

SOTA *Speak*

School of the Air Newsletter



June 2025 Term 2



Message from the Head of Campus

I can't believe how quickly Term 2 has flown by!

Over the past seven weeks, we've welcomed Mr Kelly into the SOTA community as an Itinerant Teacher, introduced a few new Supervisors, and sent our Years 5/6 class to Canberra to deepen their understanding of History and Civics and Citizenship.

Academic reports will be distributed in Week 10. Teachers are currently finalising assessments and moderating results to ensure grades accurately reflect student achievement. Next week, the primary team will engage in a moderation process—a powerful, research-based strategy that links assessment to improved instructional practice. For students in Reception to Year 6, reports will align with the Australian Curriculum achievement standards. Students in Years 1–6 will receive A–E grades, while Reception students will receive a written comment.

Some recent changes in our Upper Primary program have allowed students to explore digital literacy and research skills—an important step as they begin preparing for secondary school. Our Junior Primary classes have identified a need to increase access to reading materials and are now working with Julie and Jess at Marden to support this goal.

Across Open Access College, we've committed to focusing on the impact area of Effective Learners, with a particular emphasis on the domain of curiosity. In the Primary context, this has involved a pedagogical shift. By partnering with Marden Primary, our teachers have demonstrated deep knowledge, skill, and commitment to continuous improvement for the benefit of our students.

Our work with curiosity centres around understanding the role of essential questions—how they spark inquiry and support students to become more curious about their learning. Through this shared commitment, we continue to strengthen the conditions for rigorous, engaging, and safe learning environments where curiosity can thrive.

Thank you for being an integral part of the SOTA community. Your involvement and support play a crucial role in sustaining a positive school culture. We look forward to seeing you at Woodhouse.

Best wishes
Rachael Russell

The Traits of EFFECTIVE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

An essential question is the broad and open-ended thinking or idea that sparks discussion and debate, fosters curiosity, and prompts learners to think expansively using deep thinking and an enquiry-based approach.

Open-Ended It does not have a single, final, or correct answer and invites multiple perspectives.	Thought-Provoking Engages students intellectually, sparking discussion, debate and deep thinking.
Calls for Higher-Order Thinking Requires analysis, inference, evaluation, and predictions, beyond simple recall.	Leads to Further Inquiry Evokes additional questions and encourages ongoing exploration and enquiry.
Broad and Transferable Points towards important, transferable ideas with an across-disciplinary focus.	Timeless and Recurring Can be revisited over time, encouraging reflection and testing reflection on personal experiences.



EVENTS

Student Free Day: **20 May**

Sorry Day: **26 May**

Reconciliation week: **26 - 30 May**

Kings Birthday: **9 May**

Camp @ Woodhouse: **30 June - 4 July**

Mini School @Coober Pedy: **22- 26 September**

Get Together: **5 - 6 December**

OPFA and SOTA CGC

Outback Parents and Friends Association (OPFA)

An opportunity for the parents, supervisors and staff of students enrolled with the Port Augusta School of the Air (SOTA) to discuss any aspects associated with the school.

SOTA Committee of Governing Council (CGC)

The SOTA CGC discuss governance issues that require further discussion from OPFA meetings.

OPFA/CGC upcoming meeting dates All meetings at 3:00pm

OPFA: Week 3 (T1) Wednesday

CGC: Week 4 (T1) Wednesday

Here is a write up from Alex explaining her recent success at the State Cross Country Championships. Congratulations Alex on your fantastic achievement. Your SOTA community is very proud of you.



We were fortunate enough to have Jayden and Elsie join us here at SOTA for two days in Week 4. We love the energy and excitement when students join us here onsite at SOTA. Here you can see Jayden and Elsie working together to fill up all the musical pipes with bark chips. They also problem solved how they would stop them from coming out the end and explored the quickest way to fill up the pipe.



On Thursday June 5th I competed at the State Cross Country Championship at Oakbank for the Mid North District. To qualify for the state championship, I had to attend the district trials held at Burra Community School on May 12th and place in the top 6. There were about 15 girls running in the trial race and I came 2nd! At Oakbank, I was very nervous. There were hundreds of kids there – maybe even a thousand! There were 177 in my race, and I came 53rd. Which I was very happy with.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Angela for 13.6.25

Thank you for your hard work and being a friendly port of call to staff, students and families here at SOTA. We are lucky to have you as a part of our team.

DES



DES LUCKY SQUARES:
\$5 per Square
\$150 Prize Money
Drawn on the 2/7/2025

Our DES members that ran the Oodndata events. You can see the students enjoying these activities below.



DES has been very busy organising, planning and running games over the past couple of months.

On May 10, 6 Govies held some fun games at Oodnadatta Gymkhana! Activities included running races, a boot toss, a lolly toss, a hobby horse race and a sack race! We loved watching all the SOTA Students having fun.

We are very excited to be running the Disco at the school camp. With the theme being "Bad Taste" and promises to be a fun filled event with games, music and face painting!



LIBRARY NEWS



National Simultaneous Storytime & Library News

This year, National Simultaneous Storytime saw 29 SOTA students tune in to the reading of *The Truck Cat* by Deborah Frenkel, illustrated by Danny Snell. On Wednesday 21st May @ 11am students joined over two million others across Australia to hear the story read by the author herself!

All students who participated will receive a certificate of attendance in the mail this week. A big thank you to all the students who entered our Storytime competition—whether by dressing up, designing a new front cover, or creating artwork inspired by the book. We absolutely loved the entries, and the library staff had a tough job choosing the winners.



Congratulations to our two SOTA winners:

Simba – for his creative cat dress-up

Jack – for his very detailed truck drawing

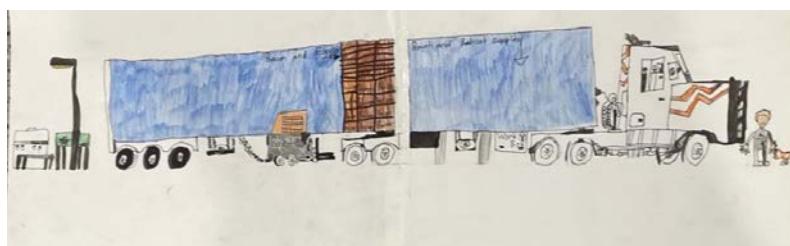
Both students have won their own copy of *The Truck Cat*!



Special mentions go to:

Elsie Henery – for her mosaic cat

Alex Robinson – for her plasticine model of Tinka



LIBRARY NEWS

Premier's Reading STEM Challenge

The Premier's Reading STEM Competition closes next week! Some students are finishing their entries, while others have already submitted. If you would like to enter, please email your submission to jessica.tiver818@schools.sa.edu.au by Thursday next week.

 A reminder:

R-2 students: Draw a picture based on a book about nature, space, or green hydrogen.

Middle primary students: Design an invention inspired by one of these topics. Further details can be found on the SOTA Library Teams page.



THE 2025 PRC STEM Reading and Design Challenge
Our Sustainable Future
Starts 31 March and finishes 20 June
Announcement of winners in National Science Week, August 2025

THE COMPETITION
The Premier's Reading Challenge and partners are teaming up again to challenge students to read about Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) in the lead up to National Science Week. The reading and design competition started in 2020 and last year 4600 entries were received!

HOW TO ENTER
Read a book about one of the 4 themes (from the Premier's Reading Challenge booklet):

- STEM (any Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths book from the list)
- NATURE IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA (such as plants, animals, bushland, rivers, beaches, parks and gardens)
- SPACE (such as human spaceflight, the planets and universes, satellites, space travel and astronomy)
- RENEWABLE ENERGY (a book about renewable energy - from our sun and wind - that can be used to create power)

Complete the task, according to your year level project.

Send entries to the Premier's Reading Challenge team. Entries should include student name, student year level, school name, school contact details, teacher name, book read from Premier's Reading Challenge (include title and author) and the theme of the project.

Schools should keep a record of students who enter.

YEAR LEVEL CATEGORY PROJECTS

- 8 to 12 Create** Draw a picture in response to the book read, inspired by the book read.
- 3 to 5 Invent** Plan an invention (description, drawing) inspired by the book read.
- 6 to 8 Design** Design a STEM poster, related to the book read, to inspire interest in science-related fields.
- Nature-Inspired** Plan an invention (model, drawing) to solve a problem related to the book read.

THE PRIZES
All students will receive a certificate of participation. A selection of prizes including passes to the Adelaide Zoo, Cleland Wildlife Park and Science Alert and books, book vouchers, vouchers for the South Australian Museum gift shop will be awarded to:

- best individual entry and runner up for each age group
- the school with the most entries.

SEND ENTRIES TO
Mail: STEM Reading and Design Challenge
C/O Premier's Reading Challenge
GPO Box 1022, Adelaide, SA 5002
Or email: education@premierreadingchallenge.sa.edu.au
Please note that the PRC Team will not be able to return any entries.

CONTACT
Mark Williams Manager Premier's Challenge
8226 2006 | mark.williams@sa.gov.au
More about the Premier's Reading Challenge:
www.premierreadingchallenge.sa.edu.au

Logos: Inspiring, SMARTSAT, ADELAIDE NATIONAL PARK CITY, SA STA, ALIVE!, ZOO, Government of South Australia

Children's Book Council Awards – Library Focus

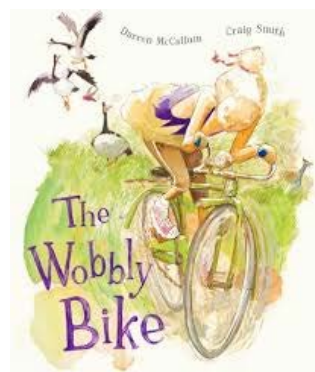
During library lessons, we've been reading our way through the Early Childhood Shortlisted Books for the Children's Book of the Year Awards.

So far, we have enjoyed:

Spiro by Anna McGregor

The Wobbly Bike by Darren McCallum,
illustrated by Craig Smith

We look forward to discovering more wonderful stories in the weeks ahead!



National Simultaneous Storytime



Beau and Loretta May
at Wintinna



Bonnie at Thurlga



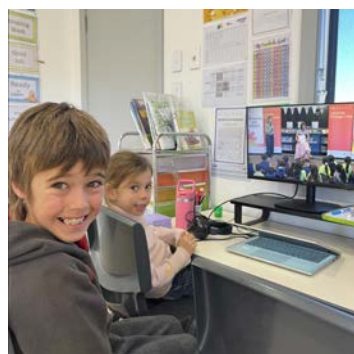
Lara and Dan at
Dulkaninna



Lisma at
Todmorden



Emmett and Asher at Mt Sarah



Eli and Memphis at Siam



Aria at Wirrealpa



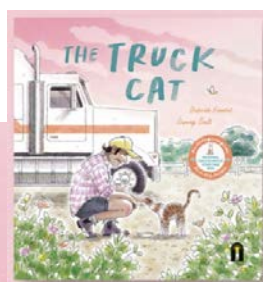
Elsie and Jayden
at SOTA



Roy at Macumba



Jack and Lenny at The Peake



NATIONAL SIMULTANEOUS STORYTIME

21 May 2025 | alia.org.au/ShopNSS | #librarystorytime



Term 2 Week 4

Miss Stringer: Memphis: for making a greater and more consistent effort to concentrate and join in during online sessions and for fantastic skip counting by 10's.

Ms Andrews: Cameron: For being respectful during our online lessons and putting in a super effort to complete his at home activities across all learning areas.

Miss Kaur: Dan: For trying his best to do all his learning in Week 3, with limited resources, while he was in Port Augusta. He showed great problem-solving skills and resilience while completing his tasks.

Miss Morley: Jayden: For his positive work attitude and for being an excellent role model to his younger peers while here at SOTA this week

Mr Kelly: Asher: For completing all her work all day during Mr Kelly's visit in a friendly and enthusiastic manner.

Mrs Russell: Miss Morley – for her personal and professional growth over the past term and a half. Stepping up and taking the lead from the classroom.

Term 2 Week 6

Miss Stringer: Aria : for consistently beginning tasks straight away, following learning instructions, practicing the best ninja segmenting to spell words and always having a positive 'can do' attitude

Ms Andrews: Beau: For his improved ability to organise his materials and be ready for lessons and activities, along with his perseverance in completing challenging tasks.

Miss Kaur: Lisma: For being an active participant in all class discussions and having a growth mindset when working on challenging tasks.

Miss Morley: Eli R : For his excellent research and application of our learning in his Linked Learning project, and his willingness to take responsibility and challenge himself in his work.

Mr Kelly: Jack: For working and playing a variety games and sports cooperatively during Mr Kelly's visit and working diligently to complete his all his tasks on a daily basis.

Mr Moyne: Dan: For consistent effort and reflective thinking in work submissions for HPE activities.

Mr Kelly Home Visits

This term, I have visited a few families from SOTA. It is great to see everyone in person and experience some unique country hospitality.



Mr Moyne's Itinerant Visits

Hi everyone, it has been another busy few weeks of itinerant visits supporting supervisors and learners, as well as delivering after school HPE sessions. It has been great to see the growth in learning and engagement from everyone involved. Looking forward to seeing you all in a visit soon.



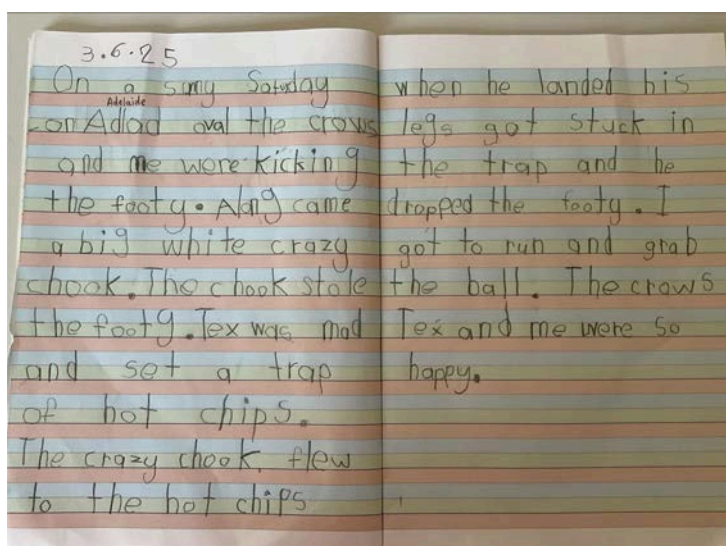
Miss Stringer - Reception

Our focus this term has been building our writing skills and stamina. What better way to do this than through narratives!

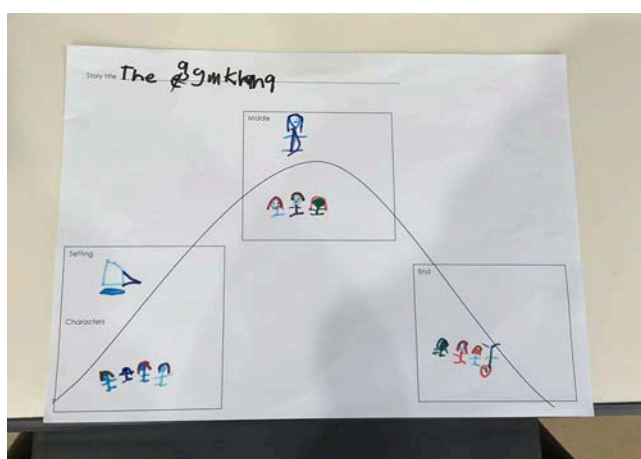
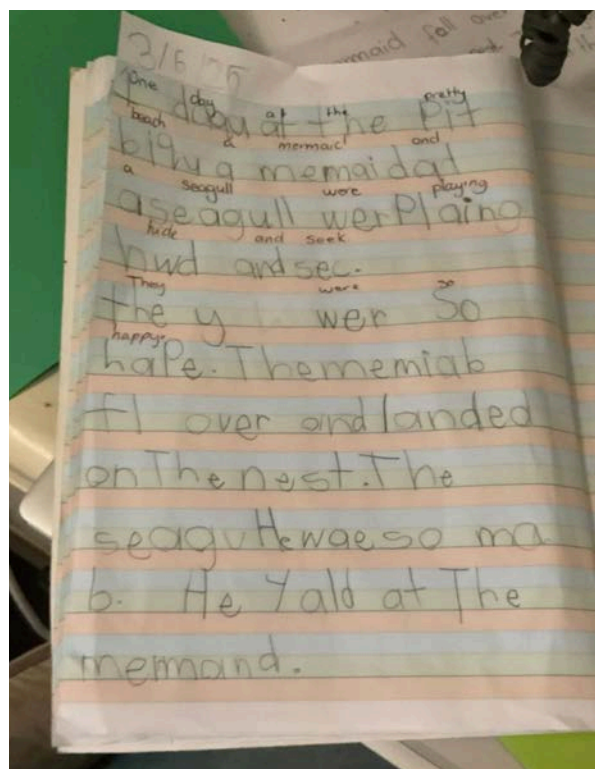
We have been learning about the structure of a narrative and why we write narratives. Narratives are fiction texts and imaginary, just for fun! We have had many fun adventures in our writing, making sure to follow the beginning, middle and end structure. Our narratives have had unicorns, pirates, hat wearing platypus' and a footy stealing chook that was lured into a cage with hot chips!

We must always plan, write and then edit our work - and we never forget the adjectives! We have demonstrated and practiced these skills over each week. Here are some of our planning and writing pieces.

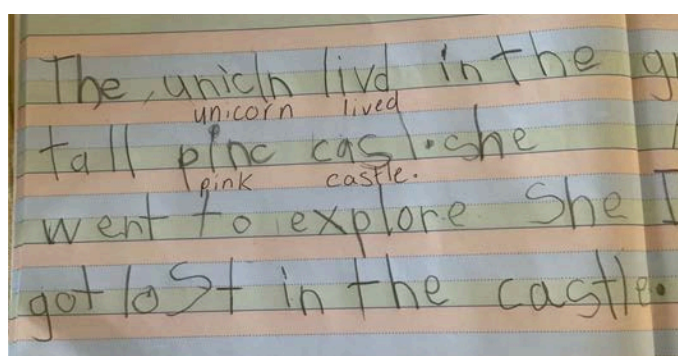
Aria



Hudson



Asher planning document



Airlie - beginning and middle

Our Linked Learning has been based around weather and the seasons. We have explored months of the year and learned how seasons/months are different for the northern and southern hemispheres.

Each week, we focused on a different season. Students created posters and chose from a range of hands-on activities—art and craft, science experiments, fine motor tasks, and more. Each activity linked to a seasonal learning experience. For example, in winter we learned how snowflakes form, and in spring we explored how water travels through a flower, followed by a related activity.



Memphis - winter snowglobe



James - spring - traveling water - like water up a stem



Elsie - autumn -
deciduous and evergreen trees

We finally celebrated our first birthday in the class and got to hear all about family traditions. We look forward to hearing about how everyone celebrates and might even have some overseas traditions sneak into the celebrations!

The tooth fairy has been busy paying a visit to many of the students which has been a joy to share these exciting moments.

We continue to learn about the concept of addition and subtraction and most importantly how we can tie it back into our worlds.

Ms Andrews - Year 1/2

Term 2 has been a busy yet incredibly productive time for the Year 1/2 class. In literacy, we've explored various phonemes, delved into the enchanting world of fairy tales, enhanced our reading skills, and learnt about several prefixes and suffixes. Our Maths lessons have focused on mastering different addition strategies, providing a solid foundation for future learning. In our exploration of transportation, we've journeyed from the old days to modern vehicles, inspiring us to design and build our own imaginative future vehicles. Additionally, we've expressed our creativity by composing a transportation song.



Eli

Emmett

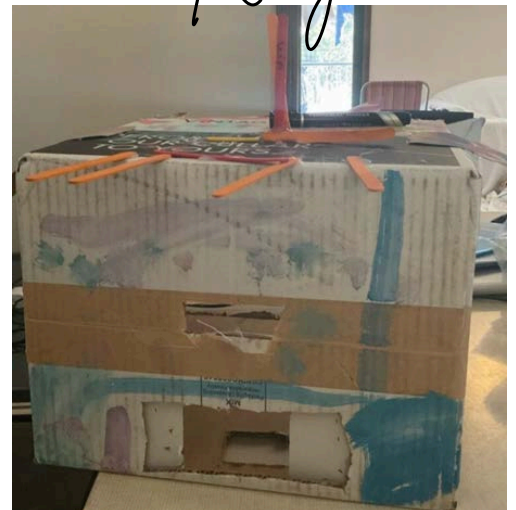


Simba



This term, our future vehicles were brought to life through our hard work and creativity, as you will observe from our work here.

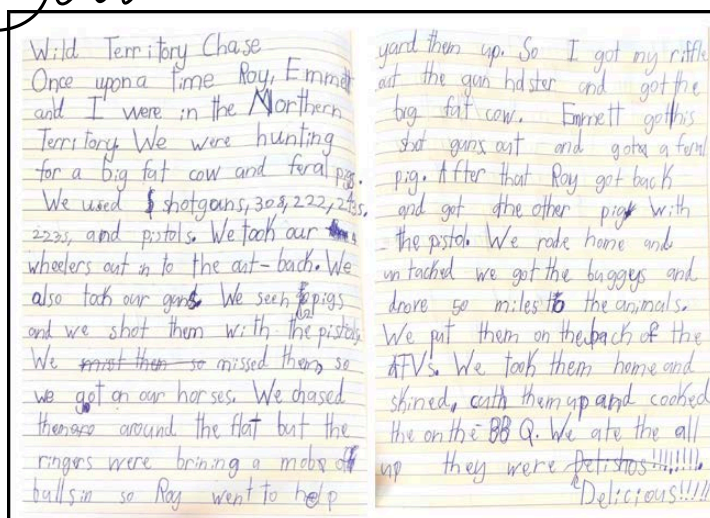
Remy



Roy



Bean



Lenny



Lucy the Dragon

Once upon a time there was a dark cave that was rocky grey and hard.

In the cave lived a green loud, beautiful, girl dragon. She loved eating piglets and drinking water. Her name is Lucy.

One morning Lucy was sleeping, and she heard a click click click. She opened her eyes.

Lucy is a very rare dragon, and she has never been seen before. She opens her eyes, and she got a fright. She huffed and she puffed and blew a flame over the people. They turned into dust.

She was now alone again which made Lucy feel happy and safe.

After carefully planning our fairy tales and exploring their structure, as well as discovering ways to make them more engaging for readers. We are excited to announce that our stories have been published!

The Bandit Who Hunted For Gold

By Edward R

Once upon a time in a small village there were 3 families that go hunting for gold.

The village was in the desert and it was very dry. Every day their families would go out and mine for gold that's in the rocks. The rocks are very hard to break.

One day they were out mining and they saw a bandit stealing their gold!

So one of the poor men had a gun and hid behind a gold rock. When the bandit came he jumped out from behind the rock and shot him.

The bandit died and the poor people found the gold rocks and they weren't poor anymore.

And they lived happily ever after.



Edward

Cameron

The Cave

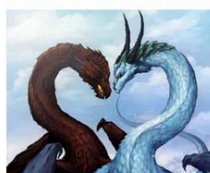
By Cameron Martin

Once upon a time in a dark spooky cave there was a big, scary and dusty spider web. Ben the friendly, blue and bubble breathing Dragon was flying past the spooky cave with his friend Jeremy. Jeremy was red and breathed fire.

Ben and Jeremy were flying passed cave when they smelt something delicious. Ben flew towards the candy and Jeremy yelled "No it might be a trap." Ben and Jeremy got trapped in a spider web by Mongo, Magenta's dad.

Jeremy uses his fire breath to get him and Ben out the web. Mongo the spider tries to grab the boys but before he can Magenta swoops out of her be and stops him. Once Magenta catches Mongo he gets sent away.

Ben and Jeremy finally felt happy and at peace now Mongo has been sent away to the beach. Magenta feels happy and they all lived happily ever after.



The Lonely Fire Breathing Dragon

By Jovie

Once upon a time there was a haunted building. The big house was creepy, it was always covered in fog. The lazy, scary blue dragon was guarding the haunted house. The fire breathing dragon was lonely. He was lonely because he was scary, and no one ever came to see him.

The villagers seemed to be disappearing because of the dragon. 100 villagers are missing. They were walking through the woods, and they found the haunted house with the fire breathing dragon. The villagers didn't know that it was the haunted house. They all decided to go into the house, but they have never come out.

A friendly fire breathing dragon came along. He and the lonely dragon had a big fight. The good, friendly fire breathing dragon won. The lonely dragon gave up and he promised to be good and kind from now on. The friendly dragon found all the villagers.

They had a big party, and everyone lived happily ever after. The lonely fire breathing was never seen again.



Jovie

Miss Kaur - Year 3/4

What an amazing term we've had so far!

It's hard to believe there are only two weeks left until camp.

Let's take a sneak peek at what we've been learning this term:

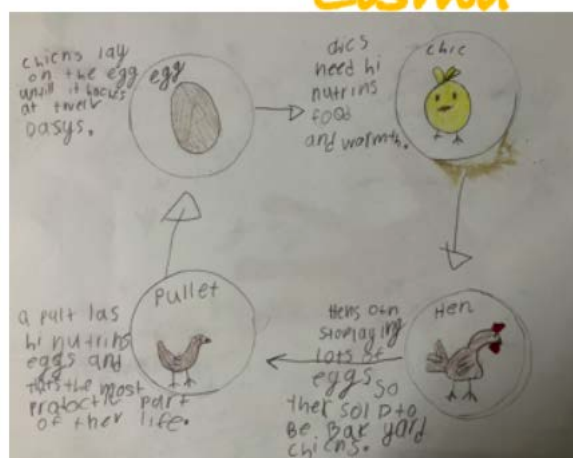
In our linked learning, we've been exploring the world of eggs – from different types of egg farms to the fascinating life cycle of a chicken.



Lilly



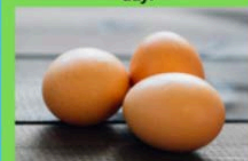
Lisma



Eggs full of more protein thanks to the grubs they eat.



From the chicken to the egg that is laid. Our farm fresh free range eggs will brighten your day.



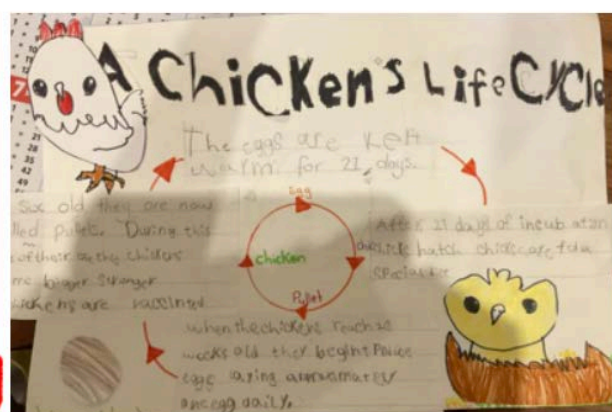
Stress free eggs.



Exercised chooks lay better eggs

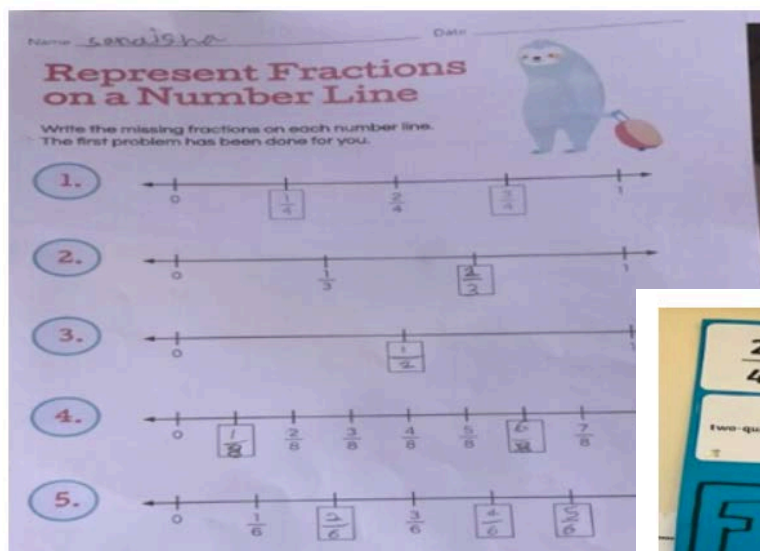
Free Range Eggs

Alex



Timmy

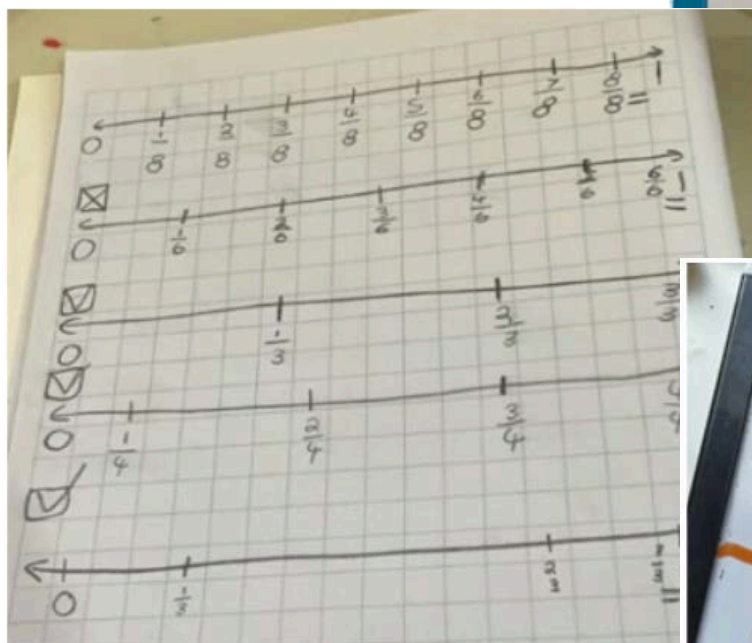
In maths, we've been diving into fractions, learning how to represent them in different ways and how to place them on a number line.



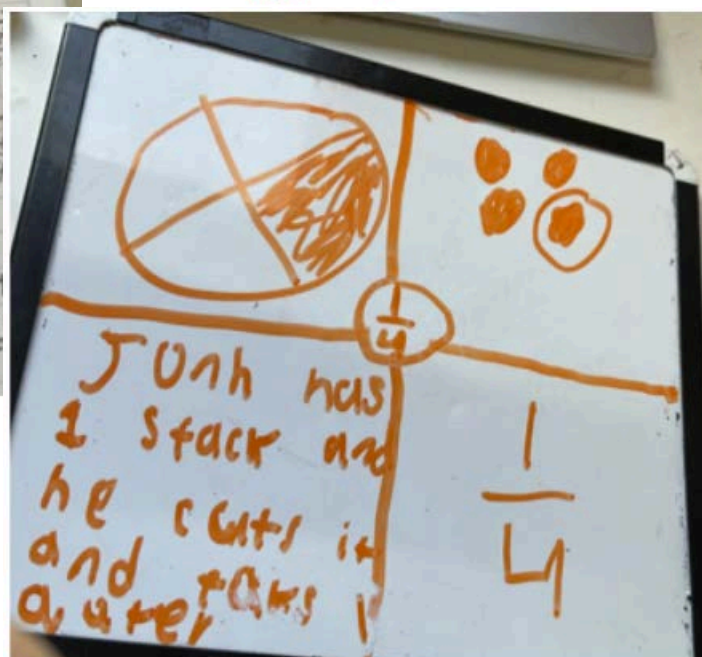
Sanaisha



Jack



Honey-May



Dan

Miss Morley - Year 5/6

Term 2 is coming to a close soon and what a term it has been!

After Canberra, our Year 5/6 students have been busily exploring a range of text types—from personal and factual recounts to online informative texts, and finally persuasive posters and speeches. They have been learning how language choices and structural elements support an author's purpose.

We have also been examining migration throughout the ages, concluding with a research project on a notable migrant Australian of their choice.

In this SOTA Speak we have some of our English work, as well as some of our Linked Learning information profiles and persuasive speeches.

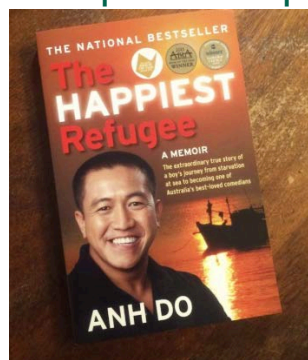
Lawson

His contribution to Australian society



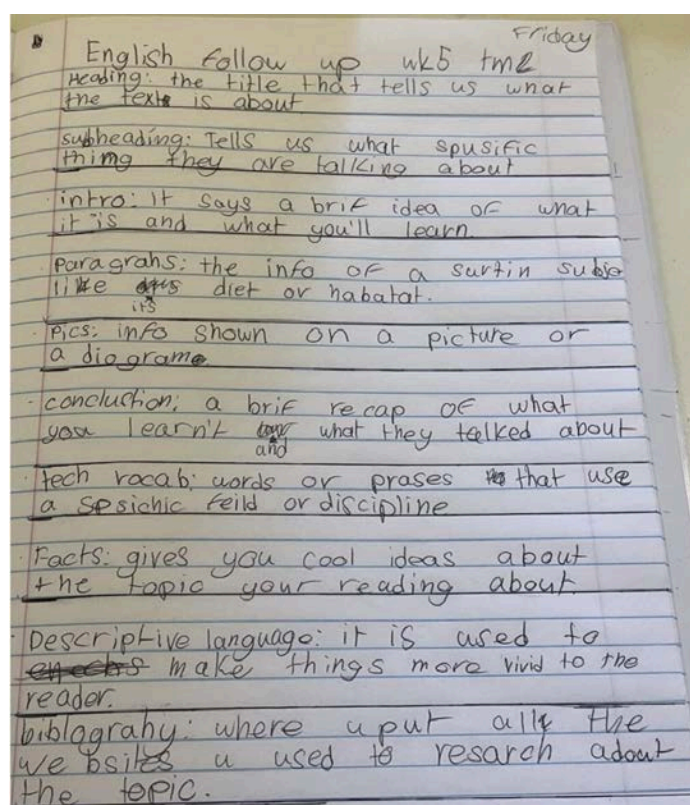
How and why did Ahn Do come to Australia?

- He came to Australia at the age of three
- His family escaped the Vietnam War
- Spent five days on a tiny fishing boat
- Twice attacked by pirates
- Rescued by a German ship



- Ahn Do's has made lots of important contributions to Australia and its people. He has made other refugees happy by being a comedian and always referring to refugees in his jokes. He makes them know they are just like everyone else, and he has also encouraged them to have fun and write books like he did and talk about his upbringing.

Lara



Bonnie



Shaquille



Julia Gillard

1. Historic Leadership

Gillard broke barriers as the **first woman to serve as Australia's Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister**. Her leadership was a significant milestone in Australian politics, inspiring future generations of women in leadership roles.

2. Education Reforms

One of Gillard's most impactful contributions was her **education reforms**, which improved access to quality education at all levels—from early childhood to university. She championed the **Gonski reforms**, which aimed to create a fairer funding model for schools.

3. Economic Management

During the **Global Financial Crisis**, Gillard played a central role in **stabilizing Australia's economy**, ensuring that the country remained resilient while positioning itself to benefit from Asia's economic rise.

4. Social and Healthcare Advancements

Gillard introduced **Australia's first national disability care scheme**, improving support for people with disabilities. She also worked on **aged care and dental care reforms**, ensuring better healthcare accessibility for Australians.

5. Environmental Policies

Her government established an **emissions trading scheme**, a significant step toward addressing climate change and reducing carbon emissions.

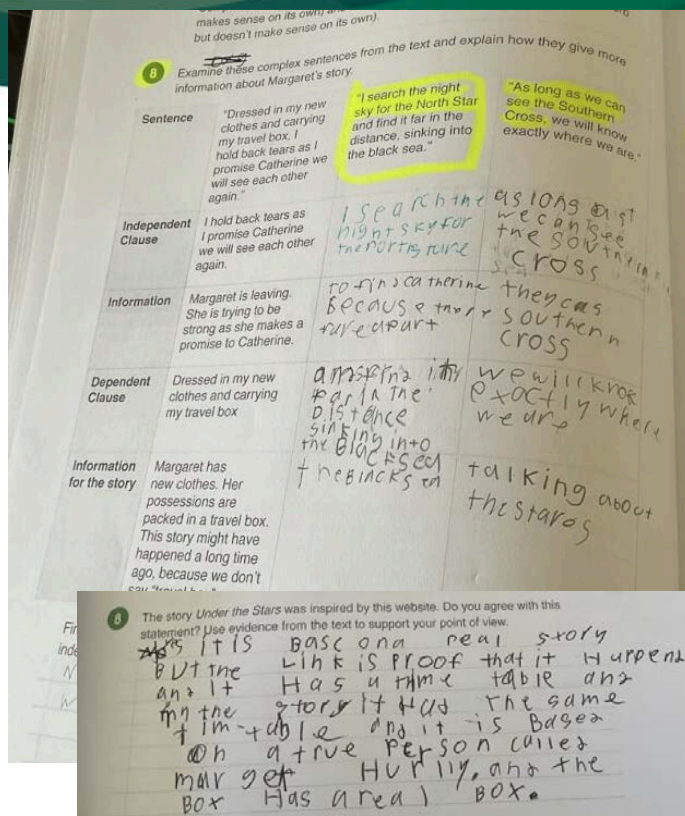
6. Foreign Policy Achievements

Gillard strengthened Australia's **ties with the United States, China, India, Japan, Indonesia, and South Korea**. Under her leadership, Australia was elected to serve on the **United Nations Security Council**, further cementing its global influence.

7. Advocacy for Women

Her **2012 speech on misogyny** gained worldwide attention, highlighting the challenges women face in professional and public life. This speech remains a defining moment in gender equality discussions.

Conclusion



Jayden

George

Usman Khawaja

Do you know the Australian cricket player who has made 5,930 runs and won 139 games? Usman Khawaja started his career in 2011 and is still playing cricket in 2025. Originally born in Pakistan he moved to Australia in 2006 with his family as a 4-year-old. He began playing cricket in high school and started getting better from there. His contribution to cricket and other sports makes him one of the most memorable cricketers to this day. So why should he be in a museum? Well, I am here to answer that question.

Argument 1: Usman Khawaja foundation:

Firstly, Usman Khawaja has created a foundation that is to help disadvantaged kids to play cricket. He does this by creating cricket programs that are played at smaller schools with a range of kids. He shines light on the children that are were just like him at such a young age. His foundation is something that should be well known and celebrated especially in a museum.

Argument 2: pioneer for diversity:

While having this amazing foundation he also creates a more inclusive and diverse atmosphere in cricket. He does this by being the first Muslim and Pakistan born player for Australia. Which further proves my point of Khawaja boosting the diversity within cricket Australia. he cause a positive affect to people visiting the museum by talking about diversity in Australia.

Argument 3: Usman Khawaja cricket career:

From an early age Khawaja showed great interest in cricket. Playing his first game for Australia in 2010 to 2011 ashes series being the 419th Australian to be presented with the baggy green. This was a great day for multicultural cricket players as Khawaja set the scene for diversity in sport.

Argument 4: How do you know your information is true: I know the information is true because I have herd a lot about him on tv, and I read a book on him before that told me a lot of information about him. I have looked threw websites and researched him.

Eli

Ladies and Gentlemen

Do you know who Thon Maker is? Well, if you do, you will know, that he should be in the national museum of Australia and here is why. Firstly, he is super helpful for the community, for example he teaches kids in his Australian community, where he grew up. English. He has changed how Australians see refugees and migrants all over the world. Another reason he is a very successful man, do you know an NBA player, who has gone from high school straight to the NBA? I did not think you would, LeBron James didn't, Steph Curry did not even MICHAEL JORDAN! That is how good Thon Maker is everybody. Even though we are a long way from the U.S.A Thon Maker was still able to make it there and become one of the best overseas players in the world!

When kids who had to walk away from their home and country walk in the museum and see him, they would be flabbergasted to see that Thon Maker is also a refugee, and he had to walk away from his home and country. They would be so happy. Thon Maker had to move from his home, because of the war in Uganda just at five years old. He never had the money to buy sport equipment and proper clothes and food until one day Edward Smith came up to 14-year-old Thon Maker and said I would like to take care of you and make sure you get good sport training and to get good food and clothes. And that is why Thon Maker is a role model to refugees all over the world.

The information is all correct because I got the information of very reliable links for example of the NBA and they would know the best, because Thon Maker is currently an NBA player. All the links include a lot of information and pictures and I compared the links with each other to see if they have the same information.

In conclusion Thon Maker is a very successful and helpful NBA player, and he is a amazing person and he would be a very good person to be shown in an exhibition at a museum and Thon Maker should be remembered as a great NBA player and role model for refugees. Even people in Australia that were thinking bad about refugees change their mind, because of successful stories like Thon Makers.

Thank you so much for your consideration.