

Auckland Literacy Association



Language of the Waves

*Ambling through the sand, as the moonlight seeped into the crooning waves,
my full attention diverted towards a certain echo,
Another language, which I now claim as my own, one that's barely a whisper, inaudible but heard
And in its silent beauty it speaks of plain euphoria and ripened days.
The work of Nature's wondrous hand
The language of the waves.*

*by Amber Orquillo
Y 6, age 11
Birkdale Primary School*



ALA EVENT:

PETER JOHNSTON

Professor Emeritus, State University of New York. Peter has a special interest in factors that influence classroom talk and student engagement. He is widely acknowledged for his exemplary research into and writing about how language affects learning.

Includes afternoon tea and dinner

When: 13th November 2018

Time: 4.00pm-9.00pm

Where: Quality Hotel,
Gladstone Road,
Parnell

\$75 for ALA members

\$100 for non-members

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Poetry by Amber Orquillo
- President's Report
- Sponsored Teachers to NZLA Conference
- Marie Clay Literacy Trust Awards
- Report on Dr. Rebecca Jesson's seminar. Partnerships to design more effective literacy instruction for non-dominant communities: The role of design based research.
- Community of Learning-Kāhui Ako. Literacy Leadership in Practice.
- International Conference Round up
- Stunning Library Hub at Papatoetoe West School





NZLA 42nd Conference

Register at:

<https://nzla.org.nz/events/2018-conference-mla-literacy-landscapes/>

Early bird registration extended until 31st August



PRESIDENT'S PEN



Kia ora

I would like to begin my first report as President of the Auckland Literacy Association by thanking Bronwyn Hayward, our Past President, for her outstanding leadership and tireless work on behalf of ALA. Bronwyn and the Executive Committee are the wheels and energy behind the stimulating programmes ALA has offered members over the last two years.

The contributions in this Newsletter are a wonderful example of the breath and calibre of the events we offer and the expertise of our members.

ALA continues to provide high quality professional learning and development at a cost that makes these events accessible to all. Many of us are challenged daily by the widespread nature of Auckland and time consuming travel. Our goal is to spread the seminars across the city to share the travel. At the most recent event with Wayne Mills - Mr Lit Quiz, at The University of Auckland Epsom campus, was attended by several schools from outer Auckland who took the opportunity to also make it a social occasion and enjoy dinner afterwards.

The 2018 programme has featured some remarkable literacy educators and researchers:

- Getting Started with Janet Hawkins, Reading Recovery Tutor and the classroom teachers and literacy leaders from Tirimoana School at Mt Eden Normal Primary,
- Fostering a School Wide Reading Culture with Jo Buchan and Rosemary Tisdall at National Library Service, Parnell
- Partnerships to design more effective literacy instruction for non- dominant communities: the role of Design based Research with Dr Rebecca Jesson, University of Auckland at Redoubt North School.
- And there is more! **SAVE THE DATE** Term 4 Tuesday 13 November for a very special dinner and presentation by Peter Johnston who has been described as the 'rock star' of literacy.

Heather Bell, our ALA secretary and NZLA Delegate, Alice Musuku and I attended the NZLA Annual Meeting in Wellington in June where the Auckland Literacy Association was again awarded Honor Council status. It was an opportunity to network with other regional councils and observe the

professional and collegial operation of the National Executive. We came away full of inspiration and ideas for future events. Tai Tokerau has an impressive membership base for a relatively small population and we are exploring some of the ways they have achieved this by using tools such as mailchimp and social media. Please keep an eye on the ALA Facebook page for practical ideas, updates, events, newsletters, and snippets from around the country. Don't forget to like us and share the page with your friends. <https://www.facebook.com/alanzelaland/>

Membership of ALA has grown since the beginning of the year but we continue to seek ways to expand our base. If each one of our school or individual members recruited one new member we would double our numbers. Let's make this our membership drive challenge!

The New Zealand Literacy Association Annual Conference, 3-5 October 2018 is in Palmerston North. This is an opportunity to deepen your knowledge of literacy, hear national and international speakers and mix with local and overseas literacy educators. ALA is very proud that several of our members are presenting at the conference - Rob Southam and Janet Gaffney are both keynote speakers and Margaret Carter, Janet Hawkins and I are presenting concurrent sessions.

Literacy Forum NZ Volume 33 No 2 2018 has recently has been posted to members. The responsibility of assembling the content is rotated among the regional literacy associations and this edition was Auckland's turn. A huge thank you to those who contributed to Literacy Forum NZ and especially to Heather Bell for pulling it all together, editing the items and liaising with the editor Mal Thompson. Some previous editions (2017/2018) are available on the NZLA website.

<https://nzla.org.nz/literacy-forum/volumes/>

Planning for an exciting and enriching programme in 2019 is already underway. We aim to offer a range of topics and presenters that address current issues and research in literacy, are fun, motivating and practical. Later this term we will survey our members about which type of events appeal. Would you like a mystery bus tour of three schools followed by a keynote speaker and dinner or a Saturday seminar with two or three keynote speakers and a selection of workshops? In May this year ninety teachers attended such a day in Whangarei organised by Tai Tokerau Literacy Association. Please contact us if you know of excellent literacy practice in schools or have topics you wish to be included in the future.

Thank you to all members for your support as we work together towards the NZLA Vision:
Growth Through Literacy.

Naku te rourou nau te rourou ka ora ai te iwi

With your basket and my basket the people will live

Ka kite ano

Sue Court

President
Auckland Literacy Association

SPONSORED TEACHERS TO NZLA CONFERENCE

Each year the Auckland Literacy Association sponsors a number of teachers to attend the national literacy conference. This initiative was begun in 1998 when Marie Clay secretly paid the registration for one young teacher (teaching for six years or less and now called the Early Career teacher) from every NZLA council in New Zealand, to attend the 2000 International Reading Association World Congress on Reading, which was held in Auckland. This was a success and so Marie decided to fund this again in subsequent years. The Marie Clay Literacy Trust still contributes to the funding for one Early Career Teacher and one experienced teacher from each council. In Auckland we decided many years ago that we would add to this sponsorship by also paying for travel and accommodation and a koha towards expenses. Applications are open to any individual ALA members or teachers whose schools are financial members. The ALA has gained some excellent executive members who have been recipients of these sponsorships, and we are always delighted to have people 'pay it forward' by supporting ALA in this way. Applications are advertised during Term 1 each year.

The 2018 successful teachers are

Natalie MAKEEF from Edmonton Primary School is the Marie Clay Literacy Trust Early Career Teacher recipient

Margaret CARTER from Tirimoana Primary School is the Marie Clay Literacy Trust Experienced Teacher recipient

Debbie DONAGHY from Oratia District School, and

Miriana CHRISTENSEN from Tirimoana Primary School were also both successful recipients.



Are you thinking about studying or attending a literacy conference?

Checkout NZLA Research Scholarships and Awards at

<https://nzla.org.nz/scholarships-and-awards/>

Dr Rebecca Jesson spoke to ALA members on 30th May 2018 at Redoubt North School, Manukau



PARTNERSHIPS TO DESIGN MORE EFFECTIVE LITERACY INSTRUCTION FOR NON-DOMINANT COMMUNITIES: THE ROLE OF DESIGN BASED RESEARCH

Over sixty teachers, school executives, academics and researchers attended the seminar by Dr Rebecca Jesson, the Associate Head of School: Research, School of Curriculum and Pedagogy and Associate Director, Woolf Fisher Research Centre, Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Auckland.

Rebecca had some intriguing ideas to try and turn the traditional approach of research on its head by reframing what research can do when working with teachers, therefore changing the conversation. She proposed designing something about practice that will meet the needs of learners, understand it in context, and then theoretically understand it. Rebecca suggested that research cannot fix all problems and that teachers are already finding their own ways to solve problems, so her approach harnessed those teacher ideas through testing a variety of hypotheses to establish what was working to increase the literacy of children across Aotearoa.

The way to make connections with learners and develop responsive pedagogies to assist literacy learning is to look at the environment in which a child is working and interacting with all components of that environment, particularly the people. Rebecca highlighted the importance of perspective, and how each person's perspectives can differ. It is vital to take into account the perspective of all those within a child's learning environment in order for change to happen. The idea is to create a better system from the inside out. A child's environment is an ever evolving concept and should always be taken into consideration when thinking about teaching practice.

Design based research allows practice knowledge to be captured and tested in order to negotiate a shared understanding of what works and what perhaps doesn't work. Some examples from Rebecca's research which have resulted in higher e-asTTle scores in the sample included; having extended writing, critical thinking and open ended activities as part of teaching practice. Rebecca reported results that showed an improvement in writing in digital learning environments.

Through engaging in a partnership and by harnessing the expertise of teachers a co-development of knowledge can occur and evolve into even better teaching practices. Rebecca highlighted the excellent education system we have in New Zealand whose aim is to overcome inequities and restraints to ensure equal access and positive outcomes.



As part of taking ALA events across Auckland, we would like to thank Jane Milner, Principal of Redoubt North School, and her staff for hosting a very stimulating afternoon. Before the seminar the school invited us to explore their specially designed library which was full of intriguing literature displays, and nooks and crannies where students could tuck themselves away with a favourite book.

Nicola Russell
Tirimoana School

COMMUNITY OF LEARNING-KĀHUI AKO IN PRACTICE

As a Community of Learning (COL) Literacy Leader at Tirimoana it has been my role to promote best teaching practice, strengthen the use of an inquiry approach (to teaching and learning, accomplish shared achievement challenges in literacy for our school and to transfer learning to new situations (Timperley, Kaser & Halbert, 2014). The COL worked closely alongside other leaders at Tirimoana and across the Te Atatu Community of Schools to facilitate this inquiry *Lifting Literacy within Tirimoana*.

Scanning

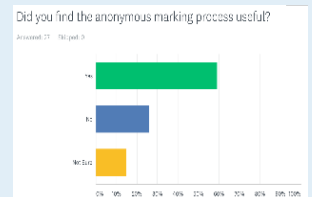
Through the scanning process we gathered data from colleagues and learners to clearly identify what was happening at each level of the school and how this connected to the school's literacy achievement challenges. This process raised hunches along with more questions such as 'What were the biggest gaps?' and 'How could worthy models be shared and replicated across the wider school?' Also, as a COL leader 'Had I contributed to this, had I collaborated enough and shared my practice with colleagues or set high enough expectations?'



Focusing

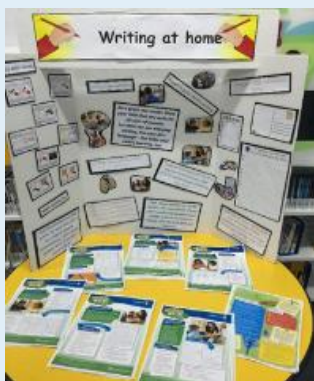


What were our priorities and what additional evidence would be needed? It was important to collate data from teacher surveys and whanau voice, learners' writing samples and professional readings to identify strengths within Tirimoana along with some areas of focus.



Developing a Hunch

The COL's next questions were "Where to start?" "Which hunches would make the biggest difference first?"



Communication with Stakeholders imperative

A 'Writing 'Hui' for whanau was an integral part to lifting literacy standards. It gave the COL insights into what caregivers wanted to know and believed was important in writing. It gave whanau an opportunity to gain greater clarity on what happens in writing at school.

For Tirimoana being a part of the COL empowered the 'Writing Hui', as it was supported by teachers from both the local intermediate and college. This powerful forum allowed parents to hear the same literary messages applied not just within our school, but as their children transitioned through to higher education.

Craft

Write your ideas:

- into sentences that make sense
- in a sensible and ordered way
- include all the information the audience needs
- in a way that entertains, informs, or persuades your audience
- record the words and sounds you know
- include punctuation as you write

Rework

Reread and change so your writing:

- makes sense
- has everything the audience needs
- uses language and vocabulary to entertain, inform, or persuade the audience

A 'Common Literacy Language'

This was achieved through the COL devising "Writing Stages Cards" based on research by Murray Gadd. These acted like anchor charts for both teachers and learners showing progressions in writing which could be taught over a series of lessons.

Checking

As a COL Literacy Leader, I had to ask What made the biggest difference? and Where to from here? We achieved the goal to help lift literacy achievement standards across Tirimoana and transfer worthy models of literacy practice throughout the school without overwhelming teachers. The COL's inquiry had lifted professional practice knowledge and understanding of curriculum expectations, developed common literacy language across the school and increased awareness of the progression of writing. Teachers could better recognize aspects of their level by taking greater notice of the evidence in the writing (this was apparent during team moderation) and using a combined rubric with aspects from after Year 1 to Year 7. As a result teachers were able to respond more accurately to learners' gaps by targeting writing needs. Finally, the system for moderation was effective because teachers had confidence that their colleagues' marking was more closely aligned with their own.

A key learning as a COL Literacy Leader was to be available and to contribute worthy practices across the school, to help develop teacher professional knowledge collectively to lift literacy practice and to better develop student agency so learners themselves could easily recognise and state their own writing goals and respond to feedback.

The inquiry implementation had been successful. It gave staff a broader understanding of the NZ Curriculum. It provided a system upon which to base moderation and the new Tirimoana Literacy Progression Rubric was able to be used instantly as a GAP analysis tool to target individual or groups of learners and formulate next teaching steps in planning to further lift achievement.

Margaret Carter
COL Literacy Leader, Tirimoana Primary

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ROUND UP

RETHINKING LITERACY, RETHINKING NUMERACY AND RETHINKING LEARNING CONFERENCE

Singapore - United World College Dover Campus (UWCDC) 24 - 26 May 2018

Across the Pre-conference and Conference days, 280 educators from 101 schools and 19 countries came together at the reThinking Learning Summit. Overall, the conference was extremely well organised and the calibre of the presenters was outstanding. The pre-conference day was a personal highlight as I have known the work of presenter Carl Anderson for a few years so to spend a full day with him was fantastic. He shared lots of practical pointers and guidance around ways to use mentor texts effectively. Mentor texts are an essential part of the Reader Writer Workshop model. Over the two main days of the conference there was a wide range of practical workshops available across Literacy, Numeracy and Project Based Learning areas; attendees were free to jump in on any of the workshops in any of the areas. This flexibility enabled me to attend a wide range of workshops across Literacy and Project Based Learning. Two particular workshops of excitement were filmmaking and Project based Learning with the Director of Middle School from High Tech High in San Diego.

Aylene Fitzgerald, Ormiston Junior College

ALEVAATE 2018 CONFERENCE

THE ART OF ENGLISH: Language, Literature, literacy

The conference was held in the Western Australian city of Perth, next to the sweeping Swan River and close to the Perth CBD. The attraction of both were not sufficient to detract from the excellent programme content or encourage absenteeism.

The theme was clever, with its three strands - English as an Art, English and the Arts, and English through the Arts. Each keynote speaker elaborated different aspects of the strands, reflected on history, considered the impact of research and promoted many examples of effective pedagogical practice. The 700+ participants were treated to a wide range of concurrent sessions with some that were a follow-up from a keynote presentation and others a variety of practical and theoretical workshops.

Writing was a major thrust for many of the speakers. Dominic Wyse (UK) delivered the Donald Graves Memorial Address (Choice, voice and process: how writing should be taught in the 21st century, Rod Quinn (Australia) delivered the annual Garth Boomer address (Articulate English Teaching) and our own Terry Locke (Waikato) added very skilfully with *We are all writers*. Their content resonated so thoroughly with what we know as effective practice - these are my synthesised notes about what we should be doing.

- Increase the amount of writing we do;
- Create a supportive writing culture (enthusiasm, scaffold learning, promote independence, have clear and relevant goals);
- Develop children's skills, strategies and knowledge (planning, revising, editing, knowing about creating and writing process);
- Teach children about self-regulation and support their being self-regulating;
- Use and articulate effective, consistent principles for assessment for learning, and make learning explicit;
- Teach keyboard use and handwriting; and
- Teach writing across the curriculum (different texts for different purposes).

Underlying these were the following.

- Written language is both static and constantly changing so we need to encourage analysis and the creation of 'real' language.
- Standards of language are socially determined.
- Language is a tool for thought.
- Creativity is essential so we must allow time for the incubation of ideas.
- We have to encourage reflection of what is original and what matters.
- We MUST build confidence in our children, our teachers and ourselves.

My other area of interest was literature. Of course, Mem Fox led the way, being as inspirational as ever - her knowledge of and enthusiasm for poetry was evident and infectious. She exhorted (in her superbly feisty style) to avoid using 'comprehension questions' when we're sharing poetry. With other literature presenters, I have another list of 'must reads'.

A wonderful workshop featured Language and the Arts and the presenters used a picture book to explore the life of an asylum seeker, with numerous strategies presented that use drama as a bridge to reading and writing. The framework they used was comprehensive and fun to use. I hope that these three presenters (Evelyn Chapman, Lona Gill and Kim Summers) might be able to present their session at the Canterbury NZLA conference in Christchurch next year.

Next year's ALEA conference will be held at the Pullman Hotel in Melbourne from 9 - 12 July. The theme is Literacy Empowering Voices. This will be an ALEA conference without AATE. More information later!

Heather Bell

STUNNING LIBRARY HUB AT PAPATOETOE WEST SCHOOL

Jorge Luis Borges said that *'I have always imagined that paradise will be a kind of library.'* This rings true for the Wonder Hub (library) at Papatoetoe West School. After a cosmetic makeover the Wonder Hub has become 'Neverland' for children to explore, create, imagine, and develop a new passion for books. Children flock to this fascinating destination to learn, to interact with others and, most importantly, wonder. Wonder about technology, wonder about our different cultures, wonder about new books and wonder about the things in this world that leave us speechless.



Alana Sutton, Papatoetoe West School