserve a long and happy summer holiday. Stay safe, have fun and see you back at school on February 4th.

Article posted # December 19, 2007 at 01:53 AM • comment • Reads 783

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### Livewires Camp

Last Thursday the Livewires camped over at school. They had great fun in the evening with swimming, a bouncy castle, a picnic soccer against the parents and a picnic dinner. Then everyone went to their luxury accommodation (tents) and tucked up into their sleeping bags. On Friday we went to Waikato Museum and made some great headbands and wristbands by weaving harakeke. After lunch the Livewires faced a very tall challenge - to climb the walls at Extreme Edge. A great effort everyone and you were all extremely brave and strong to do the rock climbing so well.




My Classes & Students

- [Livewires 2008](#)
- [Livewires 2007](#)

About the Blogger

I live in a rural town in a dairy farming district of New Zealand. I love cats, butterflies, playing squash, travelling, reading, gardening, teaching and learning.



000742

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