

# The 5-8 project: Improving Literacy and Numeracy



**Faculty of  
Education  
seminar**

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**FACULTY OF  
EDUCATION**

# The 5-8 project: Improving Literacy and Numeracy Project Team

Project members	Responsibilities
Sharon Fraser	Project Leader Scottsdale Cluster Liaison
Kim Beswick	Project Leader
Peter Brett	Penguin Cluster Liaison
David Moltow	Tasman Cluster Liaison
Tracey Muir	New Town – Ogilvie Cluster Liaison

- With additional and important contributors from Faculty staff leading individual cluster professional learning throughout the two years
- With Ian Hay and Rosemary Callingham pivotal in the first year (2013) of the project and the former being the original Project Leader and instigator of the proposal.

# Project Goals



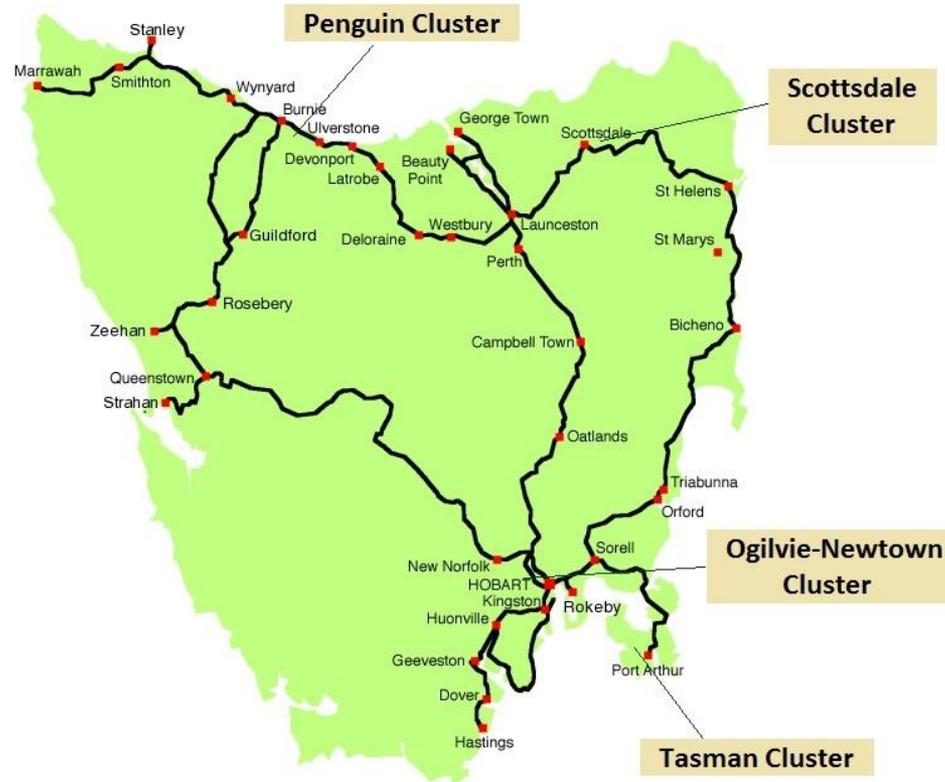
Throughout 2013 and 2014 the Faculty worked with the Tasmanian Department of Education:

- focussed on improving literacy and numeracy across years 5-8
- in response to the outcomes of the NAPLAN results in years 7 and 9.

The project aims were to work with schools in regional clusters to:

1. improve literacy and numeracy outcomes of high school students, targeting the transition from primary to high school;
2. focus on teacher professional learning through an exploration of issues, sharing best practice pedagogy, beliefs and practices; and
3. develop and trial initiatives that may be transferable to all Tasmanian government schools.

# Project Clusters



# Project Negotiation: initial steps

The Project Leader, Professor Ian Hay and the other members of the original bid selected Education staff members to participate as Cluster Liaison:

- Appropriate and relevant expertise and where possible, were conveniently located to the Cluster Districts.

Subsequently, Ian Hay and the Cluster Liaison:

- Met with each school cluster leadership group to commence the scoping of their project.
- The school leaders were asked to:
  - Review the objectives of their projects;
  - Confirm both their selection of participating teachers, and their targeted area of concern that impacted on transition from primary to secondary school.



# Project Negotiation: Cluster partnership

Cluster liaison worked closely with teachers from each of the cluster schools and their Literacy and Numeracy Lead teachers.

The initial goals were to:

- Identify and trial agreed upon in-school and in-class initiatives and negotiate appropriate professional learning;
- Monitor the on-going development of the projects and the outcomes associated with each setting;
- Set curriculum milestones, student learning outcomes, and school and professional benchmarks;
- Evaluate formally and informally each agreed upon initiative over the course of the project.



# Project Focus: Cluster activities

- Exploring issues, sharing best practice pedagogy, beliefs and practices:
  - investigate how the performance of students in Years 7 and 9 can be improved;
- Engagement, transition, and retention:
  - through a common approach to literacy and numeracy within cluster schools;
- Transition from primary to high school:
  - key determinant of likely success (curricular and pedagogic transition around literacy and numeracy practices; social/cultural transition);
- Identifying specific areas of literacy/numeracy as areas for development:
  - analysis of NAPLAN achievement data.





# Project Methodology: Cluster questions

Cluster	AR research question
New Town - Ogilvie	In what ways can quality practices, that are consistently implemented across grades 5-8, improve student achievement?
Tasman	How can the development of collaborative learning communities enhance transition and student learning for years 5-8 at Tasman District School?
Scottsdale	How does the consistent use of strategies that make thinking visible across Grades 5-8 improve students' comprehension and problem solving abilities?
Penguin	How can more focused planning – at the strategic, year group, and classroom level – deepen student understanding around comprehension of information texts, persuasive writing and the language of mathematics and contribute to wider improvement in children's achievement in literacy and numeracy?

## Project Methodology - 2013

- Cluster Liaison worked closely with their groups:
  - Utilising 8 professional learning (PL) days available to each cluster (paid for by the DoE);
  - Format negotiated with the participating principals and teachers – 2 days per term;
  - aligned with the needs / status of the individual project.
- Cluster liaisons met outside of the PL days, to plan and debrief project progress.
- Literacy / english and numeracy / maths experts were co-opted as the AR unfolded to work with whole groups or individual teachers.
- Work was undertaken during term time in classrooms



# Project Methodology - 2014

- Cluster Liaison worked closely with their groups:
  - Using the hours of available for 8 professional learning (PL) days but utilising them differently (e.g. 2 full time day as a group with flexi-PL throughout the term).
- Focus of the project moved from individual teacher capacity building to:
  - Building on 2013 learning;
  - Embedding sustainable practice within participating schools;
  - Student learning outcomes;
  - Dissemination and transferability.



# Project Cluster Research Question: Penguin

How can more focused planning – at the strategic, year group, and classroom level – deepen student understanding around comprehension of information texts, persuasive writing and the language of mathematics and contribute to wider improvement in children’s achievement in literacy and numeracy?

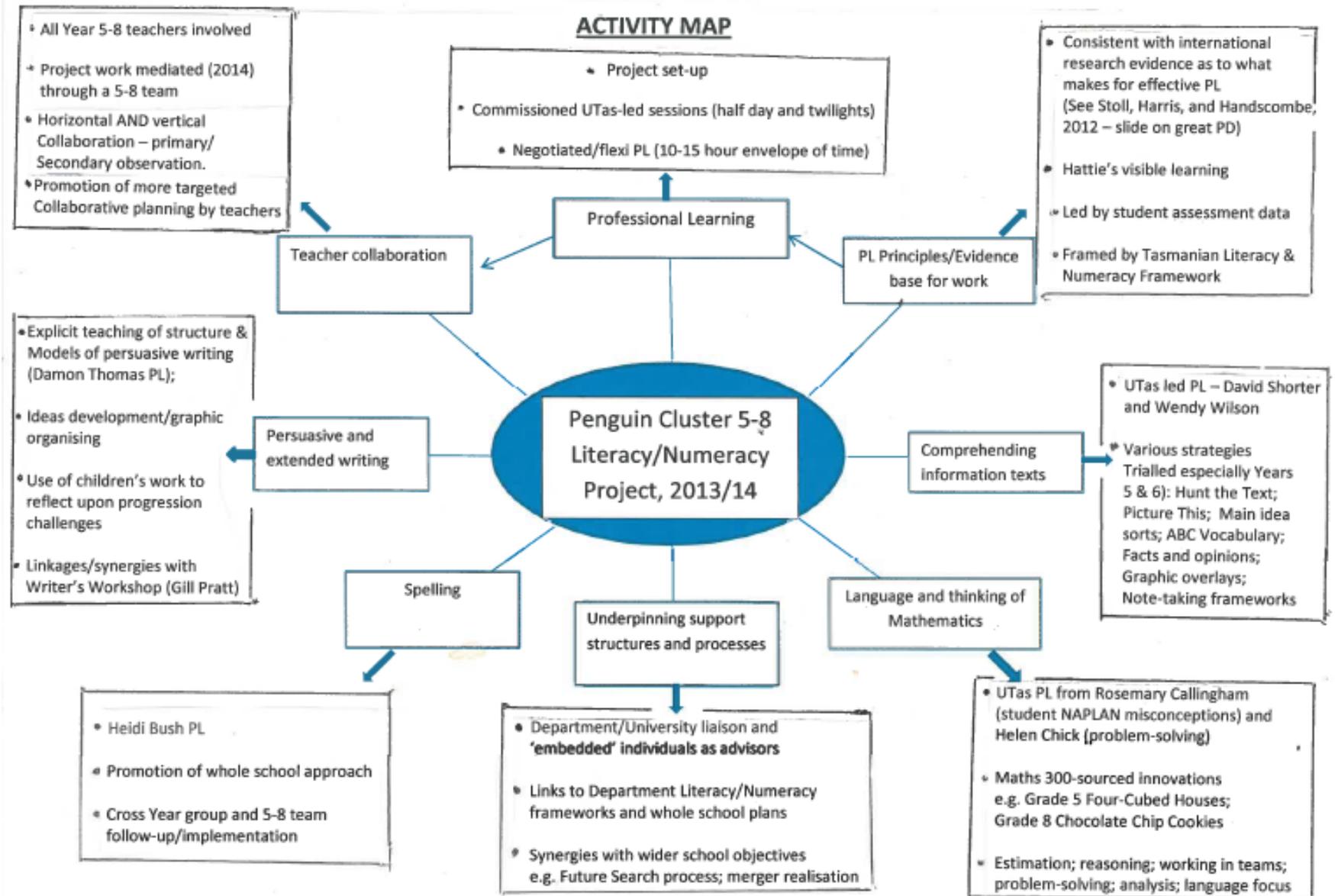


# Project Cluster Summary: Penguin

- Range of professional learning to model best practice and explicit teaching of classroom strategies;
- Plenty of joined-up activity [See next slide];
- Creation of a Year 5-8 team, meeting on a weekly basis;
- In 2014, flexi-PL time provided for collaboration and focused activity;
- Children's work and action research ideals and the centre of our thinking;
- The project seated within – not bolted on to – evolving school structures and systems.



## ACTIVITY MAP



# Project Cluster Research Question: New Town - Ogilvie

In what ways can quality practices, that are consistently implemented across grades 5-8, improve student achievement?



# Project Cluster Summary: New Town - Ogilvie

- Increased communication between schools;
- Common language - Consistency of terms/vocabulary;
- Terminology – no need for students to “relearn” in high school;
- Consistent use of concrete materials (decipipes etc);
- Confidence - Good to realise that we are all “on the same page”;
- Collective shift in some of our thinking/language;



# Project Cluster Summary: New Town - Ogilvie

- We have more understanding of where place value sits in the curriculum;
- Benefit in seeing how different schools operate and teach place value;
- More aware of what grades above and below are doing;
- Sharing across grade levels to know where students need to get to ...;
- Development of common lesson plans.



# Project Cluster Research Question: Tasman

How can the development of collaborative learning communities enhance transition and student learning for years 5-8 at Tasman District School?



# Project Cluster Summary: Tasman

- To plan, implement and monitor lessons to improve student knowledge of *proportional reasoning*;
- ‘SMART’ goal: to implement a collaborative planning process that informs teaching to enhance transition through years 5 – 8:
- 2013:
  - a schedule of fortnightly meetings
  - focussed on planning for achieving the teaching and assessment curriculum priorities
  - unpack and refine the principles, processes and protocols of the ‘SMART’ goal.



# Project Cluster Summary: Tasman

- Used an AR Reflective Tool - principal reflective tool for the project
- 2014
  - Uni-assisted peer review
  - Uni-assisted (scaffolded) facilitation of observation, feedback and review cycle:
    - Piloted successfully in Term 2 rolled out in Term 4, 2014



Leading to a community of practice approach to collaborative planning, implementation and review for improved student learning and transition

# Project Cluster Research Question: Scottsdale

How does the consistent use of strategies that make thinking visible across Grades 5-8 improve students' comprehension and problem solving abilities?



# Project Cluster Summary: Scottsdale

Reconceptualisation of Literature Circles (LC) as Numeracy Circles (NC) for enhanced comprehension;

Enhanced process and supporting documentation developed for LC and NC:

- Increased teacher and student capacities for undertaking LC and NC;
- Evidence of enhanced proficiency of children engaging with LC (SHS – 2014);
- Improved teacher confidence in children's ability to solve problems and comprehend texts;
- Draft assessment LC and NC rubrics implemented;
- Enhanced development of both curriculum skills and 21<sup>st</sup> Century capabilities e.g. collaborative learning, critical thinking, reflective practice.



# Project Cluster Summary: Scottsdale

- Enhanced development of both curriculum skills and 21<sup>st</sup> Century capabilities

Enhanced processes for and understandings of transition within the NE cluster:

Enabled “systemness” throughout the NE cluster:

- Building of shared purpose, thinking and practices with agreed goals and actions with a focus on sustainability of initiatives.

Enhanced leadership of NE cluster principals.

Creation of draft LC and NC resource pack for distribution.

Creation of draft LC and NC comprehension framework for distribution.

