

Master Teachers

Action Research Project Snapshot

School/Cluster Name CABOOLTURE STATE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Region NORTH COAST REGION

Master Teacher Name JENNIFER MARSH

School context

Caboolture State School has served the Caboolture district for 126 years. It is a Band 9, co-educational state school with a current enrolment of 605 students. This comprises an Indigenous population of 13%, a Pan-Pacific population of 10% and a further 2% of students who have an EAL/D background. Our 2014 School ICSEA :- 914 percentile.

The focus of our school is to foster children's learning in a supportive, creative and harmonious environment, preparing them to become lifelong learners and responsible contributing members in our society. As a staff we value the development of each individual. Our NAPLAN results indicate continual improvement by students who engage with the range of school programs offered. The Principal and other school leaders have developed and are driving an explicit and detailed local school improvement agenda. This agenda is couched in terms of specific improvements sought in student performances, is aligned with state wide improvement priorities and includes clear targets with accompanying timelines.

Key focus or problem

Our school has been targeting Literacy with the focus on Early Years Writing.

ACTION RESEARCH QUESTION: *'Will the quality of the students' writing improve with the implementation of improved teacher pedagogy based on the 'Read to Learn' program?'*

Data baseline

NAPLAN data indicates that over the past five years Caboolture State School has performed substantially below the Nation in writing with no significant improvement within that time frame. In response to this data we have been working to improve teacher pedagogy in the Early Years using the writing component of the 'Read to Learn' program. We have been working across all year levels to improve teacher pedagogy, however we will specifically target our Year Three Cohort data as the benchmark for improvement in the three year plan.



Target Strategy including Literature review snapshot

'Read to Learn' (R2L) is a set of strategies that enable teachers to support all students in their classes to read and write at the levels they need to succeed. In the R2L program, teachers track their students' literacy growth by assessing their writing.

Our Prep to Year Three teachers have undergone training in the 'Read to Learn' program. We have used this Model within a Caboolture State School context to directly influence teachers and teacher aides and have established a common practice across the Early Years. We have conducted regular meetings and Forums and have established a Professional Learning Community to aid and assist all teachers and teacher aides in the development and delivery of this program.

Resources to support the action research

Our Prep to Year Three teachers have undergone eight days of training in the 'Read to Learn' program. This was conducted in two separate sessions with the use of relief staff to cover classes. As Master Teacher, I have conducted after school PD sessions and participated in Writing Conferences and PDs. Afternoon forums have also been conducted as a vehicle for the sharing of ideas and successful practises, for discussion, clarification, and to map out our future path to success. We have also been able to fund the release of staff to observe their peers with the intent of sharing good practise and establishing a common philosophy in the teaching of writing.

Regular Data Meetings are held within Year Level cohorts to discuss common problems and to identify students at risk. Individual meetings with teachers are also held to determine individual needs and means of support.

As a result we have organised further school PD Sessions and have developed and funded a 'Writing Pack' for all teachers. This consists of resources that will support teachers to further enhance the development and implementation of the R2L program.

Outcomes

Pre and Post writing samples were collected and collated each term with data being recorded on a pre-determined class Excel spreadsheet according to the marking criteria from the writing component of 'Read to Learn' and in conjunction with the Australian Curriculum. These are analysed to determine areas of improvement and focus for the next Term. To date we have seen significant improvement in the Early Years and will now extend this pedagogical practice into Years Four to Six. With the intensive work carried out by the Early Years Teachers we have seen a 25% increase in student outcomes from Term 1 to Term 3.

As a result of our success with the Early Years we have been and will continue to in-service all teachers and teacher aides. Starting next year we will have a 'Mentor' teacher from the Early Years for each Upper School teacher, and will be conducting and funding Peer Observation sessions, Professional Development and Forums. We will continue to collect pre and post test data and collate this with the intention of analysing problem areas and acting on those to support individual teachers and their classes.

