DEADLY WRITIN',
READIN' &
TALKIN' PROJECT
(DWRAT)

ANNUAL REPORT 2000:
On the move

Bronwyn Parkin, Co-ordinator, DWRAT Project
PROJECT PERSONNEL

School Principal: Julie Bishop Dip T, Grad Dip Ed (Language and Literacy)
Co-ordinator: Bronwyn Parkin B.A., Grad Dip Ed, Grad Dip Comm & School, M. Ed
Co-researcher, functional grammar adviser: Rose Ashton Dip T, B Ed, Grad Dip Ed (TESOL)
Classroom Teachers: Gayle Bonnett, Lynne Fischer, Julie Gagnon, Katrina Georgiou, Caterina Mancini, Lyn Shepherd, Vicki Swanson, Maureen Walker, Gary Wheaton
Aboriginal Education Teacher: Anne Hamnett
Aboriginal Education Workers: Muriel O'Loughlin, Thurza Buckskin (trainee)
(Management Team: Julie Bishop and Bronwyn Parkin)

Salisbury North R-7 Aboriginal Education Team
Back Row: Bronwyn Parkin, DWRAT Co-ordinator; Debbie Mayle, ASSPA Chairperson; Muriel O'Loughlin, AEW; Tony Zed, Deputy Principal
Front Row: Rose Ashton, ESL, Functional Grammar, Coordinator, Teaching and Learning; Julie Bishop, Principal, Anne Hamnett, AET

On the move: Annual report of the DWRAT project November 2000
OUR INTENTIONS AND WHAT WE DID
Our intentions and what we did

Aims of project
DWRAT began in 1999 as a DEETYA funded Strategic Results Project. Its aims, as part of a formal agreement between DEETYA and the Aboriginal Education Unit, Enfield, were to improve the oracy and literacy outcomes of targeted Aboriginal students from Reception to Year 7 at Salisbury North R-7 school through an action research project focussing on teaching/learning practices in standard and Aboriginal English (DEETYA agreement with Aboriginal Education Unit, Enfield, November 1997)

The aims for 2000 were
1. To continue to develop students' literacy skills through Scaffolding pedagogy
2. To expand the number of classes using Scaffolding as the basis of their literacy programs
3. To increase teachers' knowledge and skills in Scaffolding and its implications for literacy teaching

Rationale
The literacy levels amongst Aboriginal students are significantly lower than the general population on all measures (Masters and Forster, 1997 p225, MCEETYA 1995). However, the results from our initial 18 weeks of scaffolding literacy in classrooms looked very encouraging (See We’re on to something here: DWRAT Report 1999). Most students showed significant development in Viewing and Reading. Some had moved more than one profile level\(^1\) in that time. There were many signs of hope which encouraged the school to find funding to continue scaffolding in 2000.

\(^1\) The profile levels are a nationally recognised measurement of the outcomes of all curriculum areas. As a guide, students cover roughly one profile level in 18 months.

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What we did

Classroom and support teachers recruited
Volunteers for the project were recruited from within existing staff once staffing was known for the year. Three of the four teachers involved in 1999 had transferred or were unavailable. Consequently, only one classroom teacher trained in scaffolding, Caterina Mancini, remained. Rose Ashton, school Coordinator, and Anne Hannett, Aboriginal Education Teacher, also remained as part of the team. The fact that eight new teachers volunteered to be involved is in itself a measure of the perceived success of scaffolding in its first year.

Initial and ongoing theoretical input
Once again, DWRAT held an all day Saturday workshop early in February of this year. As well as the DWRAT team, other classroom teachers were invited to attend, and many did. In addition, we invited the staff from the neighbouring Kaurna Plains School, and three teachers and the principal attended.

The DWRAT co-ordinator attended a day's workshop on writing with Wendy Cowey in September. The insights from this day have strengthened the writing component of our program, an area which has been of concern since the beginning.

At the beginning of each term, several sessions of Training and Development are held after school with the School Service Officers who work in classrooms. Each session covers one year level, and introduces one of the texts to be scaffolded that term. Content covers text analysis, spelling and writing.

An important theoretical input has been the Language and Literacy Course, tutored by Rose Ashton. This 30 hour course builds a knowledge of functional grammar and its use in the classroom. Almost all Scaffolding teachers have now completed the Language and Literacy course.

Regular planning with classroom teachers
It is again evident that regular and sufficient planning is crucial to the ongoing success of this program. This planning is carried out in two ways: firstly, each class team, consisting of class teacher, ESL teacher, AET, Special Ed, and School Service Officers, meets for 2 lessons at the beginning of every term. At this time, the text to be scaffolded is introduced, and scope and sequence laid out.

Secondly, time is found each week to plan the next week's lessons. Thorough planning at the beginning of each term means that planning throughout the term can be quite short. This weekly planning is done with all teachers involved at any stage during the week so that we all know the scope and content of lessons.
Our intentions and what we did

**Intensive scaffolded literacy lessons**

The Scaffolded Literacy process has been documented by others (Gray, B. and Cowey, W., 1997, Rose, D., Gray, B. and Cowey, W., 1999). We have continued to use the pedagogy as the basis of our literacy teaching, and are pleased to note the improvement in our own teaching, as well as in the understanding of students about literacy. Issues related to the pedagogy are explained later in the report.

Each DWRAT class has a 50 minute scaffolded literacy lesson four days a week. In addition, the functional grammar teacher gives a focused grammar lesson in some classes once a week. The scaffolded literacy lessons are team taught in various ways, each class teacher negotiating with the DWRAT team. There are almost always at least two adults in each classroom, although the older classes have demonstrated that it is possible to teach some aspects of scaffolding effectively without this extra support.
Reading Support Program from Aboriginal Parent Literacy Workers

When we began the program in 1999, we were keen to find ways that Aboriginal parents could have a recognised and valued role in the school, at the same time supporting their children's literacy learning. The Reading Support program evolved from an original series of workshops for parents on language-issues, particularly dialect and register. Parents examined the difficulties which children might encounter with those issues in school. The original intention had been that we would find ways for parents to support classroom literacy programs, armed with their new knowledge. However, literacy learning is so complex that it would have been difficult to achieve successfully. Instead, a more manageable role was devised for Aboriginal parents, and a new series of workshops run early in 1999.

Based on the theories of Marie Clay and Brian Gray (Clay, M., 1999, Gray, B., Cowey, W. and Graetz, M., 1998), a training program was developed to teach parents an educationally useful way of listening to children read. This year, in recognising the active role adults play in teaching their children in this context, we have given it the title of 'one-to-one reading instruction' rather than 'listening to children read'.

While we have had many difficulties in sustaining the program this year, there have also been many highlights. Rosina Eckermann, an AEW trainee, made a video on the process to show to parents and other AEW's. Rosina and Muriel O'Loughlin, our school AEW, presented a workshop on the process at the state-wide Indigenous Literacy conference held in April this year. Their audience was about 30 AEW's and teachers from around the state.

Muriel O'Loughlin has co-run two workshops this year; one to a group of interested Aboriginal parents, and another to a group of parents from throughout the school, run during Literacy Week. She is currently supporting the training of Thurza Buckskin, our new AEW trainee, and has demonstrated the process to a visiting trainee as well.

Thurza Buckskin, AEW Trainee, involved in one-to-one instruction with a Reception student.
Our intentions and what we did

Focused case studies
The conviction of the management team has always been that successful pedagogy should assist all indigenous children. We considered that we would not count ourselves as successful unless we had managed to improve the literacy skills of the Aboriginal children most at risk in the research classrooms. Consequently, in 1999, we identified in each classroom a child whose progress could be the subject of a focused case study which would help us determine if scaffolding did indeed assist those students most at risk.

Three criteria were used for their selection:
- The literacy skills of the child were of considerable concern to us
- They must be children who were settled into the school and unlikely to leave during the study
- They must have participated in pre-project literacy assessments.

Three of the four focus students from 1999 have left the school, so we have chosen three new students who fitted the criteria. While generalised data show us the big picture, these case studies are important in showing us how the scaffolding pedagogy has impacted on individuals whose progress is of concern to us. Data has been collected in the form of writing samples, test results, and tape recording of their reading each term.
PROJECT PERFORMANCE
Performance targets

In 1999, our target was that 'the spread of English profile levels of Aboriginal students in the Salisbury North R-7 school sample reflects the spread of profile levels for the non-Aboriginal school population' (from DEETYA agreement with Aboriginal Education Unit, Enfield, 1997). We chose Profile Levels on the assumption that they would be use nationally as a measure in literacy. However, this target created a problem because we did not have sufficient data from the school to make the comparison at the time. Instead, we created two alternative targets:

1. Using the information provided by DART, our target is for our Year 3 and Year 5 Aboriginal students to match the median measured for Viewing, Reading and Writing in the national literacy survey of 1997 (using national Profile Levels as the measurement). Our Year 4 students should be about half way between the Year 3 and Year 5 median, and our Year 6 and 7 students somewhere above the Year 5 median.

2. Secondly, there are many instances where that goal is unachievable because of the low literacy levels of the students when we started DWRAT. Students who are educationally at such risk often show little improvement from one year to another. We decided that another measure of success would be if students had moved at the same rate as their national counterparts in each of Viewing, Reading, and Writing (according to the National Literacy Survey data) during the 18 months that they had been involved in the project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National median in profile levels</th>
<th>Viewing</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>P.L. 3.1</td>
<td>P.L. 3.3</td>
<td>P.L. 3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>P.L. 3.7</td>
<td>P.L. 4.2</td>
<td>P.L. 3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of movement in those 2 years</td>
<td>P.L. 0.6</td>
<td>P.L. 0.9</td>
<td>P.L. 0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In other words, even if our students have not matched the national median for their Year level, if they have moved by at least 0.6 of a profile level in Viewing, 0.9 in Reading, and 0.5 in Writing over the 18 months, we would be satisfied with their progress. We realise that this is a rough measurement, but it gives us one way of determining if students are progressing in their literacy skills.
Base-line data

Baseline data collection

Baseline data was collected in November/December, 1998 and February 1999. Assessments were made of the reading and writing skills of all Aboriginal students in the school, as it was not known which students would be in the research classes in the following year. In addition, as a necessary part of the DART assessment process, the 'viewing' skills of Middle and Upper Primary children were also assessed.

The measurement tool for Junior Primary students, ie Years Reception (entry level) - Year 2 in 2000 was again the Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (Clay, M., 1997). Year 3 students who were not sufficiently literate for the Middle Primary test also completed the Marie Clay tests. The assessment tool allows us to compare students with a large cohort of their own age, ie 6.0 - 7.3 years, with stanine levels 1-3 being of concern, 4-6 being average, and 7-9 being above average.

While running records were used in 1999 as part of the assessment, they were not used this year to measure distance travelled; the whole school was assessed using running records at the beginning of the year. This information was collected too early to be of use for this purpose, and running an additional assessment later in the year was not feasible. Nevertheless, all Aboriginal students in DWRAT classes record a sample of their reading at the end of most terms, and this data provides us with information on what they are able to read when scaffolded.

The Developmental Assessment Resource for Teachers (DART), published by ACER was the tool for older students (ACER 1997). We would like to acknowledge the co-operation and assistance of Margaret Forster and Wendy Dick from the ACER in our use of the test.

Two versions, a Middle and an Upper Primary test allow for a wide range of literacy levels to be tested. Students from Years 4 and 5 completed the Middle Primary test. Students from Years 6 and 7 completed the Upper Primary test. The test plots students according to their movement within and across the Australian Profile Levels. The students were tested in Viewing, Reading and Writing. It must be noted that only one
Project Performance

Year 3 student was considered to have sufficient literacy skills to complete the test this year. The other Year 3 students were tested using Marie Clays 'Early Detection of Reading Difficulties' test.

The Viewing and Reading tests were marked by individual teachers, using the guides provided by DART. To make sure that we were fair, the writing samples were moderated by a panel of 4.

How improvement was measured

In addition to the formal tests at the beginning and end of the project, improvement has been measured through the ongoing collection of data in each classroom:

- Video tapes of literacy lessons
- Collection of artifacts in the form of student work samples
- Notes from the evaluation session we run each term with teachers and School Service Officers
- Evaluation questionnaires completed by teachers at the end of each term.
The outcomes of the project with relation to the performance indicators

The Junior Primary children are assessed using the Marie Clay tests in Term 4 of each year. All Year 4-7 Aboriginal students in the school are now reassessed using DART, ie the same assessment tool, in Term 3 of each year. Because different year levels are assessed using different assessment tools, the results have been discussed separately; firstly Reception to Year 3, then Years 4 to 7.

Only the results of children who have attended this school for the full 18 months since the project began have been shown. They have been present for the first test in December 1998, and the last test in August 2000.

JUNIOR PRIMARY (RECEPTION TO YEAR 3): POST PROJECT DATA

The shaded area in each graph represents the scores we would like our students to achieve at this age. Scores higher than the shaded area, ie 7-9, show a strength in the area. Scores lower than this, ie 1-3 suggest a child to whom we must pay close attention.

Reception Reading

![Graphs showing performance in Sight Words, Concepts of Print, and Letter ID](image)

The graphs above show the results of the Marie Clay 'Early Detection of Reading Difficulties' tests from the eight Reception children. The results suggest strength in letter identification and students' understanding of print, but at this stage students are generally not able to recognise the given words out of context as the sight word test demands.
Reception Writing

Our reception children did not perform well in the writing vocabulary test, due in part, I believe, to the test design. Students are required to record as many words as they can in 10 minutes. A mark is given for each word accurately spelled, without regard to the number of letters in each word. No marks are given for words that are close to, but not exactly accurate. 6 of the 8 children recorded 0-3 words accurately spelled. The test advantages those children able to 'sound out' short words accurately such as 'fat', 'cat' and 'rat', rather than attempting longer, more difficult words, perhaps not totally successfully.

These graphs of the results from Reception level writing tests provide some interesting information. The Dictation test assesses children’s ability to hear and record sounds. It requires children to record a sentence containing 37 phonemes. A score is given for each phoneme heard and recorded, even if the spelling is not accurate. It is evident from the Dictation assessment that hearing sounds and recording them is not a strength in 5 of our 8 reception Aboriginal students. At least three of the eight have records of otitis media or phonological awareness difficulties. This information supports our reasons for working with Gray’s scaffolded spelling, which emphasises visual memory, rather than aural acuity as the basis of beginning spelling. This issue is discussed later.

Year 1 Reading

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All 4 Year 1 students are now involved in scaffolding lessons four days per week. Students 1 and 2 have been members of DWRAT classes for the past two years and were present for the pre-project assessment. For these two students, both pre- and post-project results are displayed, represented by two columns, rather than one. All Year 1 Aboriginal students tested are at satisfactory levels for letter identification and concepts of print. Of particular interest is the growth in concepts of print shown by students 1 and 2, and the high scores in concepts of print by all four students. While recognising unfamiliar words out of context (Sight word test) is still not a strength, only one student is still of concern.

**Year 1 Writing:**

As discussed previously, the Reception children demonstrated in their dictation test a weakness in hearing sounds in words (phonological awareness). Of the students currently in Year 1, students 1 and 2, the students who have been involved in scaffolded literacy for two years, demonstrated a similar weakness in their February '99 test. However, the same could not be said for them now. They have jumped 5 and 4 stanine levels respectively over the past 20 months. No Year 1 child is of concern in the Dictation test, i.e. hearing sounds in words.

The results from the writing test may be of concern. The quantity, but not quality of writing is still an issue for many scaffolding teachers in our school, although decreasingly so. Are these scores a result of the test disadvantaging the writing vocabulary of our students, or are they really performing poorly in comparison with their peers? I have already outlined my concerns about this particular test in regard to the Reception results.

**Year 2 Reading**
Project Performance

The results of the Year 2 reading tests shown in the graphs above are encouraging. All but one student knows all letters of the alphabet out of context, as we would hope they would by the end of Year 2. Student 2 is still having trouble with b/d and p/q reversals. Reversals are marked wrong in this test.

The 'concepts of print' test assesses how closely students focus on text and whether they are able to detect errors in text. These results, with all six students scoring close to the maximum, supports the value of the close attention to print enabled by scaffolded literacy.

The scores in the sight word test are less consistent. Half the children are considered satisfactory. Two of the six knew all the words in the test. However, this score does not reflect the effort we put into teaching children sight words. Learning to read words out of context is an important part of the scaffolding process but it is still new to many students. If the children were being tested on the words they had worked on this year, I expect that they would have scored much better.

Year 2 Writing

When children were asked to write as many words as they could in 10 minutes, two of the Year 2 children were satisfactory, or more than satisfactory. The other four children, including Harry, whose case study will be discussed later, are of significant concern.

The dictation test shows significant improvement in children's ability to hear and record sounds in a sentence. All students are satisfactory or above, and 4 of the six students show leaps of 3 -5 stanine points. Whether this is due to children growing up, or the scaffolding pedagogy we do not know.
Year 3 Reading

It should be noted that all Year 3 students are at least 1.3 years older than the cohort against which they are being measured in the Marie Clay Observation Survey. By Year 3, notions such as Concepts of Print, and Letter Identification should be well and truly established. Hence the shaded area defining our goal is at the highest end of the stanine curve. We would hope that our students had mastered all these skills by the end of Year 3. However, it should be noted again that only one of our Year 3 children had sufficient reading skills to be able to complete the DART assessment test for Year 3.

The Year 3 students, all boys, were able to recognise all letters of the alphabet, lower and upper case. The scores in the concepts of print test indicate that the boys could identify change in word order, but that none of the three students was able to identify a change in letter order within a word. The results of the Sight Word test indicate that the students were unable to recognise many common sight words out of context under test conditions. This information is of grave concern.

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Year 3 Writing

The graph of the writing vocabulary results reflects the same difficulty that other year levels have with this test. They are unable to write lengthy words accurately in the time allowed to score well. For example, student 3, who wrote 'hat, fat, sat, pig, wig, pen, ten etc' scored higher than Student 1 who attempted words such as 'went, money, seals, king, being, sea lion'. These students are still 'transition' spellers who need a great deal of work to strengthen their skills.

Two of the three boys are still showing difficulty in hearing sounds in a word. Their scores again demonstrate the problems that many Aboriginal students have with aural acuity. When tested, students 1 and 3 had been in the DWRAT program for three terms.
YEARS 4-7: POST PROJECT DATA
DEVELOPMENTAL ASSESSMENT RESOURCE FOR TEACHERS (DART)

Rationale for using this test:
We have used DART, an assessment tool devised by the Australian Council of Educational Research (ACER) three times now, over 18 months. Baseline data was collected in December 1998, our final test for 2000 was conducted in August. The test was used for the 1997 National Literacy Survey (Masters and Forster, 1997). There are three reasons for our using this test:
a) it allows us to compare our own school cohort with a large group of students nationally
b) it uses the national Profile levels as its unit of measurement. These Profile Levels are the same as are used in the South Australian curriculum.
c) it also enables us to integrate the assessment of Viewing, Reading and Writing by using the same content for all three aspects of literacy.

Although Year 3 students are expected to participate in this assessment, only one of our Year 3 students this year was literate enough to take part. The Year 4 and 5 students use the Middle Primary assessment, the Year 6 and 7 students use the Upper Primary/Lower Secondary assessment.

Primary goal for student achievement:
The DART resources provide information on the national scores of Year 3’s and 5’s, using the national Profile Levels as the measure. Our primary aim for our Year 5 students is to match the national median at their year level in Viewing, Reading and Writing. However, this matching exercise is not so simple for other year levels. National data is not available for Years 4, 6, and 7, so approximate median Profile Levels have been extrapolated from the national Year 3 and 5 data.

Secondary goal for student achievement:
DWRAT also has a secondary aim. When the project began, the literacy levels of some of our children were so low that there was little hope of them catching up and matching the national levels within the two years that we have been operating. Many children who are educationally at risk show little progress from year to year. If they are to have any chance of catching up to their peers, their rate of development will have to be faster.

Consequently, an approximate rate of student development in each area of literacy was again extrapolated from the national data. This rate of development provides some sort of guide on what to expect from our students. The rate of development differs in each area of literacy. For example, in Viewing, the difference nationally over 2 years is 0.6 Profile Levels. In Reading, it is 0.9 Profile Levels. In Writing, it is 0.5 Profile levels.

The secondary aim for our students is that their rate of development in 18 months at least matches the national rate of development over two years. Whether this rate of development is sufficient for our students to catch up to the national median by the end of Year 7 remains to be seen.
Project Performance

Primary Goal; matching the national medians:
The following graph shows the number of our Year 4-7 students who have achieved our first goal by matching the national median for their year level in each of Viewing, Reading and Writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yr level</th>
<th>Student Nos.</th>
<th>Viewing National Median Profile Level</th>
<th>% of our students reaching median</th>
<th>Reading National Median Profile Level</th>
<th>% of our students reaching median</th>
<th>Writing National Median Profile Level</th>
<th>% of our students reaching median</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1998 and 1999, our best results were in the Viewing tests. The same outcome has occurred this year. The results are not so encouraging in Reading and Writing. It is helpful to remember that the Year 4 cohort could not even participate in the tests 12 months ago as Year 3 students because they could not read well enough. In addition, the table does not show those students who were within a decimal point or two of the median, nor does it separate or identify those students who scored above the median.

If this goal were the only goal, DWRAT could not be seen as successful. However, at the end of our second year in the program, we are still hopeful. In order to see encouraging growth, it is necessary to move to goal 2, to determine how far students have progressed in the past eighteen months.

Goal 2; national rate of development over two years achieved in 18 months:
This next graph shows the average distance traveled in 18 months by each cohort of students from Years 4-7, using Profile levels as a measure. This progress is compared with the growth shown nationally within two years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yr level</th>
<th>Viewing Estimated progress rate nationally over 2 yrs</th>
<th>Average progress of our students over 18 mths</th>
<th>Reading Estimated progress rate nationally over 2 yrs</th>
<th>Average progress of our students over 18 mths</th>
<th>Writing Estimated progress rate nationally over 2 yrs</th>
<th>Average progress of our students over 18 mths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.6 P.L.</td>
<td>n/a²</td>
<td>0.9 P.L.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0.5 P.L.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.6 P.L.</td>
<td>0.7 P.L.</td>
<td>0.9 P.L.</td>
<td>0.7 P.L.</td>
<td>0.5 P.L.</td>
<td>0.7 P.L.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.6 P.L.</td>
<td>1.2 P.L.</td>
<td>0.9 P.L.</td>
<td>0.6 P.L.</td>
<td>0.5 P.L.</td>
<td>0.6 P.L.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.6 P.L.</td>
<td>1.0 P.L.</td>
<td>0.9 P.L.</td>
<td>1.2 P.L.</td>
<td>0.5 P.L.</td>
<td>0.9 P.L.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From this table, it can be seen that even though many of our students have not matched the national median within the 18 months of the project, they have improved at least as well as the progress shown by national data. For example, the progress shown nationally between Year 5 and Year 7 in Reading is 0.9 Profile Levels. Our Year 7 students have

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1 Either the national median for Years 3 and 5 as provided by DART, or an estimate for other year levels extrapolated from the national data.

2 Because these students did not complete the test in Year 3, progress cannot be measured using this test.

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improved on average 1.2 Profile Levels in Reading in only 18 months, i.e. at 1.3 times the national rate of improvement. The only areas in which our students have not improved at a faster rate than the national scores is Years 5 and 6 Reading. Our Year 5’s improved by 0.7 Profile Levels, compared with the national 0.9 Profile Levels, and our Year 6’s improved by only 0.6 Profile Levels. On the other hand, these same Year 6 students progressed at double the national rate in Viewing over the 18 months. Many of our indigenous students may not have caught up with the national median, but they appear to be progressing at a faster rate.

The question of how much data to present, and how to represent the data continues to be vexatious. Taking average scores of such small samples of students hides those students who have shown great, almost miraculous progress, and those who have shown little progress or regressed in their scores. Unfortunately, presenting individual graphs of Viewing, Reading and Writing in each year level provides readers with too much data to absorb. Nevertheless, it is in the close examination of individual students' progress that we gain our enthusiasm. The graphs of each literacy area in each year level show encouraging growth.

Here as an example of the useful information provided by these graphs of separate areas of literacy in individual year levels, is the Year 7 Reading data.

The first column for each student represents their Year 5 result. At that time, Students 1 and 2 were below the Year 3 median, i.e. more than two years behind their peers. In Year 7, these same students scored 4.5 and 4.4 Profile Levels respectively, very close to the estimated Year 6 median of 4.6 Profile Levels. In other words, these two students, educationally at risk, have made three years progress in 18 months, twice the estimated national rate of development for Reading.
Did we achieve our targets?

Reception to Year 3
Our targets for the Junior Primary classes were as follows:
Reception, Year 1, and Year 2: Stanine levels 4-6 (These year levels match the cohort provided by Marie Clay as the control group)
Year 3: Stanine levels 7-9

After three years of testing, we are able identify some patterns in the skills of our Junior Primary students:
a) After two years of scaffolding, our students tend to demonstrate advanced knowledge about Concepts of Print when compared to Marie Clay’s cohort
b) They also tend to be able to identify letters of the alphabet out of context very well
c) Many of our students also perform well in the Dictation test where they show that they can hear and record the sounds in words.
d) At these year levels, their text and letter knowledge does not seem to transfer to the Writing test where they are required to spell words 100% accurately to score.
e) Our students do not perform well when tested on a random list of sight words, i.e. words that they have not studied during Scaffolded Literacy time.

Of serious concern is the Year 3 cohort, consisting of 3 boys. At this age, they should be scoring at 7-9 Stanine levels. None is scoring near that in most tests. Combined with the story of Harry, (see case studies) who is still in Year 2, the performance of these boys raises the issue of their engagement and interest in school learning. If we have not managed to keep them focused on school learning at this age, what will we do when they get older and have not caught up? This time is crucial for them and we are determining now how we can make a difference in 2001.

Years 4-7
Our primary goal was that the literacy skills in Viewing, Reading and Writing of all Aboriginal students in DWRAT classrooms would match the national median for their year level, using the national Profiles as the measure. We did not achieve that goal. Nevertheless, many came close to that goal, and several students exceeded the goal.

Our secondary goal was that our students would show a rate of development over 18 months commensurate with the rate of development shown in the national data over two years. Because our time span was eighteen months between tests, not two years, this rate of development would therefore be seen as a hopeful sign that our students might one day, with continued support, catch up to the national levels. With the exception of two scores, the Reading in the Year 5 and 6 cohorts, whose average rate of development was slightly below the national rate, all cohorts managed to achieve this secondary goal. The fact that we can see significant growth is what makes us want to continue.
FOUR CASE STUDIES
Four case studies

Our original project proposal argued that our new pedagogy would not count as successful unless the children educationally most at risk had shown reasonable progress. It is these children who, in standardised statewide tests, often show little or no progress from one test to the other. In 1999, as part of our monitoring of students educationally at risk, we identified four students, one each at Reception/Year 1, Year 2/3, Year 4/5 and Year 6/7 as the foci for case studies. These case studies would help us look more closely at how our project impacted on individual students. Because three of the four original students have since left the school, three more ‘students at risk’ have been selected. The criteria for selection were:

a) they were identified by school based educators as educationally at risk
b) they were present for both pre- and post-project assessments so that we could measure distance travelled.

Travis

Travis is in Year 1, and has been part of the project since its inception. Because in 1999 his own class teacher was not very keen to have people working with her in class, Travis was part of a withdrawal group of 8 Aboriginal and ESL students from the class who worked with me for four lessons a week, using scaffolding pedagogy. In 2000, the 3 Aboriginal children from his class were withdrawn for three lessons a week to work with the Aboriginal Education Teacher in another DWRAT classroom during scaffolded literacy time, so that scaffolding pedagogy could continue.

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3 The names of all students referred to in this report are pseudonyms.

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Travis's attendance was one of the best in the school. He was present 91% of school days, absent only 18 days for the year.

In 1999, as a Reception student, Travis was a cooperative, enthusiastic child in class, but his logic was not the logic of school, and his concentration span was short. There were many occasions when I did not know how to respond to his talk because I did not know what he was trying to say! However, in Year 1 he began to make more sense of school and school learning. Of course, DWRAT literacy lessons were only one small part of his school life, and there must have been many factors which helped to make a difference. Here are the results of his Marie Clay tests, the first in February 1999, the second in November 2000:

![Graph showing Marie Clay Early Literacy Test results]

In 1999, Travis scored at the lowest Stanine level in all but the Concepts of Print test. Although he had spent five terms in Reception, he was the Aboriginal child in that year level most seriously at risk educationally. Two years later, he is scoring satisfactorily in all but his writing vocabulary. Most encouraging is the improvement in Travis's concepts of print which shows that he is paying close attention to print in texts and is able to notice errors in many cases.

As previously discussed, it seems to be writing vocabulary which takes the longest to develop in most students. Although Travis has shown some development over the 18 months, it appears that he is only using phonics to sound out simple words. His visual memory still needs developing and he is still scoring on the lowest Stanine level. This may well be a matter of maturity. With Travis, we will wait and see. He is still very young.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Vocabulary, February, 1999</th>
<th>Writing Vocabulary, August, 1999</th>
<th>Writing Vocabulary, November, 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travis</td>
<td>Travis</td>
<td>Travis on Dad at hat sat rat pat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Harry
Harry is the only original case study child to remain in the school. He is now in Year 2, aged eight years old. While Harry showed encouraging improvement in his 1999 scores, the progress has not continued this year, and he is a child seriously at risk. He does not often work independently in the classroom, and his behaviour does not support school learning, even in small groups with increased attention from an adult.

Harry's attendance is of great concern to us. The Aboriginal Education Worker in our school, Muriel O'Loughlin, has been vigilant in keeping an eye on Harry's attendance, telephoning home if he has not arrived, and on occasion picking him up from home. She even offered him a weekend's sleepover if he attended school for a full five days in a row! Harry was absent for 30% of possible school days in 2000, and late for another 30%. Because his class's literacy lesson had to be programmed in Lesson 2 each day, Harry often missed out. In fact, he has probably missed more than he has attended.

Harry's literacy development is not showing the promise it did the previous year. Here are the results of five Marie Clay tests, each assessment carried out three times, In February, 1999, August, 1999 and November 2000. The first was carried out before the project began. The second was after six months, and his progress in a very short period of time can be observed. However, this progress has not continued in all areas, as the final test shows.

![Harry: Marie Clay Early Literacy Assessments](chart)

Of particular concern is Harry's writing vocabulary. He had shown great improvement in 1999, when he was working with one adult in a small group of 8 students. However, this year, despite working regularly in a similar sized group, his writing has not progressed. Harry's classroom teacher supports the observation that Harry doesn't appear to be interested in writing during literacy lessons. He can sit at his desk for a lesson, and write no more than three words. We have not succeeded in retaining his newly found interest in literacy that was so evident in his Year 1 lessons. Following are the writing vocabulary samples of the past three tests. These lists of words are the result of 10 minutes of writing:

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*On the move: Report of the DWRAT project 2000*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Vocabulary, February, 1999</th>
<th>Writing Vocabulary, August, 1999</th>
<th>Writing Vocabulary, November, 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>Harry up mum dad look fat pond</td>
<td>Harry Mum Dad and am car Nikki cat Matt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rosie he sat the and hat hen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>went foot for cat rat Matt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>she</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There has been other evidence to suggest that the positive change in Harry’s participation in school has not been sustained over the project:

- Harry’s attendance has been sporadic. It is very frustrating for teachers and difficult for Harry when he misses out so many literacy lessons through absence or lateness.
- When Harry is at school, his attention in small groups is often focused on other children rather than the task at hand.

Our difficulties with Harry’s learning remind us that we can never become complacent about the students in our care, and that scaffolded literacy does not solve every problem!
Four case studies

Naomi
Naomi is in Year 5. This is her first year in a DWRAT class, but I have been keeping a watchful eye on her for several years. Naomi was a focus of my Masters thesis in 1997.

Of the possible school days at our school, Naomi was absent 23% of the time, and late for a further 9%. Naomi's focus in class is often social, talking to her friends, playing with their hair, concerning herself with other students' welfare. Despite this focus, her teacher's expectations are very high, and there has been obvious and significant growth in many areas of literacy over the past year. Here are her scores from December, 1998 and August 2000.

![Naomi DART Assessments](image)

Naomi's progress has been really exciting. The difference between the Year 3 and Year 5 median nationally is 0.6 Profile Levels in Viewing, 0.9 Profile Levels in Reading, and 0.5 Profile levels in Writing. Naomi's scores have improved 1.8, 1.3 and 1.2 Profile Levels respectively, according to her DART test scores, in 18 months. In other words, her rate of improvement in Viewing is three times the national rate, in Reading it is 1.5 times the national rate, and in Writing, it is almost two and a half times the national rate. Even more exciting, Naomi is able to read parts of Colin Thiele's Storm Boy after scaffolding (Profile Level 4.7), and parts of Paul Jennings The Paw Thing without assistance (Profile Level 4.0).

Naomi's writing skills have improved remarkably. It is valuable to look at the development of her writing over the past two years. Following are three pieces of writing which demonstrate the growth:

The first was the piece she chose as her best piece in November, 1998. Naomi was in Year 3 at the time. Naomi uses the cluster 'ur' often to complete words, a strategy which suggests that she is not using aural acuity to support the spelling of her words. Her use of words like 'hes' for 'his', 'hat' for 'had' are common for children who speak Aboriginal English as their first dialect. These spellings indicate that the strategy Naomi has been taught for spelling is to 'sound out' the words, rather than rely on her visual memory to retain the correct spelling.

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Mrs Farnerys life on the farm
hes Mum habur and Fumtur
and every ret thret they hat to got tr got the Bukel ont and
go to the toele theur and she did wat to the a bus pitur her
mum had to mekel and a cow's and the go tur wat a tur Lin peur
and de for

Naomi, 26-11-98

The second and third pieces were all written in 2000. The second was written under test
conditions, and still shows considerable improvement. Naomi’s spelling is much easier to
understand, and she is able to use words like ‘there’ and ‘friend’ that cannot be ‘sounded
out’. Even her misspelled words, like ‘sied’ show that she is using her visual memory as
well as aural acuity as a strategy; this spelling suggests that she knows that ‘said’ has an
‘i’ in it, even though the rest of the word has been sounded out. Naomi planned this
piece, and has recorded her notes (which are in fact clearer than the final text) under
the headings of O for Orientation, C for Complication, and R for Resolution.

On day I went to the shop and there was tis man and he name
was big foot and he was nise and frendlis and he was my friend
and he sied that he want to tak me to the Deset and I side
Yes and he side ok on Sunday he wok me up and we went to the
Deset and we got there. Big foot got lost and all the uther
amentoile got him and Bog fo frgot that he go invible and I saw
Big foot and he yoos them and the Problem was sforb

Naomi, August 2000

The third piece was written after studying Storm Boy by Colin Thiele in Term 4 of this
year. It is a scaffolded piece, and demonstrates how children are able to take resources
from published authors, and use those resources in their own writing.

Tjerayh live between the beaches and the bush. His home was a
long curved snake of dirt roads. All around were trees and
bushes, tall and different shades of brown.

Tjerayh lived with Scott, his father. Their home was
Wherevella, a big house made of bricks and tiles. It had lots of
little windows made of clean glass. Even though it was hot all
year round, Tjerayh was happy there.

When Tjerayh went running along the poolside, or the beach, or
the river - the fish weren’t afraid. They knew he was a friend.

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But one morning he saw everything in uproar and confusion. Two big men killed the fish. They had found the fish's home; it was so big like a classroom with lots of fish. They killed 20 of them and only 10 were still alive.

Tjerayh crept forward in fear and anger from behind a tussock he looked around sadly at the run and destruction. then Just as he was about to run back to tell Scott to grab his spear gun there was a faint swishing and crying and there in the water hiding behind fish Tjerayh carefully picked them up and put them into a plastic bag filled with water and gently ran back to Scott

And that was how miss Ally miss Nina and miss Kim live with Tjerayh

Naomi, December, 2000

Naomi could not write such a rich and colourful piece by herself. Nevertheless, with scaffolding, she is able to participate far more fully in a literary world. We hope that this new knowledge becomes increasingly consolidated so that she is able to make choices from her new repertoire about the resources she uses in her writing.

Vanessa
Vanessa is in Year 6, an obliging and cheerful student with a great sense of humour. Vanessa speaks strong Aboriginal English. Most of the Aboriginal students in Years 6 and 7 are able to switch dialects readily when needed, but Vanessa has great difficulty using standard Australian English. The problem is partly vocabulary, partly pronunciation. When Vanessa came to our school in Year 3, she could not write independently at all, only copy, and her spelling was unrecognisable. I have seen her in Silent Reading lessons slowly turning the pages of a thick novel, unable to read even the chapter headings. Nevertheless, Vanessa is also extremely determined, and has received very useful support from her classroom teacher this year.

Vanessa was absent 20% of the school days, and rarely late; only 5 days for the entire year.
Vanessa's DART assessment results reflect her growing confidence in literacy:

![Vanessa DART Assessments](image)

The DART tests assess writing, reading and viewing skills under examination conditions, and Vanessa had trouble. She works very carefully and slowly, and in fact did not finish any of the tests in the time allowed. She missed the final five questions from the Reading test from a total of 22 questions. Each test lasts 1-2 hours, and because literacy requires so much work for Vanessa, she is disadvantaged by the requirements. She would have scored better if the test had been taken in shorter bursts. I have consulted with the DART authors about this, and they have suggested that this is what we do next year. Unfortunately, that is too late for this test. Vanessa's scores for this year have suffered as a result.

The improvement in scores over two years nationally is 0.6, 0.9 and 0.5 Profile levels respectively for Viewing, Reading and Writing. Vanessa's has improved 1.2, 0.7 and 0.4 Profile Levels respectively. While she has not managed to match the national rate of improvement in Reading and Writing, bear in mind that her tests were 18 months, not 2 years apart the way the timing of the tests disadvantaged her. Her improvement in Viewing scores is twice the national rate.

Again, these scores are not the only evidence of Vanessa's growing literacy skills. She is able to read parts of Colin Bowle's *Surfing Mr Petrovic* (Profile Level 5) after scaffolding, and was also willing to struggle through other excerpts independently. She is able to read parts of Paul Jennings' *Good Tip for Ghosts* (Profile Level 4.0) with confidence. While her writing under test conditions was not her best, there is still a recognisable narrative structure in her writing.

Her confidence in, and enjoyment of writing is very evident in her day to day work. Included here are three samples of Vanessa's writing. The first was written in 1998 as part of the DART assessment. Vanessa was in Year 4. Her Aboriginal English dialect has very different pronunciations in many instances, and she had real trouble with spelling, for example 'adid' for 'had' and 'fand' for 'found'. At this time Vanessa's safest strategy for writing was to stick to words that she knew she could spell, and her stories were thus very repetitive. For example, in this story, she includes the words 'fun', 'home' and 'good' on many occasions. Vanessa uses full stops, but not speech marks at this time:

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Four case studies

One day I was in the jong looking for birds it is good in the jong. I fand a big bird it's name is Griffin. Griffin got to say a word. My nest is lined with gold. I live high in the mountains. (These last two sentences copied from the instruction booklet.) I have a hom to Griffin and it is bogg too and I live in my home. Will you be my frind. Yes seid Griffin I will be or find. So we went in my home. Then we went in Griffin home. It was fun on that day. We went to see my nanna and my mum it was fun too. Griffin did not have a nanna or a mum but he adid a tree and it is good in the tree and fun. (The End.)

Vanessa, December, 1998

There are so many pieces of writing of which Vanessa can be proud in 2000. I have not included her DART assessment writing, although these samples clearly show an understanding of narrative and argument structure, the use of paragraphs, a growing control of spelling, an understanding of how to persuade and her use of her sense of humor. Instead, I will offer two samples of her scaffolded work during the year to demonstrate her control of different genres.

Firstly, here is an excerpt from Vanessa's scientific report on an animal, written in Term 2. This is the Appearance section:

Appearance
In Queensland and New South Wales the koalas are the smallest. Koalas have long, strong and sharp claws on their feet. Male Koalas weigh 6.5 kg and Females Koalas weigh 5.1 Kg Koalas have very short tails Koalas have a very fine, dense under coat and a longer shaggier top coat of fur.

Vanessa, July, 2000

This scientific piece demonstrates Vanessa's use of technical vocabulary, and her familiarity with the structure of scientific texts.

Vanessa read this final story to an audience of Aboriginal parents at our Christmas celebration. It was written after studying Paul Jenning Good Tip for Ghosts\(^4\).

Nearby behind some old rusting beds I thought I heard a noise. I was too frightened to move. I wanted to go but my

\(^4\) It is a sign of our increasing expectations of our students that this novel, at Profile Level 4, has been moved from a Year 6/7 text to Year 4/5 text for 2001.
legs wouldn't work. I opened my mouth to scream help but no sound came out. I was so terrified I couldn't move.

It was a banging smashing noise like people fighting. It was coming my way. I was faking that I was a dead animal. I wished the lights were off so that I could go behind something. The banging got louder. I was coming closer. Then I saw it. It was an old woman that looked like she was holding an little box. She was dragging an old pair of shoes. She was looking under the beds. She was moving slowly. She was crying. She was all wrinkled and seemed to be holding an old hat. She walked towards me. With an angry face. Then I saw it. She wasn't on the ground. She was about 40cm above the surface. It was the ghost of my old nurse.

Vanessa, December, 2000

We have also been working with Vanessa on making explicit the differences between school and Aboriginal English, and there is also evidence of pronunciation changes in her formal reading and talking for an audience.

These four case studies show, in most areas, steady and sometimes very exciting improvements in student literacy skills. They also show that Scaffolded literacy is no miracle. It does not solve the issues of attendance and lateness, it does not prove to all boys that school matters, especially if attendance is so poor that they are not learning successfully. Nevertheless, the results are encouraging enough for us to still be convinced that this is the direction in which to move.

On the move: Report of the DWRAT project 2000
ANALYSIS OF PROJECT PERFORMANCE

On the move: Report of the DWRAT project 2000
Analysis of Project Performance

Reading Support Program with Aboriginal Parent Literacy Workers

In 1999, several parents were trained to work one-to-one with Junior Primary students, teaching them useful reading strategies using scaffolded pedagogy. This worked very well, and by the end of the year, the Junior Primary cohort of Aboriginal students had increased 0.7 Profile Levels in independent reading.

Despite the fact that the Reading Support Program was regarded as an important factor in this improvement, the program has proved difficult to sustain. We ran two training workshops in 1999, but were not able to find parents able to work regularly in the school. Our best trained parents moved on to more formal and regular employment. Other parents had family problems or young children that prevented their regular attendance.

Muriel O'Loughlin, our full time Aboriginal Education Worker, and Rosina Eckermann, our indispensable trainee AEW presented a workshop on Reading Tuition at the state-wide Aboriginal Literacy Conference in March, 1999. Their presentation was well received. In Term 2, Rosina gained a permanent promotion position in a District office. Muriel has been able to maintain a certain level of the program, but not enough to meet the needs of all the Junior Primary students.

In Term 4, Thurza Buckskin was appointed to the school as a new trainee AEW. She has been trained in scaffolding for one-to-one tuition, and we hope that she will be able to work more intensely with students in 2001. Despite this disappointment, the program has gained some momentum in other areas. Muriel O'Loughlin and I ran a workshop for all Junior Primary parents in Literacy Week. Five parents attended. Two Parent Literacy Workers have been trialing the program with at risk students in higher year levels, and some School Service Officers are also using the program in their support time in classrooms. There are many students throughout the school who do not qualify as Negotiated Curriculum Plan students (Special Education) whose reading levels are not age appropriate. Teachers have also been introduced to the program, and despite the interest shown by many teachers, the main issue is always 'How do we find the time?'. We will continue to grapple with this issue in 2001.

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ASSPA Support
The support from the school's ASSPA committee has been overwhelming. They have assisted us by funding the DART assessments for all Aboriginal students, because they regard this monitoring of student progress as a useful way of helping parents and students to see how they are going. They have also supported us with the extra consumables necessary for some parts of the program.

Each year ASSPA holds a Christmas party in conjunction with their annual general meeting, and buys presents for all the Aboriginal students in the school. 2000 was notable for the committee's decision to buy books as Christmas presents, to show that they also valued literacy for their children. ASSPA is also concerned with the attendance of some of our students. We have been working together to find ways of encouraging a higher attendance rate. For the first time, an award was given at each year level for the student with the highest attendance. We are also working on ways of showing parents the absentee rates of their children with the use of pie graphs. This is still being discussed.

Scaffolded literacy process
Scaffolded literacy, as devised by Brian Gray from the University of Canberra, remains the foundation of our program. Because we had seven new teachers to train this year, we had to take several steps backwards. However, Rose Ashton, the Coordinator of Teaching and Learning, who is also part of the DWRAT team, Anne Hamnett, the Aboriginal Education Teacher and I have improved our understanding of the process since the beginning of 1999, and are able to articulate it to teachers in a much clearer way.
Analysis of Project Performance

The expectations presented to teachers at the beginning of the year were that they would be expected to teach the process on their own after two terms. They have in fact had continued support from many sources, but are well able, with planning support, to teach on their own in 2001.

This year we have extended our repertoire and included genres other than narrative in our program. The outline follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reception/Yr 1</th>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Term 2</th>
<th>Term 3</th>
<th>Term 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 4/5</td>
<td>Narrative: The Mouse at the Seashore by Arnold Lobel</td>
<td>Narrative: The Paw Thing by Paul Jennings</td>
<td>Scientific Report: Goannas</td>
<td>Narrative: Storm Boy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6/7</td>
<td>Narrative: Surfing Mr Petrovic by Colin Bowles</td>
<td>Scientific Report: Goannas</td>
<td>Autobiography: Eileen's Story and Kill To eat by Oodgeroo Nunukkal</td>
<td>Narrative: Good Tip for Ghosts and Spooks Inc. by Paul Jennings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study of each text, incorporating reading, grammar, spelling and writing takes one term. Through classroom conversations around close analysis of parts of the text, students grow to understand the intent of the author and the author's strategies as they become apparent in the grammar of the text. As students master the spelling, and practice constructing sentences in a similar style, so they gradually transfer their new knowledge into their own writing. Some samples of student writing at each year level are included as appendices in this report.

An ongoing issue has been how to incorporate writing more regularly, particularly in the Junior Primary area where skills are very new, and children can forget from one week to the next. Because of way we have interpreted the carefully devised cycle of study, students have not been involved in extensive writing until at least half way through each term. However, Rose Ashton and I attended a writing workshop with Wendy Cowey, from the University of Canberra, at the Wiltja Program in October, and this has proved a breakthrough for us. Students are now engaged in writing from the first week of term, building up to the writing of an entire text, or a substantial part of a text towards the end of term.

There are many aspects of literacy that we would like to focus on more closely now that we have a group of teachers who are familiar and confident with the program. Our critical literacy teaching is not yet sufficiently focused, and this was evident from the analysis of student answers to DART questions in both Reading and Viewing.

Many teachers are also aware of the role of literacy as a social tool, and would like to make the links between our scaffolding and real life texts more explicit. Although this has also been a concern of mine since the beginning of the program, and was mentioned in the 1999 report, I believe in hindsight that our narrow focus has been crucial for the
development of teaching skills in this area. I hope that we will be able to address this issue with one or more teachers as a mini-research project in 2001.

The fact that our students continue to improve in Viewing, despite the fact that few teachers consciously teach Viewing in any critical way, suggests that they are transferring knowledge from our written text analysis to other media. Nevertheless, we would like to ensure that we more consciously focus on other media in 2001.

Effective teacher development
Eight teachers are now using scaffolding as their literacy pedagogy. Some are contract teachers and we don’t know if they will be back in 2001. Those that are left will be supported with notes and planning time, but will be in control of their classroom program, with adult support of some kind in the classroom for literacy lessons. This adult support might be an Aboriginal Education Resource Teacher, an English as a Second language Teacher, a School Support Officer, or Parent Literacy Worker. All teachers attended a full day’s training at the beginning of the year, as well as an hour’s planning session at the beginning of every term, and weekly planning.

Open Classrooms, visitors and workshops:
Three teachers presented workshops at the statewide Aboriginal Literacy Conference in March 2000: Caterina Mancini, Rose Ashton and myself. The interest in scaffolding is growing. Following the conference, Ron Hoenig, the editor of Dexpress, published a substantial report about our workshops. As news spread about Scaffolding, we became inundated with requests for people to visit the program. Rather than accept visitors on an ad hoc basis, we chose to run two Open Classrooms days, or half-days, and invited up to 30 people to come to each one. The morning consisted of an introduction to scaffolding, observation in two classrooms of differing year levels, followed by questions at the end. The enthusiasm has been overwhelming, with repeated requests from some schools who want us to help them establish scaffolding. Following is the list of institutions who sent representatives to our Open Classrooms:

- Bordertown Primary (3 staff)
- Carlton Primary, Pt Augusta
- Challa Gardens Primary (4 staff)
- Mansfield Park Primary
- Flinders View Primary, Pt Augusta
- Warriapendi School
- Willsden Primary
- Woodville Primary
- Munno Para Primary (6 staff)
- Murray Bridge District Office
- Para Hills Schools
- Port Adelaide Primary (all staff except Principal attended)
- Salisbury Downs Primary (3 staff)
- University of South Australia

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Analysis of Project Performance

In addition, we have had visitors from interstate and overseas:

Northern Territory Education Department delegation, looking at a pilot program in 2001
Bodil Hedeboe, University of Southern Denmark
Helga Payne and two teachers from the Pitjantjatjara Lands
Mr Peter Plummer, Chief Executive Officer, NT Department of Education
Robyne Selbie, Principal Port Chalmers Primary, Dunedin, NZ.
Delegation from a group of schools in Wentworth, NSW are coming early 2001

National and international recognition
In June 2000, the DWRAT team at Salisbury North R-7 won a national award for
'Leadership in indigenous literacy education' from the Australian Principals' Association
Professional Development Council. The Principal, Julie Bishop, and I traveled to
Melbourne for the presentation from the federal minister of Education, Dr Kemp.

In November, Julie Bishop and I spoke at a meeting of Queensland Principals in Brisbane
on our project, and two weeks later I gave a paper at the national Indigenous Education
Conference in Sydney.

In December, I attended a Spencer Foundation Conference in Albuquerque, New
Mexico. At this conference I spent a day with Dr Courtney Cazden from Harvard
University. She was very interested in the program, having had prior knowledge of
scaffolding from Brian Gray. Dr Cazden is trying to organise a visit to the school in early
2002.

Teachers as Researchers Mentoring Scheme (TARMS)
During 2000, Salisbury North R-7 entered
into a contract with Angau Education
Services to support teachers on the
Pitjantjatjara Lands in conducting action
research projects. This support is provided
in conjunction with the University of South
Australia and Flinders University.
Lecturers from these two universities help
teachers and schools with research design,
data collection and analysis. Our role is to
provide ongoing support, training and
development to assist teachers in their
classroom practice. As well as attending
the Angau Education Services Conference
in Alice Springs in April, teachers from
Salisbury North R-7 School have sent
resources to schools, helped with data
analysis, and run a workshop for Aboriginal
Education Workers and teachers from a
group of schools on 'Oral English in the
classroom.' In 2001. With change of staff on the Pitjantjatjara Lands, it is anticipated
that more time will be spent in supporting new teachers in Scaffolding pedagogy, partly
through the organisation of observations at Salisbury North R-7.

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Conclusion

The past twelve months have continued to be both exciting and challenging. In my first report, I questioned whether we would be able to maintain the pace with which we began the project. We have now slowed down to a steady and sustainable jog. We are still in a state of praxis; currently devising smaller action research projects that will allow us to look more closely at how scaffolding can work with critical literacy, and how children can transfer their knowledge about literacy to other contexts. We are still looking closely at our classroom talk and honing our skills on making our knowledge about literacy and texts explicit for the students with whom we work.

This year we have managed to maintain the high quality Aboriginal Education team in the school; a supportive and knowledgeable Principal, DWRAT Research Co-ordinator, functional grammar adviser (who is also the Co-ordinator in teaching and learning), an Aboriginal Education Worker who is committed and increasingly multi-skilled, a supportive ASSPA committee, an Aboriginal Education Teacher who co-teaches scaffolding with many teachers, and many teachers who are familiar to varying degrees with scaffolded literacy. We have an assessment process established that should not be so difficult to maintain and a recording system for data already established. We have strong Aboriginal community support. Those who have been in Aboriginal education for some time would know just how rare it is to have all these conditions in place simultaneously.

Ongoing funding

Despite the encouraging outcomes of DWRAT at Salisbury North R-7 School, there is at this moment no definite funding to extend Scaffolding in South Australia and other schools are crying out for support. At this moment, there is no systematic way we can support new schools in the sustained way necessary for Scaffolding to be successful. To ensure that teachers are both confident and knowledgeable in Scaffolding requires much more than an introductory workshop. It requires ongoing support, skilled people teaching alongside learners until they can take over, detailed notes and careful regular planning. Without these, any introduction to scaffolding would simply lead to frustration and failure.

It is a source of great frustration that we receive recognition but no funding. Unless something happens soon, Scaffolding and the DWRAT program at Salisbury North R-7 School will go the way of many other projects; it will be just one more hopeful experiment.

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DWRAT Project
26th January, 2001

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Appendix
Appendix

Writing sample: Reception/ Year 1 (negotiated in a group after studying 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff', by Mary O'Toole)

Once upon a time there were two unicorns who were to go up to the castle to get all of the gold and silver. On the way up to the castle there was a forest and in the forest lived a friendly rainbow lion.
So, first of all, came the baby unicorn to run through the forest. Clip Clop! Went her feet.
"Who's that clipping through my forest?" whispered the lion.
"It is only I the baby unicorn", said the unicorn. "Please don't eat me, I'm too little that I am".
"I want to be your friend. Can you please be off with you?" said the lion.
A little while later came the mother unicorn to run through the forest. Clip Clop! Clip Clop!
Clip Clop! Went her feet.
Who's that clipping through my forest?" whispered the lion.
"It is I, the mother unicorn", said the unicorn.
"Can you please be off with you?" said the lion.
"No, I like you", said the mother unicorn. Then the baby came back. A little while later the mother and the lion got married.
They all went to get the gold and silver.
They were very happy. And so Snip, snap, snout, - this tale's told out.

Writing sample: Year 2/3 (after studying 'Seals and Sealions')
Classification - seals and sealions are mammals. Seals and sealions live on land and in oceans. They are warm blooded animals and they feed their babies milk.

Appearance - sealions and fur seals have little ear flaps that cover their ears. They are called eared seals. All other seals do not have ear flaps. They are called earless seals.

Behaviour Eared seals and sea lions can turn their front and back flippers. Eared seals and sealions use both their front and back flippers when they walk on land. They only use their front flippers when they swim. Eared seals and sealions are both good swimmers.

Diet: Harbour seals live in the warmer waters of the Atlantic.

Breeding: seals and sealions go to breeding grounds to mate and raise their babies. These breeding ground are called rookeries. There can be up to 150 000 seals or sealions at one rookery. Fur seals and most sealions make their rookeries on islands out a sea. Earless make the rookeries on the sea shore.
Writing sample: Year 4/5 (After studying 'The Mouse at the Seashore', an fable by Arnold Lobel)

Once upon a time, a Kangaroo told his mother and father that he was going to the fresh waters. "We are very alarmed," they said. "That is a great big terror river of death!"
"I must go," said the Kangaroo. "We need water."
"Then you must, but do watch out for other animals." They replied.
"I must go now. Bye" he said.
"We will not stop you, but do be careful."

Days past by he hadn't returned. He wrote a letter saying emus had chased him. His tale was hurt.
The next day he was at the fresh waters, he was exhausted. He was all messy.

By teatime, he finally reached the river. It was sparkling in the moonlight. He carefully filled the bottles.
He was worried about his family. "I wish my family were here to drink this with me," He said.
He was overwhelmed by a feeling of deep peace and compassion.

All the miles of a hard road are worth a moment of true happiness.

Writing sample: Year 6/7 (after studying 'Spooks Incorporated' by Paul Jennings)

She jumped up in bed. There was someone there. She heard a sound. It sounded like someone tip towing to her bedroom.

The sound came from the back porch. It was very loud. She told herself not to imaging things, there was noone there It was just her hearing. But she could fell her body getting goosebumps in the darkness. She wanted to turn on the light and go to ring someone. She now she couldn't back to sleep until she made the phone call. But she was terrified. So she layed there not alone. In the dark.

The noise got louder. It was coming closer, coming from the back door. Miss Magenta heard screaming. And screeching. It sounded like someone scratching on the wall. Someone was walking towards here. It was definitely screaming and screeching and scracking, tip towing. Ms Magenta gave a little sob. She wanted to run. She wanted to scream for help. But she didn't. She layed in her bed hoping it would goa way.

The sound moved closer and closer.

There was a bright shadow. Bright light flickering like lights going on and off. Ms Magenta took a deep breath. Her head started to spin and her body froze.

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And the door started to open. Quickly. Light flickered into the room. Quickly, quickly, the door opened. And there in the dark passage she stood. The ghost of JFK’s old waitress. She had an old apron over her stomach with a wrap around the back. Her body was covered in an red apron. In one hand was an old baking tray and in the other was an photo of herself. Skinning body she had.

Ms magenta’s body shot down. Her eyeballs almost fell out of her eyes.

JFK’s old waitress started to run over to he. She cried. Her apron fell. She reached out with long skinning hands. Then the light globe blew. It was completely dark.

Ms magenta yelled. She put her blanket over her head and screamed again. Then I saw it. She ran out through the hall in darkness. Out through the front screen door.

It was dark outside. IT was hot. But Ms Magenta didn’t care. She ran to next door nieghbours. She was puff out with her night gown a bit riped.

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