

## National Literacy and Numeracy Week 2009 Project Report

**Project title:** Dads, Dinner and Bedtime stories

**Project description:**

This activity will bring dads of the boys at St Joseph's to school to read with their sons. It will be held at dinnertime and dinner will be provided. Dads will listen to a guest speaker outline the importance of boys engaging in reading and fathers showing they value this by modelling to their sons. Boys will then take their fathers to their classrooms where they will read one of the four selected short-listed books for Book Week, 2009. They will then engage in literacy-based activities with their fathers. We have many more boys at the school than girls, so we are aiming to raise the profile of literacy amongst the boys so that they value it in later years.



**Person responsible for project:** Peter Hughes

**School, region, diocese:** St Joseph's Primary School, Boorowa.  
Canberra & Goulburn Archdiocese

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

- 30 fathers
- 35 boys
- 5 staff members
- 1 parish priest

**Intended literacy and/or numeracy outcomes:**

- Raise the importance/profile of literacy for boys.
- Engage fathers in discussion re the importance of reading and increasing their own knowledge.
- Showing the fathers what the children do in the classroom.
- Building of community.
- Exposing all involved to contemporary literature.
- Associating literacy with enjoyment.

**Evidence of achievement of intended literacy and/or numeracy outcomes:**

- The fathers listened attentively to the guest speaker – given a handout to assist them at home.
- Fathers and sons worked quietly and were all engaged in literacy activities.
- Both sons and fathers were exposed to four books from the year's shortlisted books with many passing comments on how much they enjoyed the books.
- Over dinner the fathers were able to catch up socially and I had to turn off

- lights to give them a hint to leave – very successful social night.
- Boys and fathers enjoyed working together on the set tasks.

**Other information:**

Sample materials:

# POLAR BOY

by Sandy Fussell

This is a great book for upper primary, exploring familiar themes in a setting that may be unfamiliar to many students. This engaging book is set in a 14<sup>th</sup> century polar community. You will meet Iluak as a frightened child who becomes a courageous hero as he follows his destiny within his small community. It is a fascinating novel that is brilliantly researched.

## Tasks

### **Igloo - Living Conditions**

Read pp. 26-29 where igloo building is described. What are the steps involved?

Using plasticine or modelling clay, try to build an igloo by using small blocks of either material.

# THE BIG LITTLE BOOK OF HAPPY SADNESS

by Colin Thompson

*The Big Little Book of Happy Sadness* by Colin Thompson is another picture book with wide appeal. It explores loneliness, friendship and fulfilment through the life of George, his grandmother and his dog, Jeremy. The ideas for this book are designed for children in the lower to middle to primary years, but could be adapted to suit an older audience.

## Tasks

You must read the book and then choose one of the activities below to complete.

### 1. The Ripples Key

Work out and draw the steps in between the first action:

- When Jeremy comes home to live with George and his Granny, their whole lives change.

And the final consequence:

- George and Granny learn about love.

### 2. The Brainstorming Key

List at least ten ways you could have cheered George up.

List ten ways you could cheer up your friends or family members.

List ten ways you can overcome your own feelings of loneliness.

### 3. The Improvements Key

Discuss George and Granny's efforts to improve Jeremy's life.

Describe how Jeremy improved Granny and George's lives.

Work out five different ways you could improve your life or someone else's life.

### 4. The Inventions Key

Invent a device that could improve your life or your pet's life.

Draw your invention.

# HOW TO HEAL A BROKEN WING

by Bob Graham

## Tasks

Prior to reading the story:

Read the title of the book and have students predict its content.

Ask prompting questions such as:

- What do you see?
- What colours can you see?
- What part of the cover do you look at first?
- Why do you think that is?
- What are the different people on the cover doing?
- Why do you think there is a yellow glow around the little boy?
- What do you think the people on the cover are feeling?
- How can you tell?

## Reading the story:

Following the reading, select some questions to discuss such as:

- What event in the story really captured your attention?
- Is there anything you are wondering about?
- Were there any main colours used throughout the book?
- Why do you think the illustrator has chosen to do this?
- Why do you think there were not many words in the book?
- Why do you think Will was the only person who stopped to help the bird?
- How do you think he felt when the bird's wing healed and it had to be let go?

## Interpreting the story:

Read through the book again, this time asking the students about what they see at various points in the book. Discuss the meanings behind: colour choice and the variation from black and white to colour, landscape, direction and line, focal points (what your eye is directed to first), sequencing (with the comic-style boxes) and the change in perspective from bird's eye to ground to bird's eye view.

## Interpreting the author's message:

- What do you think Bob Graham wants us to know about?
- Does this book remind you of any other books you have read?

# A ROSE FOR THE ANZAC BOYS

by Jackie French

Jackie French provides her readers with a unique perspective on WW1: the story of the women and their tireless and heartbreaking work tending to the soldiers.

## **Tasks**

Read Chapter 6 (page 76)

On completing the chapter, your task is to write a letter to the Editor of a large metropolitan newspaper to ask for readers to provide food/cocoa for your canteen. You must express the seriousness of the situation you find yourself in.