

National Literacy and Numeracy Week 2009 Project Report

Project title: Surf's Up: Showing snapshots of our community

Project description:

This project is designed to be a literacy project for a particular group of students with the aim that the process is transferable across classes in the year and across years.

The project aims at developing the literacy skills of a group of interested and able Year 7 student writers by extending their composition and ICT skills. It aims to capture the importance of the beach to our school community through 'showing' it in their writing. With these skills, they will mentor other students in their class to create their personal compositions for display and publication in the classroom or the library.

- Students apply in writing for selection into a writing group which will work with a published author for two half-days to create a collection of compositions about the beach at Manly. This collection will be published in a display in the library during NLNW.
- The writing group will meet initially with the author and discuss what makes writing which 'shows and not tells'. Such visual writing will aim to engage readers and have them understand the nature of the beach, its power and perceptions of it by The Forest students and the general community.
- The writing group will then bus to Manly Beach and take photographs of a variety of aspects of the beach including those who use it.
- There they will meet a member of the Manly Lifesaving Club who will talk to them about the 'nature of the sea' and offer oral stories and anecdotes about the beach and its past.
- They will return to The Forest, download their photographs and workshop with the author to create an accompanying written composition.
- When they have a final draft, the students will address their Year 7 classes and reflect on the process of writing and the particular process they followed to achieve their composition.

The writing group will publish their compositions and photographs in a multimedia display in the library during literacy week for all students, visiting parents and friends to view.

Person responsible for project:

Lyndell Town, Head of English

School, region, diocese:

The Forest High School
Northern Region

Contact person's email:

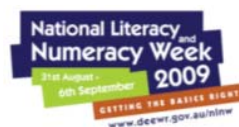
lyndell.town@det.nsw.edu.au

Number of students, teachers, parents, other community members directly involved:

- Two Year 7 English teachers
- The mentoring author, Laurine Croasdale, composer of 'Surf Sisters' and 'Surf School'.
- 20 students; 4 from each Year 7 English class
- Visitors to Manly Beach

<p>Intended literacy and/or numeracy outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To encourage students to write about a place in their community in a way that records their personal responses while also highlighting its importance of the school and local community as a whole • To help students develop the key competencies of Stage 4 English • To develop ICT and publishing skills • To foster literacy and literary skill development by engaging with a published author who will mentor them at a new level of competency • To help students edit their own work, to polish and rewrite it for publishing under the guidance of a teacher and an author • To enable students to reflect on the processes of composition and articulate this to peers • To publish student work in a way which celebrates their achievement through public awareness • To provide an authentic composing experience and promote literacy within the whole school body
<p>Evidence of achievement of intended literacy and/or numeracy outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students wrote personal, informative and imaginative responses about Manly Beach and their experiences there which were put on display • They took photographs which they downloaded and printed for the display • A number of students used pictures to illustrate their writing • The display was set up by the students in the library
<p>Other information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The visiting author brought most teaching materials which included video, novels, pamphlets, informative texts, props of various kinds which were used for creative writing eg snorkel and net
<p>Feedback about making grants available for such projects: This was a wonderful experience for the students and for the participating teachers. It created value added to our school because of the professional development experienced by the teachers and the new skills and confidence learned by the students. It was not difficult to manage and caused little disruption to the whole school while also reaping whole school rewards. Parents thought it was a great writing opportunity and hopefully, reluctant writers might apply next time a writing workshop is offered because of the buzz it generated. Our school is most appreciative of the grant.</p>

Samples of student work below:



Summer

It's dawn. The cool sea breeze flows through my hair. The sunrise, pink and blue light, mixes together. The beach is deserted. I'm all alone. Suddenly a cold hand slightly touches my shoulder. I scream. I turn around quickly and to my astonishment I find Robby, the scary dark one. No one ever talks to him. He's kind of a loner and what's even scarier is that he's next to me. "Hey, I didn't scare you did I?" he said

ever so politely. I thought about running but that would just be rude. Next thing I know he is sitting right next to me with his cold arm around my shoulders. Now I am scared.

He stands and his light blue jeans just touch the sand. He bends down and picks up two sea shells and hands one of them to me. The other orange shell is shoved in to his pocket. I open my hand. The shell he has given me is pink. I close my eyes to take in all that is happening. He is actually nice and he is just misunderstood I think. When I open my eyes there is a seagull on his left shoulder. It scares me a lot. He starts to pat it with his cold right hand. The bird does not move as it lets him touch it; I cannot wrap my mind around this.

He holds the bird out in my direction. "He's my pet, you can pat him if you like," he says kindly. He bends down a little further. I extend my hand and the bird lets me touch it, just like Robby. I see Robby now. Robby is kind of hot with his dark brown hair drooping over his face and his light blue eye shining in the sunlight. I pat the bird. It has soft feathers. He holds out his hand and I take it. He lifts me up of the sand. And we begin to walk along the beach.

Nicole Wiseman



The Beach

1 Second

A picture fit for a postcard.

1 Minute

A gentle gust of wind that smells of salt against my face.

15 Minutes

A zoo of shells carefully arrayed on the shore.

30 Minutes

A sundae with pizza in the thin yellow sand.

1 Hour

A splash in the cold water and endless laughs.

1 Day

A party better than any birthday.

1 Lifetime full of wonders at the beach.

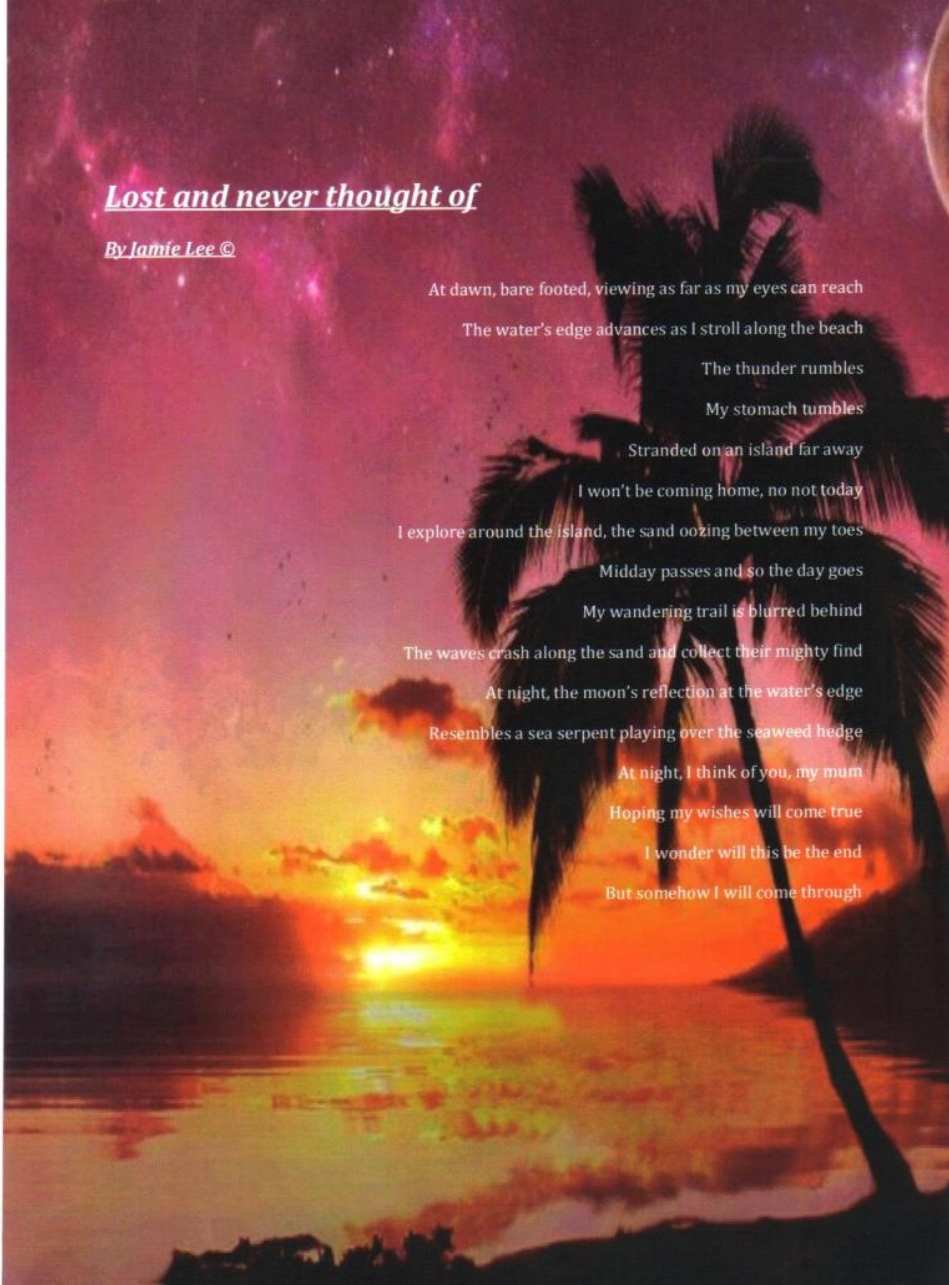
Juliette Struye

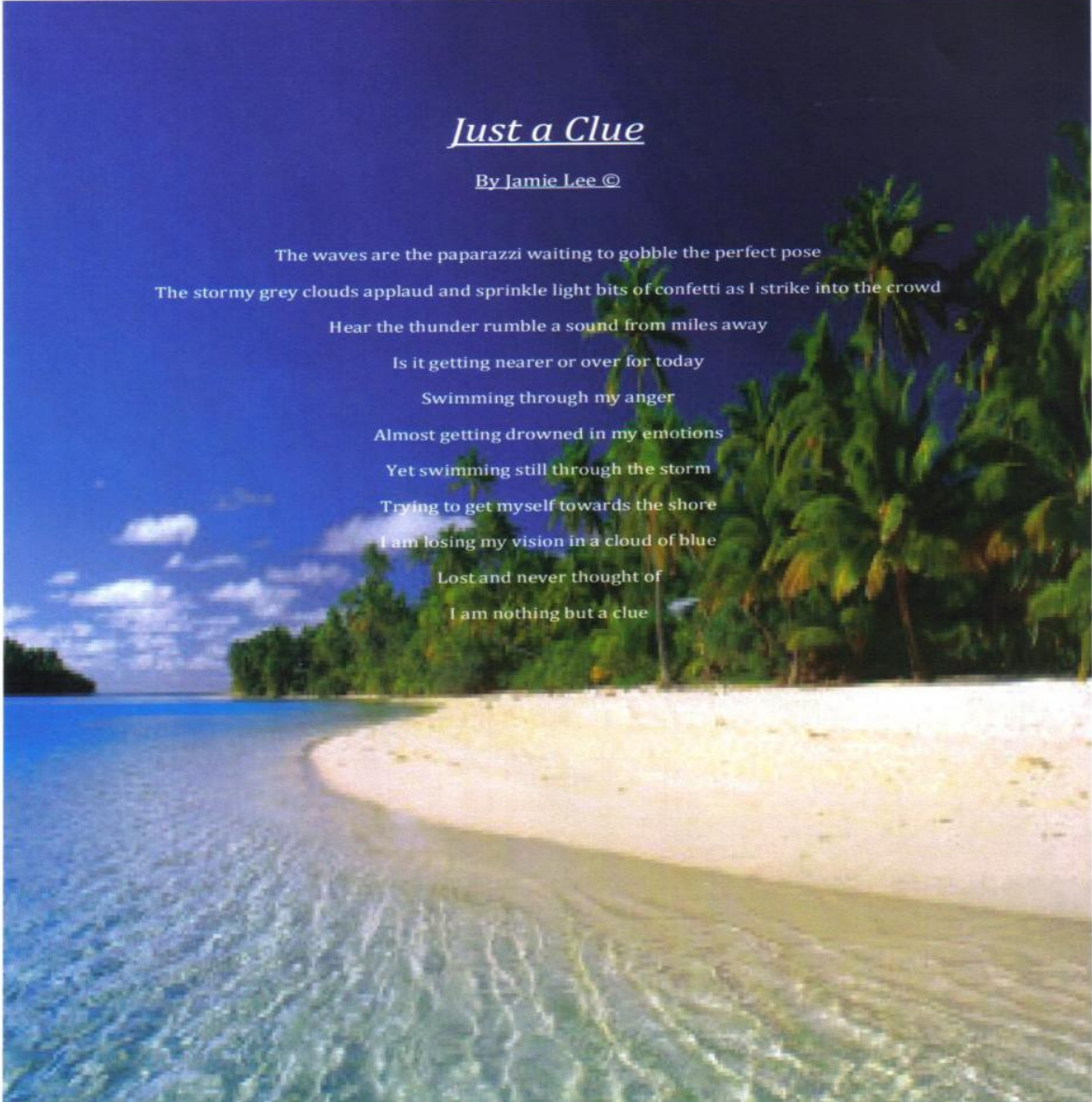


Lost and never thought of

By Jamie Lee ©

At dawn, bare footed, viewing as far as my eyes can reach
The water's edge advances as I stroll along the beach
The thunder rumbles
My stomach tumbles
Stranded on an island far away
I won't be coming home, no not today
I explore around the island, the sand oozing between my toes
Midday passes and so the day goes
My wandering trail is blurred behind
The waves crash along the sand and collect their mighty find
At night, the moon's reflection at the water's edge
Resembles a sea serpent playing over the seaweed hedge
At night, I think of you, my mum
Hoping my wishes will come true
I wonder will this be the end
But somehow I will come through





Just a Clue

By Jamie Lee ©

The waves are the paparazzi waiting to gobble the perfect pose
The stormy grey clouds applaud and sprinkle light bits of confetti as I strike into the crowd
Hear the thunder rumble a sound from miles away
Is it getting nearer or over for today
Swimming through my anger
Almost getting drowned in my emotions
Yet swimming still through the storm
Trying to get myself towards the shore
I am losing my vision in a cloud of blue
Lost and never thought of
I am nothing but a clue