



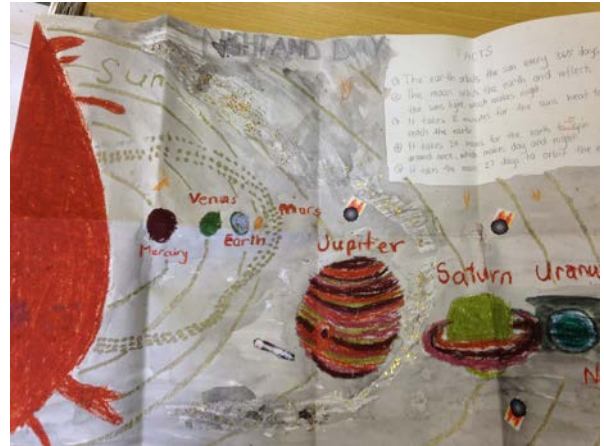
The QDE Courier

March 2015



to our new students in term 1

- ☺ Kayla Deveney
- ☺ Matilda Short
- ☺ Ronan Firmstone
- ☺ Luca
- ☺ Rose Hollywood
- ☺ Darcy Firmstone
- ☺ Shayda
- ☺ Charlotte N
- ☺ William Szypica-Denham
- ☺ Shanaye Firmstone
- ☺ Claudia Clunn
- ☺ Priya
- ☺ Meika Lindsay
- ☺ Jade Wright
- ☺ Joel Clunn
- ☺ Christopher N
- ☺ Lewis Lindsay
- ☺ Heidi Wright
- ☺ Darcy Firmstone
- ☺ Zara Wright



River Kinsey's fantastic solar system project

Welcome all to a new school year. As we welcome in 2015, we have said goodbye to some of our families and hello to a number of new students and supervisors.

We're also experiencing some staff changes in the Centre. We have farewelled both Sue and Peter who both have returned to face to face teaching, with Peter as a teaching Principal at Captain's Flat Public School and Sue taking a Year 2 class here at Queanbeyan Public School. Vivian has gained a part time position in the A.C.T. system but we may call her in as a casual if needed. We welcome our new staff, Lyndal de Ligt who will be working with Eloise as the second Assistant Principal in the centre. Michelle Hill is another new staff member to the centre but unfortunately we are waiting to see if our student numbers increase, before scheduling her regular days. Kathy's one day per week has changed to Thursday if you need to speak to her.

This term, Eloise has had to take some leave to care for her parents. By the time you read this message she will be back on deck. In the meantime, Julie is acting in the Assistant Principal role. As always, our office staff; Vickie and Isabel are a wealth of information for all your enquiries.

Meet the Staff



Hi, I'm **Eloise Dews**, and I've been here for a long time. I can hardly believe this is my sixth year at QDE and after lots of years teaching, it's still fun and very rewarding – especially working with families and building relationships that last for eons. I'm not going to say 'I've taught everywhere Man' but I nearly have! After many years in distance education in Dubbo, Cobar and Queanbeyan I can say I've taught students from pre-school to Year 12, I've travelled to the far-flung corners of NSW and beyond to Lord Howe and even over the Queensland border to hold gatherings of all sorts; in communities as tiny as Tibooburra, Gulargambone, Hernani and Ewingar. I count it as a very great privilege to work with supervisors and family members in providing rich educational experiences which is something quite unique to distance education. Walter Finigan's (the first principal of distance education) adage, uttered in 1916 to 'Go with the child', still stands strong in my thinking each day.



My name is **Gillian Gamble** and I have been a member of the Distance Education teaching team for a number of years. I enjoy the challenges and the varying opportunities that the DE mode provides especially in the ever changing area of technology. This year I am teaching across all grades and look forward to getting to know my students as the year progresses. My students are home, overseas and travellers so I can see there will be a variety of news coming my way and I will be able to share in many adventures.

As well as my usual pastimes of gardening, walking and the visual arts I have taken up a yoga class and plan to go swimming at the pool to try and increase my fitness. Fitness is one of my main goals this year.



My name is **Lyndal de Ligt** and I am the new Assistant Principal here at the Queanbeyan Distance Education Centre. I previously worked in distance education in 2009 and loved it. Upon my return, I have found many new and exciting changes to

the way we deliver the learning programs to our students.

I have been teaching for 16 years and have taught from Kindergarten to Year Six, both mainstream and special education. I spent time teaching in England in 2006 when my husband and I were on a 12 month world trip. I live on a small property about 30 minutes from Queanbeyan with my husband Donovan and our two children, Michaela and Lachlan. We love to go camping and mountain bike riding.



Hi, I'm **Max Dews**. It's great to be back at my desk for two days per week this year and I'm entering my 45th year of teaching of which I'm very proud. Teaching in distance education has 'helped' me to learn new computer skills.

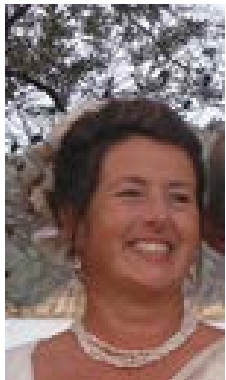
There's a long way to go and it's a work still in progress so I send out SOS messages to my colleagues who are always here to help. The very productive part of my teaching is visiting students and their families in their homes and this has certainly widened my vision considerably – to see the big picture and build learning around each student's interests.

So far I've been to Goulburn, Bowral and Nelligen on the South Coast and even to Fyshwick to meet with families. It's also rewarding to see students go back to their local schools or transition to high school successfully. It's going to be a good year.



Hello everyone, I'm **Julie Kendal-Rowe** and I began working in the Centre in 2014 after spending 2013 teaching in the Karabar Distance Education Centre. I love the personalised approach to teaching in Distance Education and really

enjoy adjusting my program to cater for individual student needs and interests. In addition to my teaching load this year I am excited to also be teaching Indonesian Language and Culture to Rural Distance Education students right across the state. I lived and worked in Indonesia with my family for four years prior to 2011 and it's lovely to be able to revisit and share that experience. The downside is, between talking about my experiences in Asia and interacting with my travelling students, it's very difficult to keep my wanderlust in check. I really have to start saving for the next big trip!



My name is **Josephine Herbert** and I have been teaching at Queanbeyan Distance Education Centre for four or five years and before that I had worked in face to face classrooms in both NSW and Queensland. I have really enjoyed getting to know all of the fabulous families that have been with us for both a long

time and a short time. As many of you already know I love sailing, gardening and bush walking. I have a little experience being on the receiving end of distance education as I have recently also started studying towards a Psychology Masters degree by correspondence, and when my son, Toby was in year 6 we went sailing and did his school work that year by Distance Education. I find that this gives me a sympathetic insight into some of the challenges involved in learning this way. Over the last couple of years I have been involved with the Primary teachers collegial networks and have really enjoyed the opportunity to communicate and collaborate with teachers from all of the other Distance Education centres around NSW. This has led to the opportunity to look at how we can all share ideas and learning resources to maximise the benefit to all of our students all over the state.



Hello my name is **Ryan Kearns**. This is my second full year at the Queanbeyan DEC. I really enjoyed having my first class last year and hearing about all of the adventures that my students were having while studying. I have recently been

very interested in computer programming and I have started to learn how to code and design websites. Outside of work, I am a father to a demanding toddler; a little boy called Joe. He certainly is keeping his parents busy as he learns more every day.



Hi I'm **Kathy Junior**. I have been teaching in the Queanbeyan DEC since Term 3 2014. I have been a classroom teacher at Queanbeyan Public School for 13 years and am enjoying the new challenges of the DE. I

am currently teaching Kindergarten in the School and working in DE for one a day a week. I am really enjoying exploring all the online tools and using them in planning for my DE students and have discovered some new ideas for teaching my kindergarten class. I live in Queanbeyan with my husband and have three adult children as well as a much loved border collie named Meg. She is great to come home to at the end of a busy day.



Hi, I'm **Michelle Hill**. This is my first year working in the Queanbeyan DE. I am really enjoying working in the QDEC so far! This year, I will be working part of

the week in the QDEC, and the rest of the week in Queanbeyan Public with Stage 2 and 3 students with mild learning difficulties. I have been working at Queanbeyan Public for about 7 years now, working in many areas of the school in that time, but mainly Stage 3. I have many different interests mainly in the areas in Art, Designing & Technology. I love sewing and cross-stitching – when I find the time! One of my other interests is our puppy, Buster. He certainly takes up a lot of our time, but I love every minute I spend with him!



Hello everyone.
I'm **Vickie Fowlie**. I'm the administration manager here at the distance education centre.

This year will be my 16th year I have been working within the Centre. I do have the best job of all here at the Centre. I get to speak regularly with you over the phone and meet nearly all of our students and their families who are enrolled through Distance Education.

My main focus at the Centre is to always try and ensure that the Centre runs smoothly and that all staff, students and their families are provided with the most up to date and best possible resources which suit every child's individual learning program.

I must also take this opportunity to congratulate all of our students' when they phone the Centre with the most beautiful manners when requesting to speak with their teachers'. Great job kids and parents.



Hello everyone, I'm **Isabel Thornton**.

I work in the office with Vickie. I help enrol students and help the teachers to get to know how to help you succeed. I love it I get a little

glimpse of what amazing and talented kids you are.

I answer your phone calls, and may I say I have been really impressed with how many students ring themselves to talk to their teachers and have such beautiful phone manners. I also get to hand out the mail every day to the teachers, so I know you've been working hard.

I love this job and being paid is just a bonus. Hope to talk to you soon.

Contacting teachers

The Centre's staff can be contacted between 8:30 AM to 3 PM Monday to Friday. Outside of these hours teachers can be contacted using either the phone and the answering machine or the email address supplied by the Department of Education and Communities. All teachers have made this email address known to their students.



The Centre's email address:

queanbey-d.school@det.nsw.edu.au can be found on the Centre's website <http://www.queanbey-d.schools.nsw.edu.au/> and also on the contact card supplied at enrolment.

Please note: The DEC Code of Conduct advises teachers about maintaining a professional relationship between themselves, students, and supervisors. This means that teachers are discouraged from using social media such as Facebook and Twitter as a means of communicating with students or parents. The DEC portal has also blocked the use of Skype and other similar video/call sites. Teacher's personal devices such as mobile phones for either calls or text messages are also not recommended.



is a Kids Matter campus and we urge you to spend time browsing the Kids Matter website. It has practical helps, advice and essential contact details and referral information. Please visit and see for yourself.
www.kidsmatter.edu.au



Attendance at school in DE

Your child, while on distance education, is enrolled as a student at a NSW Department of Education and Communities school. Each set of work represents the work your student is to complete for their learning for the length of time indicated on the pack. This is usually two weeks, or in some instances, one week.

The regular return of work demonstrates students have been in attendance at school.

Students in distance education are allowed to be absent from school for legitimate reasons!

Should the work not be able to be completed for any reason, you need to inform your child's teacher. Your child may be sick or on leave for a special reason (to attend an appointment requiring travel or for urgent family business for example). Alternatively, you, the supervisor, may be ill and not able to fulfil your role. In either instance, where work is unable to be completed, call, email or write a note so the teacher can record the absence and help you with re-organising.

EDUCATIONAL NEGLECT

All of the QDEC staff attended staff development days at the beginning of 2015. One of the topics discussed at the staff development day was that of education neglect.

Many parents are unaware that when their children and young people don't attend school regularly, it is a form of child neglect.

Examples of educational neglect include constant lateness for school, irregular or inconsistent attendance at school, continually missing school, with or without explanations, increasing truancy, developing a dislike for school and a reluctance to attend, with inadequate parent follow up and excessive absences inappropriately attributed to illness or disability. In cases of educational neglect a referral may be made to the Child Wellbeing Unit or the Department of Communities Services.

The flexibility of Distance Education raises some interesting challenges for teachers to identify how it applies to our setting.

We refer parents/supervisors to our attendance information to ensure you are meeting your obligations in regards to your child's education.

!! Fees Reminder!!

Queanbeyan Distance Education Centre is a public education facility and is part of the NSW Department of Education and Communities. We try to keep costs and charges to families as low as possible.

Queanbeyan Distance Education levies two types of fees. The first is a general service fee of \$50 per student per year. This contribution helps cover the cost of consumable materials used by each student. This fee is payable each year of a student's enrolment.

A second resources fee of \$50 is a 'one-off' fee which is charged to cover returnable resources such as books, USB drives, maths kits and other items necessary to the delivery of student programs. When an enrolment is completed and all resources on loan have been returned, this resource deposit is fully refunded. In a case where items have been misplaced, damaged or not returned, the cost may be deducted from the resource fee before a refund is given.

An Overseas Student Fee of \$100.00 is payable at the time of enrolment and prior to the beginning of each term. *Exemptions under this category only applies to students where hard-copy mail is forwarded to a locked or diplomatic bag within Australia OR where a family elects to receive and send work wholly electronically.*

Payment of fees is a condition of enrolment and of continuing enrolment. Fees can be paid either by cheque, money order, cash or direct deposit. We do not have EFTPOS facilities. Receipts for payments received are provided.

Further information about fees can be obtained by contacting our office on (02) 6299 2966.

Special circumstances are considered with regard to the payment of fees. Please discuss this with the centre manager at the time of your student's interview.



'Open a World of Possible' - Real Stories about the Joy and Power of Reading. **Edited by Lois Bridges. Forward by Richard Robinson**

You will find this text in the parent section in the Centres library. If you are interested in reading this text you are welcome to borrow the book from the library. Below you will find some quotes and excerpts from the text.

'Finding the right book at the right time can light an emotional spark within children that motivates them to read more, understand more and read joyfully. When that happens the world opens. Everything becomes possible.'

'Reading gives life; it also defines and refines life. Boundless, it transcends time, culture, and place, so that Diana, a schoolgirl in Nairobi, faced with the challenges of poverty and discrimination, marvels at the strength and resilience shown by Fern in *Charlotte's Web*. LitWorld founder Pam Allyn explains that Diana discovers that she, too, can be strong. She, like Fern, can stand up and "from a very hard place of beginning, her heart and spirit, too, can soar into possibility." P8

Kylene Beers - Lost and Found

'It wasn't until I was a teacher that I came to understand the power of books.....That's not to say that prior to that moment I didn't love reading and didn't understand that a life spent in the company of books would be enriched.....a colleague in the middle school where I taught suggested that I was ready to help chaperone the annual voluntary spring break trip for our seventh and eighth graders to Washington, D.C..... I was in and began talking to my seventh graders about this trip.....This was the year I taught Gary, a small seventh grader with an impish smile, uncombed hair, wild freckles, and an optimism that was contagious. We began to talk about this trip and one day he happily announced that he'd get to go. He, too, had never visited D.C. On and off over the next few months, we talked about what it would be like to visit The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, to walk through the Capitol, to go to the Pentagon, to actually stand in the shadow of the Lincoln Memorial. On Monday of the final week to make the payment, Gary came into my classroom at the end of the day. "I need to talk to you about our trip to Washington, "I can still hear him say.....Then he took a deep breath and continued, "I can't go.".....he explained, "My mom says we don't have enough money for one of us kids in the family to get to take a trip like this and the others not. So I can't go."....."But it's ok. My mom says that we'll go to the library and check out books about all the places you will go while you are there. So, on the day you are at the White House, we'll read about the White House. And when you are at the Smithsonian, we'll read about that. We'll read about everything that you will see. And then Mom says when you get back you should come over for dinner and we'll both talk about our trips because Mom says that the only difference is that you'll take a trip on a plane and I'll take a trip in my mind. So, will you give me a copy of the itinerary?".....Spring break came. I headed off to the airport and Gary headed to the library. When I returned, sure enough, his mother invited me to dinner.....Later, we moved to the living room where I took out my photos and Gary opened up his books. We began talking about our respective trips and it was soon evident that Gary had had a better trip than I-but that's a different story.....I told her (Gary's mom) that I thought the world would be a better place if every kid had a mom just like her. She..... pulled out a small blue card. She handed it to me. "See this?" she said....."This is our library card," she told me. "There are many things I will never be able to buy my children, but because we have a library card there is nothing they can't have. They can travel anywhere, learn anything, meet anyone, and ultimately become whatever they dream to be because we have this card that gives us access to a world of books. And it's those books that will help Gary find his place in the world."

Yes, getting lost in a book is a magical thing. But finding your way because of a book is better.' Pp60-62.

The contributors to this text are from all walks of life. Not all the contributors to this text were confident or avid readers from a young age. Some developed their confidence and love of reading later in life.



From 12 to 14 May 2015 the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) will be completed by all students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in all government and non-government schools. NAPLAN has the support of all State and Territory Education Ministers and will assess the literacy and numeracy learning of students in all Australian schools.

The results of the tests will provide important information to schools about what each student can do, and will be used to support teaching and learning programs. Parents will receive a report indicating their child's level of achievement later in the year; around end September. Each student's level of achievement will be reported against the national minimum standard.

Background information (student name, gender, date of birth, language background and Aboriginality) will be collected as part of the National Assessment Program. This information is confidential and is held securely to ensure that every student's right to privacy is maintained.

Students may be considered for exemption from the tests if:

- they are newly arrived in Australia (less than one year before the test) and with a language background other than English, or
- they have significant intellectual disability and/or significant co-existing conditions which severely limit their capacity to participate in the tests.

All other students are expected to participate in the tests. *Students may be withdrawn from NAPLAN by their parent or carer if there is substantial reason for their non-participation. This is a matter for consideration by parents or carers in consultation with Lyndal at the DE Centre.* If you wish to withdraw your child from the tests you must sign a parent/ carer consent form. Access to special provisions and exemption from the tests must be discussed with *Lyndal* as soon as practicably possible.

When and how does the NAPLAN testing take place for distance education students?

Test papers will be posted to your nominated address on 15 May by Express Post.

PLEASE NOTE this is after the testing is completed by all mainstream students.

Once papers are received, they are to be completed and returned immediately to Queanbeyan DE Centre in the envelope provided (Australian students only) or by Express Post (overseas students). This will ensure the best possible opportunity for papers to be marked at the official marking centre.

[Set aside 3 consecutive mornings to complete the testing as indicated here.](#)

Day 1 – Language conventions and Writing

Day 2 – Reading

Day 3 – Numeracy

Depending on where you are and when you receive your mail, your testing dates will vary.

Students attending the May Gathering will complete tests each morning as follows:

Language Conventions (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) and Writing	12 May 2015
Reading	13 May 2015
Numeracy	14 May 2015



NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Literacy and Numeracy

Home students (all categories of enrolment) not attending the Gathering will complete the tests each morning once they are received in the mail.

Students travelling within Australia can either:

***attend any public or private school** closest to them to complete the tests during the testing periods in the table above. You will need to nominate the school *at least two weeks* in advance and advise the DE centre so that arrangements for your child's papers can be made

OR

***complete the tests 'at home' under your supervision.** You, as the supervisor, will be required to sign a declaration outlining your compliance with and adherence to the stipulated test conditions.

Overseas students will complete the tests at home. You, as the supervisor, will be required to sign a declaration outlining your compliance with test conditions.

When do papers need to reach the distance education centre?

After your student has completed the tests, they are to be returned to the DE centre in the reply paid envelope enclosed with the papers. If you are located overseas and in a rural or remote area and you know your mail is slow, you are advised to return papers by Express Post. **All test papers received at the Queanbeyan DE Centre by 18 June will be posted to the Marking Centre.**

Who marks the papers and when do parents receive results?

Tests are marked by independent markers and after papers are marked, a NAPLAN report will be sent to you. Your child's results are strictly confidential. Results can be discussed between your child's teacher and yourselves.



Additional information about NAPLAN can be found at: <http://www.naplanforparentsnsw.com.au>

TRAVELLERS

Many of the students studying with us are currently travelling around Australia or abroad. There have been recent changes to the exemption from attendance guidelines for the purposes of holidays. From the beginning of 2015, NSW public schools no longer consider family holidays and travel as valid for an exemption from school. If you meet other NSW families during your travels, you could make them aware of the provision of Distance Education, which is available for families taking an extended holiday of a minimum of 50 school days. Families can contact various Distance Education centres to find out if they are eligible.

Speaking of travellers, this lovely report by Holly Mansell (Year 3) is an excellent demonstration of the rich educational benefits of travelling. The Mansells are travelling Australia with their three children and studying with Queanbeyan Distance Education.



Lockhart River Aboriginal Community

Lockhart River is a coastal community in Cape York. It has a population of 650 and a mission started there in 1924. The government tried to move all the clans to live together in Lockhart River around 100 years ago. It did not work well because there was lots of fighting.

Lockhart River is the most northern town on the east coast of Australia and there are five tribal groups. To be an official community Lockhart River has to have a school, post office, council, health clinic, supermarket and police.

It is a dry community which means no alcohol. Mum and dad tried dugong. We played with their pet pig. Two teenage boys were teaching a three and four year old to catch dugong and turtles. There are two sacred sites in Lockhart River and they are Quintell Beach and Chili Beach.



Dugong bones cooking on the beach

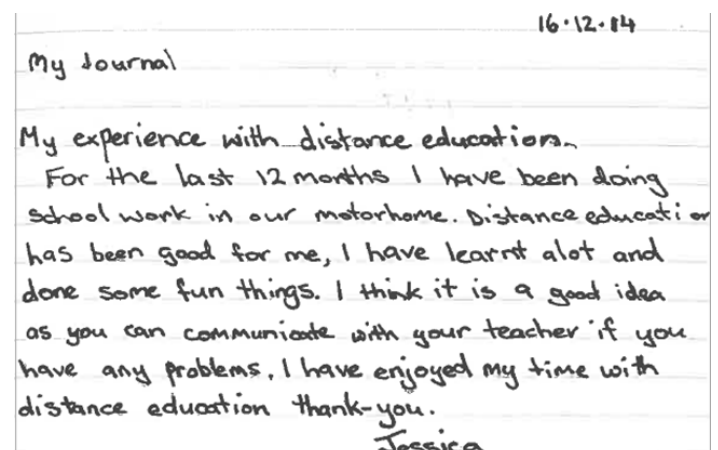


This is a photo of my dad holding the pig. In the background the boys are learning to fish. The grandad is looking after the baby while the mum cooks.

Another of our travelling families; the Wrights, have a great blog about their travels. Have a look at: wrightroundoz.blogspot.com.au

My Experience with Distance Education

Every year we say goodbye to a number of our students as their circumstances change or they move onto high school. Below is a journal entry, submitted by one of our students; Jessica Chamberlain in the final set she submitted before moving on to Year 7. It is certainly lovely to have such an endorsement by a student.



Call out for Apps



As we move more into a blended and flexible learning environment for Distance Education students, the teachers here are always on the lookout for convenient options for our clientele.

There are so many apps designed for education of varying qualities.

As we the purchasing of apps involves a small cost to parents, we at the Centre only wish to recommend tried and tested apps that will enable our students to experience success.

If you are currently using any educational apps with your child that you would recommend, please contact your child's teacher with a list.

Thanks to one of our supervisors; Kara Potter, who has already supplied some great ideas. We will be discussing and looking at these suggestions at our next staff meeting.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2015

Please go to...

<http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/calendar>



Students with satellite provision have now commenced using the new REACT system. At present QDE students are working with their class teachers as well as with Hay School of the Air and Bourke/Walgett Distance Education Centres.

Don't forget to go to those lessons scheduled at other centres and mark these on your weekly timetable. A new timetable will commence at the beginning of term 2 so please watch out for the emailed attachment.

An Introduction to Indonesian Language and Culture

This year the satellite sessions include lessons in Indonesian which is facilitated by Julie and includes students from a number of centres across the state.



Indonesian flag image from photobucket

Memory

Teachers state-wide are finding that more and more children come to school with a diagnosis or assessment that indicates a deficit in working memory. Although this article has a focus on students diagnosed with ADHD, you may find has some helpful tips that we can all use at times. This article was originally published in the *Learning Brain* newsletter.

The Other Memory

Prospective memory is the ability to remember to remember, the capacity to remind yourself to do the right thing at the right time. It is the process of carrying an idea from one moment in time into the future, when it is time to act on it. Maybe your boss asks you in the morning to call an important client this afternoon, or you get an idea in the shower that you should take a CD to a friend's house tonight. It's a matter of holding that idea in your mind until you can act on it.

Prospective memory works with working memory to get things done. We hold an idea in working memory until our sense of time tells us to act on it. A strong prospective memory is important in managing the details and interruptions of life. A weak prospective memory is where good intentions go to die.

People with ADHD have trouble holding a thought until the moment when it's time to act on it. They have trouble bridging the gap of time, of carrying that thought reliably into the future. They intend to follow through, but they get lost along the way. Sometimes they forget the thought completely, and other times, they remember it too late. When they disappoint others, there can be social fallout. When they disappoint themselves, it's a blow to their self-esteem.

Some people have more struggles at work, some at school, some at home. Each of these areas places different demands on you, and offers different supports, so you may perform well in one and not well in others. Because of this difference, you may find it helpful to practice new strategies more in one setting than in another.

—Ari Tuckman, Psy.D.

Remember the Milk! — Tips to Improve Working Memory

If you forget phone numbers or grocery lists on a daily basis, follow these easy tips to boost your working memory. [By Eileen Bailey](#)



Losing your keys, leaving your wallet in the refrigerator, forgetting your husband's birthday, asking the shop assistant to repeat the directions to the gift-wrap department. You might think that these are all examples of [inattention](#).

After digging into [working memory](#) studies, I have realised that, while these are examples of inattention, they are mostly signs of poor working memory. Working memory deficits are a symptom of ADHD, autism, and learning disabilities.

What Is WM?

You might be familiar with the term "[short-term memory](#)," which is used interchangeably with the term "working memory." Both refer to thoughts or information you hold temporarily in your memory, so that they are available when you need them to complete a task. Think of working memory as a shelf in your brain. Imagine you are going to the shop. You need milk, eggs, and bread. While you're in the store, you suddenly remember you need cereal. You head to the cereal aisle, but as you focus on Special K, the eggs fall off your mental shelf. You arrive home with cereal, milk, and bread, but have forgotten the eggs.

The number of items you store in your working memory might not be as many as the number your best friend can accommodate on his mental shelf. Research shows that young children have limited working memory skills, being able to hold only one or two items in memory. WM continues to develop until around age 15, but not everyone develops at the same pace or has the same working memory capacity. Some people can store more information than others.

Researchers disagree about the number of information "bytes" that can be held by the brain. Some say it's as many as seven items, and others claim it's four. You can increase your working memory capacity by grouping items together. A telephone number is typically 10 digits long, but we often break the number into three groups (55-5555-5555), allowing us to use only three working memory slots to remember 10 digits.

When Do We Use Working Memory?

You use working memory every day, in many situations: to read, write, plan, organize, follow a conversation, do mental math, or follow multi-step directions. It helps you stay focused on, and engaged with, a task.

Working memory is essential at school. One study, done in the United Kingdom, looked at 3,000 grade-school and junior high students and found that weak working memory was more indicative of struggles in school than was a low IQ. According to researchers, almost all the children with weak working memory scored low on reading comprehension and math tests.

The following are examples of how poor working memory affects your daily life:

- You want to join in a conversation, but, by the time the other person stops talking, you forget what you wanted to say.
- You consistently lose your keys, cell phone, or wallet.
- You get lost easily, even when you were just given directions.
- You have trouble following a conversation because you forget what the other person has just said.

- You have many unfinished projects because you become distracted and forget about the first project.
- You plan to do some work at home, but you forget to bring needed items with you.
- You have to reread a paragraph several times to retain the information.
- You miss deadlines at work because of your disorganization and inability to follow through on projects.

No matter what you do, you need your working memory to help you do it.

There are a number of products and services, such as CogMed and Play Attention, that you may use to help train your brain and improve your working memory. Some research has shown that they can increase your working memory, but that the benefits may not last beyond the training session. Other research has shown that brain training delivers significant improvements in working memory if you commit to sticking with it.

WM Strategies

The first step to better working memory is to understand how memory works and to accept your limitations. That doesn't mean saying, "Oh, I forgot," to excuse yourself. It means developing and using strategies to compensate for forgetting. Many people with ADHD use reminder systems to keep things in order. They might use a notepad app on their phone or tablet to keep a running to-do list or a list of items they need at the store. They might use a timer or calendar app to remind them of appointments. Other strategies that will help include:

- **Break big chunks of information into small, bite-sized pieces.** Focus on one or two of them before moving on to the next instruction. Suppose you are getting ready to host a party in your home. You are overwhelmed with everything that needs to get done: shopping, cooking, cleaning, and setting up for the party. Focus on one area, such as shopping. Ignore the rest of the tasks until you are done shopping.

- **Use checklists for tasks with multiple steps.** You might create a checklist for your first hour at work. It might include: listen to messages, return calls, check and answer e-mails, review yesterday's progress, check with supervisor for important tasks to be completed immediately.
- **Develop routines.** Create a routine when you return home from work. Place your cell phone and keys in the same place every time, as soon as you walk in the door.
- **Practice working memory skills.** Use the brain training programs mentioned above or create your own. Write down six unrelated words. Start by trying to remember the first two words without looking at the paper, and add another word as you succeed.
- **Experiment with various ways of remembering information.** You may remember a list more easily if you create a song or make up a rhyme. Others find that visualization helps them remember multiple items. When you are heading home from work, visualize yourself stopping at the store, picking up milk, cheese, bread, and yogurt. Imagine going to each section of the store, and see what it looks like. Because images are more powerful than words, you are apt to remember everything you need at the store as you follow your visualization.
- **Reduce multitasking.** According to a study completed at the University of Sussex, multitasking can actually shrink certain areas of your brain, and is linked to shortened attention spans. Complete one task and then move on to the next.
- **Use mindfulness to minimise distractions and sharpen working memory.** A study, completed at Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, found that daily mindfulness exercises increased recall and allowed participants to tune out distractions by regulating sensory input.
- **Add exercise to your daily routine.** Some studies have shown that working memory increases with daily exercise. While the reasons for this aren't fully understood, scientists believe physical activity improves the health of brain cells. It can also indirectly affect memory by improving mood, helping you sleep better, and reducing stress — areas that can affect cognitive abilities.

2015 School Calendar

TERM 1 - 10 weeks	Wednesday, 28 January 2015 – Thursday, 2 April 2015
TERM 2 – 10 weeks	Tuesday, 21 April 2015 – Friday, 26 June 2015 (Staff Development Day on Monday 20 April 2015)
TERM 3 – 10 weeks	Tuesday, 14 July 2015 – Friday, 18 September 2015 (Staff Development Day on Monday 13 July 2015)
TERM 4 – 11 weeks	Tuesday, 6 October 2015 – Wednesday, 16 December 2015 (Staff Development Day on Thursday 17 and Friday 18 December 2015)

NB: Staff Development Days are teacher meeting days. Students do not attend school on staff development days. Staff are also not available by phone on these days.



DOROTHEA MACKELLAR POETRY AWARDS 2015



the open door

OPTIONAL
THEME

The awards are supported by



Australian Government



Award Categories and Prizes

LOWER PRIMARY (YEARS K - 3)

Winner: \$300, trophy and prize pack
Runner-up: \$150 and prize pack

UPPER PRIMARY (YEARS 4 - 6 + 7 IN SA)

Winner: \$400, trophy and prize pack
Runner-up: \$200 and prize pack

ASSISTED LEARNING PRIMARY

Winner: \$400, trophy and prize pack
Runner-up: \$200 and prize pack

Entries to be submitted by the teacher, eligibility criteria covers students on assisted learning programs or students with English as a second language.

Senior school students must apply online at www.dorothea.com.au

JUNIOR SECONDARY (YEARS 7 - 9)

Winner: \$500, trophy and prize pack
Runner-up: \$300 and prize pack

SENIOR SECONDARY (YEARS 10 - 12)

Winner: \$500, trophy and prize pack
Runner-up: \$300 and prize pack

ASSISTED LEARNING SECONDARY

Winner: \$500, trophy and prize pack
Runner-up: \$300 and prize pack

Entries to be submitted by the teacher, eligibility criteria covers students on assisted learning programs or students with English as a second language.

SCHOOLS' AWARD

Winner Sheelah Baxter Schools' Award - Primary: \$1000, trophy and prize pack
Winner - Secondary: \$1000, trophy and prize pack

For schools that demonstrate effort, achievement and a high standard of entries, awarded at the judges' discretion.

MULTICULTURAL NSW (FORMERLY CRC NSW) AWARD

Winner: \$500, trophy and prize pack (separate presentation arrangements)

For the best poem highlighting the value of cultural diversity within Australian community (See website for relevant criteria to be met).

PRESENTATION CEREMONY

National presentation ceremony will be held in Gunnedah, NSW. The prize includes travel and accommodation (from the nearest capital city) for the individual category winners and one accompanying adult to attend the event.

ALL STUDENTS RECEIVE A PARTICIPATION CERTIFICATE

> VISIT OUR WEBSITE WWW.DOROTHEA.COM.AU

CLOSING
DATE
30TH JUNE

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

- 'Award Categories and Prizes' and 'How to Enter' form part of the Conditions of Entry
- Only students enrolled in Australian education facilities are eligible to enter
- Entries accepted between 1 March and 30 June 2015
- School entry fee for entries submitted: \$25 for up to 30 poems, \$50 for over 30 poems/unlimited
- Individual entry fee (i.e. home schooled or if school is not participating): \$15
- This entry form is a valid invoice
- Payment method: cheque, money order to Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards, PO Box 113 Gunnedah NSW 2380 or bank transfer, contact project officer for details
- All poems must be student's own work
- Class and group poems are accepted
- Poems on any subject are accepted
- Limits: up to 3 poems per student; poems no longer than 80 lines; no illustrations, graphics or decorations included
Fax, email or poems posted without the entry form will not be accepted
- The judge's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into
- Winners are announced at the National Presentation ceremony
- Entrants may be asked to assist in media publicity in the form of comments and/or photos
- Submitted material will not be returned, only selected records are kept
- Copyright remains with the author, however Dorothea Mackellar Memorial Society Inc. reserves the right to have any entry published reproduced or publicized for promotion purposes
- The Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards collect information from individuals and organisations in order to administer and deliver its programs, communicate with its stakeholders, associates and customers and is committed to the protection of privacy and personal information (details are on www.dorothea.com.au)



HOW TO ENTER

Postal (this option available to *primary schools only*)

- Teacher / parent registration completed on www.dorothea.com.au
- Print out (photocopies accepted) and complete entry form for/by each student
- Print out poems (text must be in a easily distinguishable font – Arial, Times New Roman, hand written poems not accepted)
- Glue completed entry form to the back of each entry
- Teacher to collate all entries, enclose entry fee or a confirmation of payment and mail to the Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards, PO Box 113, Gunnedah, NSW, 2380

Online (open to *primary and secondary schools*)

- Teacher/ parent registration completed on www.dorothea.com.au.
- Log into your page
- Enter student details and submit poem(s) - you can cut and paste poem content directly into the page
- Arrange the entry fee

For more information contact the Project Officer on 02 67421200 or visit www.dorothea.com.au



2015 DOROTHEA MACKELLAR POETRY AWARDS

ENTRY FORM | Tax Invoice

Please note that secondary school entrants must apply online. This form is for the use of primary school entrants only. Complete the entry form and glue it to the back of your poem, or enter online at www.dorothea.com.au. Please print clearly in block letters.

First Name _____ Surname _____

Year Level: (circle) K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (SA) Age _____ Gender (circle) Male Female

Contact Teacher (Dr, Mr, Mrs, Ms) _____

School _____

School Address _____

Suburb _____ State _____ Postcode _____

School Phone _____ School email _____

Award category (tick one box only)

Lower primary Upper primary Assisted Learning Multicultural NSW (formerly CRC NSW) Award

Declaration of Ownership

I declare that this is my own work, it is titled _____

Signed (entrant) _____ Signed (teacher) _____

Entry fee \$ 25 (incl. GST) is payable per school for up to 30 students' entries submitted, \$50 (incl. GST) is payable per school over 30 students' entries submitted, or \$15 (incl. GST) is payable per student for individual (i.e. home school) entries.

Cheques should be made payable to Dorothea Mackellar Memorial Society Inc. This entry form is a valid tax invoice. DMMS ABN 88 639 657712.