

Literacy & Numeracy Pilots FORUM

National Literacy and Numeracy Pilots Forum

18 March 2010

National Press Club

PROGRAM

TIME	ITEM
08:45	Welcome by Dr Michele Bruniges
09:05	Guest speaker: Neil Dempster
9:35	Marketplace – Session 1
10:10	Marketplace – Session 2
10:45	Morning Tea
11:10	Guest speaker: Gary Fry
11:40	Marketplace – Session 3
12:15	Lunch
13:00	Guest speaker: Simon Pampera
13:30	Marketplace – Session 4
14:05	Marketplace – Session 5
14:40	Afternoon Tea
15:05	National Evaluation of the Pilots
15:15	National Literacy and Numeracy Reform
15:45	Close
16:00	End

Literacy & Numeracy Pilots FORUM

Narrowing the Gap in Numeracy: Quicksmart

Catholic Education Office Lismore New South Wales

The *Narrowing the Gap in Numeracy: Quicksmart* pilot is working with students experiencing difficulties in numeracy and is also increasing teacher capacity in numeracy education.

Thirteen schools are involved in this pilot. For more information visit the pilots website at:
<http://pilots.educationau.edu.au/>

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

The *QuickSmart* numeracy lessons follow a specific lesson structure which uses a fast-paced sequence of activities. While the lesson content changes over time, the pre-specified activities mean that the students know 'what comes next'. They are able to focus on learning and understanding the content of the lesson, rather than needing to spend time learning new activities.

Lessons are delivered by teacher assistants with support from an in-school supervising teacher. For the teacher assistants, the consistent lesson structure means they can deliver routine lessons which require minimal planning. This enables them to focus their time on student learning and on providing meaningful feedback to each student.

Employing teacher assistants to deliver the lessons, rather than teachers, provides greater economy so more students can access the *QuickSmart* program.

Another benefit of this approach is the professional development opportunities it provides to the teacher assistants. This is a capacity-building approach which benefits the school, the teacher assistants and the students with learning difficulties in numeracy.

WHAT WORKS?

At St Joseph's Primary School in South Murwillumbah, three teacher assistants were engaged to implement *QuickSmart*. Two staff were experienced teacher assistants and one began working as a teacher assistant for the first time.

All three have worked closely with a supervising teacher in implementing *QuickSmart* at the school. Their close collaboration and sharing of information has not only successfully delivered the program, it has enhanced the professional skills of the teacher assistants and everyone involved in the program. This provides immediate benefits to the students, and ensures the staff are now even better equipped to help others.

TOP TIPS

Repeated practice, but in different ways, of the basic skills of numeracy can lift results for middle-years students who are struggling in numeracy. When students have repeated, successful practice opportunities, they build confidence in tackling and persevering with numeracy problems.

SCHOOL EXAMPLES

The *QuickSmart* pilot has resulted in improved learning outcomes for the students who have participated in the first year of the program. The pilot focuses on developing basic numeracy skills. Results show that the participating students improved significantly in overall maths achievement as a result of their involvement in the pilot.

The whole school community also benefited from the pilot because of the professional development delivered to teacher assistants and supervising teachers engaged in the program. At a Year 6 graduation ceremony many of the *QuickSmart* participants spoke of their involvement in the program as one of the best and most memorable parts of their primary school experiences.