National Literacy and Numeracy Week 2008
Project Report

1) Intended Literacy Outcomes
   - Regular access to appropriate and personalised reading materials for students with a severe disability
   - Language development (single sounds, single words, sentences and sign language)
   - Increased engagement with text
   - Foster a love of reading
   - Embed successful strategies and high expectations into the teaching/learning repertoires of our school community (e.g. acting out stories with props and puppets, retelling stories, changing familiar text to create a different story, comprehension activities and augmentative communication strategies that support the decoding of text)
   - Consistent approach to the instruction of literacy to students with a severe disability (staff, volunteers, parents trained in strategies and techniques appropriate to student learning styles and required adjustments)
   - Creation of a specialised learning environment that caters to the needs of physically, intellectually and sensory impaired students and directly facilitates literacy instruction for those students
   - Measured and evidentiary gains in word attack skills, sight word recognition, fluency, comprehension and communication (spoken language and signed language)

2) Evidence of achievement of intended literacy outcomes
   - The creation of the literacy room has increased the students’ enjoyment, confidence and independence in the learning of language and reading skills. This is evidenced by watching the students in the program run or skip to hurry to the “reading room” and they can not wait until it is their day or their turn to go because they enjoy the range of literacy activities which are relevant to their special needs and which have enabled them to read, respond to and create texts.
   - Within the calm, quiet and uncluttered literacy room the students have displayed gains in their ability to maintain their focus to literacy tasks for longer periods of time with a higher intensity of engagement. The students are also exhibiting increased personal intrinsic motivation to stay on tasks rather than, the teaching staff needing to rely on external motivators such as reward stickers, verbal re-direction and praise. Of course positive praise and rewards are given however it is evident to see that personal success and pride in their work and achievements is more important to each individual.
   - All students now realise that text has directionality from left to right and they realise that words and/or symbols carry a message and a constant meaning.
The students have made progress in letter recognition and word discrimination using matching activities.

Individual student data has shown that many of the 12 students are making steady progress in the automatic recognition of whole words by sight.

The recorded data also plots an increase in word attack skills with more students attempting to identify new words using letter-sound relationships.

Several students can now use letter-sound relationships to build word families.

The area of handwriting has also made significant gains with correct grip, posture and the production of letters of consistent size, shape and spacing being specifically targeted throughout the term.

Students in the literacy room project have also had more opportunity to produce and publish their own texts based on the text type of the visually supported reader that they work on in a six lesson format over a three week period.

I have also noticed that more teachers in the school have been able to access and use the visually supported reading program that I have developed with their own classes and some are now keen to begin to produce their own books personalised for their students.

3) Feedback

I would like to sincerely thank you for the grant of $1000.00 to enable the creation of the Literacy Room at Cameron Park School. This has enabled the development of a specialised environment to enhance the delivery of literacy programs. I have thoroughly enjoyed creating this environment and training teachers and volunteers to implement visually supported reading, language and handwriting, spelling and text writing activities.

Yours sincerely

Lenore Hanney (Assistant Principal)

See photos and material below:
Assessment of students:

KLA: ENGLISH STAGE OUTCOME: WS4.1 Produces texts using the basic grammatical features and punctuation conventions of the text type.

ASSESSMENT TASK (What do I want the student to do?):
- Student will construct her own story within the reader Where are you?

INDICATORS (How well do I want the student to do the task?)
- read complete text aloud
- reread a selected page of the text
- listen to teacher as she explains that the student will write her own different short text, using new words (e.g. different nouns, verbs)
- discuss with teacher, content of new short text
- examine some new words and symbols suggested by teacher
• construct new short text, using a new noun, verb or symbols, on a blank page with a Velcro strip
• read her new sentence
• type her draft copy on the computer and save it
• read her new printed short text.