

# I love a good story

Workshop for NHT Conference, Wednesday 21 September 2016

## Welcome

- I note we are in the **Reading Room**
- Some people were at my workshop last year – so welcome back!
- 26Ten are represented here as well, so I might ask you a few questions later on

## Objectives

- I'll read to you soon – I know we all love reading and being read to
- I might even tell you some secrets about me as well!

**ASK ALL TO STAND UP – have half sit down and look around**

## Literacy levels:

- ALLS 2008 (*Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey*) – around 50% of Tasmanians do not have the literacy skills needed to participate fully in the new economy
- PIAAC (*Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies*) – 49% of employed people perform below level 3, which is the level considered to be the minimum required to adequately function in society

15 year-old students give us an idea of what we might expect in coming years

- PISA 2012 – Internationally, Australian students perform above the OECD average, but behind such countries such as China, Canada, Japan, Poland, and Estonia
- PISA 2012 – Locally, Tasmanian students consistently performed below all other Australian States on all measures. There were less Tasmanian students performing at the highest level than any other State, and more Tassie students performing at the lowest level than most other States.
- Local results troubling because today's students will be

## Everyday Literacy for Local Communities – Workshop

### My comments on literacy levels

- I actually have a positive view on the figures – I feel we are the most literate we have ever been.
- The literacy issue has become a problem because manufacturing and other industries, where there was once an unskilled workforce, have virtually closed down in Tasmania. The new economy requires a highly literate and agile workforce. If a person is not agile, or has low literacy levels they will be left behind.
- 26TEN is a wonderful idea. I'd like to see more data around the progress the campaign has made.

### Everyday Literacy for Local Communities

ELLC provides grants to Houses, and partnerships Houses have with other organisations, to fund projects that embed literacy in everyday contexts.

### Working with adults

This is one part of the broader spectrum of working with adults

- Neighbourhood Houses provide a safe space for people to be as engaged as they feel comfortable
- Our Stories shows some of the special outcomes achieved by this
- Literacy in context – authentic, we don't see separate categories of knowledge in everyday life, maybe only in the academy
- There are other services to refer adults to when they are ready, or that they access when they are ready

### I can't live without my books

- Where do you read?
  - Toilet;
  - I read to my partner (currently reading *Best Russian Short Stories*)
  - Kindle
  - Still love books!

### **Favourite books**

- Picture books – why? Reasons
  - First books kids fall in love with – lifetime readers/lifetime learners
  - Language often more sophisticated – good way to learn language
  - Most flexible of literary formats – creative for author and reader, broadens minds
  - Interaction between text and illustration – analysis, meaning in visual (we are surrounded by visual images!)
  - Best art being created!
  - Multiple learning styles – visual (written/illustrated), audible (read out loud), kinaesthetic (physical interaction)
  - Good for teaching an idea – presentation can't be misunderstood (start with PB), express powerful message
  - Human relationships – bonding
  - Broadest possible range of audience
  - Short!
- Use with all children – babies, toddlers, older, “book cuddling”, discussion, conversation, questioning

### **Read to you!**

- Lucy's Bay
- The story of the little Mole who knew it was none of his business – all read and discuss, how to use with adults
- Namaste book (which one?)

### **Range of picture books (with some examples)**

- First books
  - Mesmerised
  - Baby face
  - <http://mesmerised.com.au/>
- First language
  - Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?
  - Spot books
- Meta reading (books about reading)
  - The wrong book

## Everyday Literacy for Local Communities – Workshop

- Who's afraid of the big bad book?
- The children who loved books
- A child of books
- The last book before bedtime
- Fairy tales or folktales – archetypal stories, morals, philosophical ideas, ethics, dilemmas
- Fractured fairytales – other perspectives, idea of Other
  - Three little wolves and the big bad pig
  - The true story of the 3 little pigs
  - The three pigs
  - Goldilocks and just one bear
  - The last book before bedtime
- Difficult topics
  - Lucy's Bay (coming to terms with death)
  - Grandma (dementia)
  - Edge of the world (grief)
  - Refugees (humanising refugees)
  - Red tree (depression)
  - Rabbits (terra nullius)
  - The Island (exclusion)
- Humerous
  - Hairy McClary
  - My dad thinks he's funny
- Adults only!
  - All my friends are dead
  - Go the f\*\*k to sleep
  - Zombie McCrombie from an upturned kombi
  - The very hungry bum
  - Where the wild bums are