

Pearson Schools Consulting Services



Improving Literacy practice across a region

Literacy User Study

Relevant, collaborative and future-focused Literacy enhancement that encompasses a variety of teaching strategies to serve the mixed abilities of students.

Pearson Schools Consulting Services was engaged by a regional educational agency to help them improve Literacy outcomes through a 'relevant, collaborative and sustainable' professional learning program for Primary Teachers.

A User Needs Analysis Workshop initiated the development and delivery of a 3-year program that included in situ face-to-face professional learning sessions, an online learning community for teachers to share best practice, resources and ideas and several 'mini conferences' that fostered collegiality and enabled teachers to meet with educational experts.

The formative process that included scheduled program reviews and use of evidence, enabled us to achieve the intended learning and teaching goals.

The background

A regional educational agency engaged Pearson to support one of their key strategic priorities for Literacy. Namely, to improve the Literacy outcomes of all students by implementing a 'relevant, collaborative and sustainable' professional learning program.

Identified goals

After face-to-face meetings with key Early Years and Primary stakeholders, a comprehensive **User Needs Analysis** was conducted and the following critical needs were identified:

1. To improve Literacy outcomes for all primary school students, including EAL learners.
2. To deepen teachers' understanding of the General Capability: Literacy in the Australian Curriculum and how to apply it.
3. That all teachers gain an understanding of The Continuum of Literacy learning and how this can be used to drive instruction.
4. That literacy teaching plans are informed by evidence (formative and summative) and analytical data.





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The program

A 3-year staged professional learning program was proposed to cater for the diversity of schools and the number of participants. Research shows that continuous professional learning across time is key to a program's success (*Understanding What Enables High Quality Professional Learning*, Pearson / CUREE, 2012).

To facilitate access to the professional learning and promote equity amongst the schools, the professional learning took place as **face-to-face sessions** in schools centrally located and suited to the size of the audience.

An **online community** was established for participants to continue their learning and share in professional discourse between face-to-face sessions. The online community served as a repository of resources and housed additional tasks set to support classroom practice and reflection.

Mini-conferences were also held, where principals and key staff gathered to share their experiences and personal learning; nurture their collegiality and hear from educational experts.

Addressing AITSL standards:

The following AITSL Australian Professional Standards for Teachers were addressed in this professional learning program:

- Standard 1 Know students and how they learn
- Standard 2 Know the content and how to teach it
- Standard 3 Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning
- Standard 4 Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments
- Standard 5 Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning
- Standard 6 Engage in professional learning

The following areas of Professional Practice from the AITSL Australian Professional Standard for Principals were addressed in this professional learning program:

- Leading teaching and learning
- Developing self and others
- Engaging and working with the community
- Program Cost





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The program structure

PROGRAM STRUCTURE	INCLUDED FEATURES*:
<p>Year 1: Literacy in the Australian Curriculum</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Literacy – the responsibility of the whole school community 2. The Literacy continuum 3. Whole school approaches to Literacy 4. What does the data say and what can we do about it? 5. Literacy Assessment strategies 	<p>Professional Learning sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face-to-face • Informal • Facilitated • Collaborative • Situated • Sustained • Online Learning Community:
<p>Year 2: Fountas & Pinnell implementation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Benchmark Assessment System 2. Leveled Literacy Intervention – Introduction 3. Leveled Literacy Intervention – Intermediate 4. Social learning and language acquisition 5. Digital tools and language learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual • Remote • Self-directed • Sustained • Personalised • Mini-Conferences:
<p>Year 3: Progressing beyond basics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The impact of Guided Practice 2. How parents can help 3. Anyone can be a writer 4. Working memory and literacy 5. Look how far we've come; where to next? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face-to-face • Formal • Facilitated • Collaborative • Situated • Certified

24 MONTHS PROGRAM

* The table shows features of innovative professional learning and performance & development in alignment with *Global trends in professional learning and performance & development Some implications and ideas for the Australian education system*, AITSL, 2014.





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Outcomes

Teachers across the region improved their pedagogical practice of Literacy and had a shared understanding of how to improve Literacy instruction and development for learners.

- Schools were able to develop Literacy programs that catered to the unique needs of their students.
- A collegiate and collaborative approach was fostered so that teachers in the region could continue their professional practice and learning beyond the Pearson program.
- School literacy programs and curricula were informed by formative and summative data.