Paringa Park Primary School  
Morning talks

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<th>Morning talks</th>
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<td>Summary</td>
<td>This educator challenged her understandings of the application of the SACSA Framework to morning talks. By engaging more deeply with the Key Ideas and Outcomes, she created a program with greater rigour and more satisfying learning opportunities.</td>
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<td>Band</td>
<td>Early Years—Junior Primary</td>
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<td>Context</td>
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<td>Learning Area</td>
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<td>Timeline</td>
<td>1 term</td>
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<td>School</td>
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<td>Julie Baillie</td>
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The Vision
This is the teacher's third year at Paringa Park Primary School. She had previously been teaching in the Riverland, where she was heavily involved in the Riverland small schools network. At her previous school she was acting site manager, working with the Quality Assessment Tasks, and trialling Key Competencies and the SACSA Framework. She considers herself to be a lifelong learner, embracing opportunities to trial new methodologies and pedagogies.

Having been involved in the writing team for the SACSA English Teaching Resources (Companion Documents) in 2002 and 2003, the teacher was well placed to share these resources with other staff at Paringa Park Primary School and dispel any misconceptions about the SACSA Framework. Later she also became involved in consultation workshops for the evaluation of the draft materials, requiring her to examine in detail the Key Ideas to clarify further the distinctions between the strands of texts and contexts, language and strategies.

_SACSA is not saying 'out with the old and in with the new': it's saying the learning environment has changed and learners have changed, so let's look at it a different way._

Starting with a good grounding in content knowledge, she recommends looking at the big picture, such as the Key Ideas, and seeing where they can be incorporated into the learning program.

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The Journey
The educator has conducted a number of workshops on the SACSA Framework with staff, both from Paringa Park Primary School and other schools. She found that frequently teachers were reluctant to work with the SACSA Framework, as they were particularly daunted by the SACSA Framework folder. Her recommendation was to return it to the shelf and begin by unpacking a small area of the SACSA Framework at a time.

*It needs to be real—trying to tackle too much at once just challenges thinking too much and makes the task too daunting.*

SACSA Framework planning day
In May, the school held a SACSA Framework planning day, which included planning with Essential Learnings, Key Competencies, ICTs and equity, and where participants walked through the process of connecting the links through the SACSA Framework.

Teachers came up with the following recommendations for planning:

1. Come up with your concept—big picture
2. Find out what your learners know
3. Think about what is the content, process, understanding and the resources that you need
4. Start writing your learning activities
5. Re-jig learning activities bringing in:
   - Constructivism
   - EVE—Key Competencies
   - Equity
   - ICTs
   - Essential Learnings
   - Learning Areas, strands and Key Ideas
   - Standards Outcomes
   - Assessment methods

and bring each of these back to the learning activities as you're devising them; ask yourself each step of the way, for example:

- What is the Essential Learning that I am focusing on here?

The team used an outback unit, written and presented at an earlier SACSA Spotlight Seminar by Maggie Gibson, to further demonstrate programming with the SACSA Framework and how to incorporate other elements, such as Bloom's Taxonomy.

From planning to practice
How to apply this to her own teaching was the next question for this teacher, who has a good knowledge of content and embraces the SACSA Framework wholeheartedly. Although she says she does not know all the answers, having a good knowledge of

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content is an excellent start when planning with the SACSA Framework, because she can then focus on the big picture.

*Here's my content, the benchmark, and I can look at a Key Idea as it was meant to be and look at the Outcomes.*

Nevertheless, because of her knowledge of content, she frequently went into teaching, particularly in areas with which she was familiar, without formally planning around SACSA Outcomes.

She challenged her understandings by engaging more deeply with the Outcomes for Early Years in speaking and listening, and applying these to an area which she had previously less formally planned for—morning talks. 'The Program' section of this website explains her planning process in greater depth.

**The Program**
The Early Years teacher recognised that her familiarity with the modes of reading and writing enabled her to engage more deeply with any Outcomes relating to these modes. However, she felt less able to engage in equal measure with Outcomes relating to listening and speaking.

She decided to challenge herself on an area with which she was less familiar—listening and speaking for formal oral language. Using the SACSA Companion Document—the draft R–7 Teaching Resource for English—she examined the oral language descriptors in each of the strands to determine how she could incorporate them into her program. This she found an extremely useful task which lead to a program with considerably more rigour.

**Creating a program**
A PowerPoint presentation on the website demonstrates in detail how the teacher planned her program using the draft Companion Documents. The finalised version of the Companion Documents will be available to teachers early in 2004, accessible at www.sacsa.sa.edu.au/companion

**Reflections on the planning process**
The educator stresses the importance of working with all three strands in English. *You can't talk about appropriate language and strategies if you don't consider audience and text.*

Her program therefore includes explicit teaching of:

- audience (for whom are we writing?)
- genre (with the topic acting only as the vehicle)
- tone and tenor, dictated by the two points above. What should this writing or speaking look/sound/feel like?

For example, in teaching about narrative genre, she concentrated on comparing, contrasting and planning for a wide range of other genres including, for example:

- shopping lists, which the children know do not need to be typed up and be perfectly neat
- information reports, where children understand that 'Once upon a time...' is an inappropriate opening.

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Referring once again to the English Companion Document, this exercise would meet the following year 1 descriptors:

| Texts and contexts—Outcome 1.4 | • Develops an awareness of the purposes of genres.  
|                               | • Begins to write for a purpose, recognising the audience for the writing. |
| Language—Outcome 1.8          | • Writes a short text modelled on a genre. |
| Strategies—Outcome 1.12      | • Attempts to plan writing—discusses ideas for writing. |

This integrated, holistic approach ensures a program with rigour.

**Reporting to parents**

The school reports to parents using the following proformas. Reports cover each of the eight Learning Areas, as well as demonstrations of understandings of the Essential Learnings.