# National Literacy and Numeracy Week 2008
## Project Report

**Project title:** Kids Write Project

**Project description:**
Students in Years 3–6 have been researching the history of their local area listening to stories from elderly residents and Aboriginal Elders as well as using Internet search engines and published historical texts. Noted author and parent, Robert Drewe, will be assisting students with the research process. The students will record the information they have discovered on a timeline and contrast what it would have been like to be a child at different times on the timeline with their life now. They will also write a personal response to the information they have collected.

This information with students’ illustrations will be used to create a book titled *The Kids’ Eye View of the History of Fernleigh*. Professional editor and parent, Candy Baker, will be mentoring students in the process of editing, page layout designs, cover and illustration selection. The book will be published and a book launch will be held at the school during National Literacy and Numeracy Week.

**Person responsible for project:** Michaela Reina

**School, region, diocese:** Fernleigh Public School

**Contact person’s email:** Michaela.Reina@det.nsw.edu.au

**Number of students, teachers, parents, other community members directly involved:**
- Number of students involved: 28
- Number of teachers: 2
- Number of parents: 12
- Community members: 4

**Intended literacy and/or numeracy outcomes:**
- Students are provided with an authentic research project that will support their understanding of and acquisition of research skills.
- Students will gain an understanding of the process authors go through to research information for their novels to engage their audience and use this in their own writing.
- Students apply critical literacy skills to evaluate the validity and purpose of information they have collected.
- Students gain interview and recording oral history skills focusing on listening, note taking and reviewing.
- Students are guided through the editing and proof reading process by a professional editor for a real purpose and understand the necessity for redrafting and getting it right when sharing their writing with an audience.
- Students gain skills in effective illustration selection and how to lay out the page to effectively engage the reader.
- Students connect with the elderly residents of the local area and value their contributions to the community.
- Students enhance their word processing, internet search, scanning and working with computer graphics skills.
- The whole school community has an opportunity to engage in the project and celebrate
their achievements at the book launch.

Evidence of achievement of intended literacy and/or numeracy outcomes:
- All Years 3–6 students completed their research on a chosen area related to Fernleigh’s local history in term 2 with student teacher Lauren Tuck.
- Local elderly residents Shirley and Phil Rishworth, Neil James and Aboriginal Elder, Artie Ferguson, presented their oral histories to the students in term 2.
- All Years 3–6 students completed publishing and self editing their stories in term 3.
- The editing worked with Candy Baker to further edit and to design the presentation of the book on the 25th of August.
- All Years 3–6 students completed their illustrations for their text with art teacher Carolyn Bailey in Term 3.
- Community Book Launch author readings held on the 4th of September. Author Robert Drewe present. Positive feedback from all members of the school community.
- Book currently being published by Southern Cross University. Will send a copy when completed.

Feedback about making grants available for such projects:
This was a powerful learning opportunity for our students. A real writing task with a purpose and a professional product at the end of their hard work. As well as an opportunity to celebrate their achievements with the whole community. Our school would not have been able to fund such a project without the Literacy Grant funding. On behalf of all the students, thank you.

Fernleigh Public School Celebrates

We would like to thank the many parents and community members who joined us for our Literacy and Numeracy week activities.
On Thursday 4 September we held our long awaited book launch of ‘The Kidz Eye View of the History of Fernleigh’. This was a project initiated by student teacher, Lauren Tuck, as part of Years 3–6’s studies into their local history and received a Literacy Week Grant to assist students to publish their research. All our student authors did a wonderful job sharing their written contributions to the book. Thank you to the parents and community members who provided our students with an authentic audience to share their author readings with. A special mention to our special guests Neil James, Shirley and Phil Rishworth who had shared their stories with students. We are in the final stages of editing the book with the assistance of Candy Baker and will be sending it to be professionally printed.
Fernleigh Public School will be holding three Kinder Orientation Program sessions at 9.30am to 12.30pm on the 4th, 11th and 18th of November. Information sessions will be held to run concurrently with kinder activities. Please don’t hesitate to contact the school on ph 6687 8267 for further information.
Michaela Reina (Principal)
The Rishworths

Imagine getting up at the crack of dawn to milk 40 cows every morning before going to school or work. I certainly don’t want to. I would rather grab some milk out of the fridge! My Nan, Shirley Rishworth had to milk 40 cows every morning and she didn’t even have a fridge. Her dad dug a hole in the ground, put in an upside down cream can, bricked in the bottom and covered it with a wet bag to keep food cool. They also had a meat safe on the verandah.

While electricity came to Brooklet in 1938 it didn’t reach Fernleigh until after the Second World War. This made doing housework really hard for my Nan. She had to get on her hands and knees to scrub the floor every week as well as cleaning the windows. My Nan had to boil the dirty clothes in a copper out the back and wring the clothes out by hand before hanging them on the clothes line. They had a heavy metal iron that they had to heat on the stove. They had kerosene and gas lamps during the war. They had a good idea for warming the beds on a cold winter’s night: they heated up a brick in the oven, wrapped it up in a flannelette sheet and put it in the bed.

They also held a special presentation at the Fernleigh Hall for the young men who were going off to the war where they gave them a wallet full of money and a pen. The Fernleigh Hall in Burnett Park was hit by a cyclone. They rebuilt it but later on it was pulled down when nobody used it anymore.

Nan said it was hard work back then but life was much simpler. When you were in trouble all the neighbours helped you. Skinners Creek was a deep river with lots of mullet jumping out of the water. She also said ‘everyone owned half a fence.’ I like the way everyone shared and helped back then.

Marc McDermott