



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations



MONASH University



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**ORAL LANGUAGE SUPPORTING EARLY LITERACY RESEARCH PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT  
1 JULY 2010**

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**1. School-Based Demonstrations**

As part of the project's school-based support, the OLSEL Project Officer has made ongoing visits to all eight research schools for consultation with OLSEL Professional Learning Teams as well as to undertake classroom demonstrations. Classroom-based activities observed have demonstrated the use of colourful semantics and story grammar with Prep, Year 1 & Year 2 classes.

The focus of the story grammar activity has been to facilitate a joint narrative development by the students through the use of scaffold questions consistent with the story grammar sequence, i.e.

- Setting
- Initiating Event
- Internal Response
- Internal Plan
- Attempt
- Consequence
- Formal Ending

A single picture stimulus was used and students were also involved in re-telling activities at the end of the joint narrative development session. In a number of schools, teachers then followed up this oral activity by encouraging students to write their narrative re-telling. In one school, a Year 1 teacher used this approach in a religious education activity focused on the Wedding of Cana. Examples of some of the Year 1 students' narrative writing based on the oral narrative activity follow:

*One day when Mary and Jesus were invited to a wedding feast, they had run out of wine. The father of the bride felt embarrassed. Mary asked Jesus to help out. Jesus told his servants to fill up three jugs of water. The servants brought the three jugs back. Jesus blessed the water. The servants gave the best wine out to the guests.*

*One day Mary and Jesus were invited to a wedding in Cana. They had run out of wine. The father of the bride felt embarrassed. Mary whispered into Jesus' ear, "Can you help?" Jesus asked the servants to fill up the jugs of water. Someone tasted the wine. It was the best wine of all.*

*Jesus and Mary were invited to a wedding in Cana. The guests noticed they had run out of wine. The father of the bride was embarrassed. Mary asked Jesus to help. Jesus asked the servant to fill six jugs to the top. One guest tasted the wine and it became the best wine of all.*

*Mary and Jesus were invited to a wedding. Mary noticed that they had run out of wine. The father of the bride was embarrassed. Then Mary whispered into Jesus' ear to help out because she was a caring person. Jesus asked the servant to fill up jugs of water then Jesus blessed the water. The servants served it to the guests. The guests loved it.*

*One day Mary and Jesus were invited to a wedding feast then they ran out of wine. The father was embarrassed and Mary was caring. Then Mary asked Jesus to help. Then Jesus whispered to the servants to fill the jugs with water. Then they gave it to the guests. This was the first miracle.*

*One day Jesus and Mary were invited to a wedding feast at Cana. There was no more wine. The father of the bride was very embarrassed. Mary whispered in Jesus' ear, "They have run out of wine." He told the servants to get the jugs of water. They drank the wine. It was the very best wine.*

## 2. OLSEL Website

The project website continues to be updated providing an increasing range of resources and activities which can be used by teachers both with students and parents. A number of these resources have been developed, trialled and refined by teachers in the research schools and so have outstanding school applicability. In addition, reports on the progress of the OLSEL project are available along with other evidence-based research articles outlining the relative effects of teaching activities.

The website is managed by Ms Brenda Dalheim (School Adviser, Student Services-Catholic Education Office Melbourne & Placed Lecturer, Early Literacy Intervention – Melbourne Graduate school of Education, University of Melbourne).



Website address:

[www.olsel.catholic.edu.au](http://www.olsel.catholic.edu.au)

3. **Literacy & Numeracy Pilots in Low SES Communities Forum (Facilitated by Department of Education & Early Childhood Development)**

A forum involving personnel from the three education sectors participating in the DEEWR funded pilot projects was held at the Mecure Hotel, Spring Street, Melbourne on 21/6/2010. The focus of the presentations from research project personnel was on intervention activities being undertaken. Details of sessions conducted on the day are as follows:

A. Department of Education & Early Childhood Development)

**Interventions including Reading Recovery in Western Metropolitan Region Pilot Schools**

Presenter: Toula Anailas – Intervention Project Officer (Reading Recovery Tutor) WMR  
Interventions such as Reading Recovery are connected to the classroom and ensure support for students by embedding strategies and skills in teacher practice.

**Hume Region Numeracy Intervention in Pilot Schools**

Presenter: Michelle Bootes – Numeracy Coach, Euroa Secondary College  
The Numeracy Coach team teaches with other teachers in Years 7 and 8 and models best practice and supports teachers in ongoing monitoring of and planning for student progress.

B. Catholic Education Commission of Victoria

**Colourful Semantics**

Presenters: Ms Cath Morrissy and Ms Lisa Decker, Speech Pathologists (Western Regional Office, Catholic Education Office Melbourne).

The Colourful Semantics Approach –originally designed in the UK - has been redeveloped by the Catholic Education Office Speech Pathologists and is now implemented both as one component of a broader teaching strategy which focuses on the development of oral language skills across the curriculum and as an individual student intervention.

C. Independent Schools Victoria

**Pilot Literacy and Numeracy Networks (PLANN) Program Logic**

Presenters: Ann Beck, Anna Bennett and Vicki Simmonds, Network facilitators for the Gippsland and Mallee Networks

Network Facilitators will use the PLANN Program Logic to explain the effectiveness of literacy and numeracy interventions in catering for students in their networks.