Implementing the Four Blocks® Literacy Framework at Kilparrin
Overview

• Overview of the Kilparrin Journey to Four Blocks®

• Implementing Reading and Writing the Four-Blocks Way
  – Guided Reading
  – Self-Selected Reading
  – Writing
  – Working with Words

• Outcomes for learners, teachers and families
Overview of the Kilparrin Journey to Four Blocks®

• **Exploring general language development**
  – In 2003 professional learning for all teachers in general language development provided by existing service providers
    • Department
    • Autism SA
    • Novita
    • Disability SA
  – Focus on what language development looked like in typically developing children
• **Symbolic Communication**
  – Dolly Bhargava, Disability Specialist Speech Pathologist, provided training for all teachers in using a range of visual systems to promote communication
  – Introduced Personal Communication Dictionaries (PCDs) to Kilparrin
  – Staff incorporated visual schedules, visual choice systems, PECS™ and PCDs into the classroom and playground
Overview of the Kilparrin Journey to Four Blocks® continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Communication Dictionary for ............</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What learner does…</td>
<td>What it means….</td>
<td>Reponse</td>
<td>(Insert picture of learner)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Notes
• **Communicating with learners who are deafblind**
  
  – In 2008 Sharon Barry Grassick provided professional development for all teachers in communicating with learners who are deafblind primarily through the use of tactile signs, body signs and personal tactile signatures.

  – Kilparrin staff published agreed universal signs for Kilparrin learners in wheelchairs.
Kilparrin Teaching and Assessment School and Services
Universal Signs for Kilparrin Learners in Wheelchairs

• 2 taps on the wheelchair PRIOR to moving the wheelchair
• 2 taps on the learner’s upper arm PRIOR to moving the learner
• 2 taps on the learner’s upper thigh PRIOR to toilet change

Note: Visual symbols, object symbols and signs may be used in conjunction with universal signs
• **Intensive Interaction**
  - in 2008 & 2009 Dr Mark Barber provided training in the *Intensive Interaction* approach and supported staff in developing communicative interactions with pre-intentional communicators

  - The next step was to find the solution to ‘What is the next step once you have developed intentional communicators?’
AGOSCI Literacy Intensive & Other Professional Learning focusing on Communication

- In 2010 Coordinator attended the week-long AGOSCI Literacy Intensive in Victoria led by Karen Erikson and David Koppenhaver authors of *Children with Disabilities: Reading and Writing the Four-Blocks Way*

- Seven teachers enrolled in a Post-Graduate Certificate in Hearing Impairment with a strong focus on the theory of communication development

- Principal participated in the 2 year *Principals as Literacy Leaders* (PALL) training and development program
Overview of the Kilparrin

• **Jane Farrall and the Four Blocks® Approach**
  – 2012 Jane Farrall became the Kilparrin Educator-in-Residence, spending 10 weeks (40 days) over the year working with staff and learners
  
  – Jane introduced the Four Blocks approach to all staff
  
  – All learners were assessed to establish a preferred and consistent mode of communication that has been relentlessly supported across the school
  
  – Janelle Sampson, novita, has also supported all staff with training on the use of the PODD
Implementing the Four Blocks® Literacy Framework at Kilparrin

Outcomes
Outcomes for our Learners: Context

• Complete data on 14 learners

• No Concepts about Print data for 4 learners

• No Phonological Awareness data for 1 student

• 1 learner moved to the country
## Outcomes for our Learners: Test Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Term 1, 2012</th>
<th>Term 4, 2012</th>
<th>Possible Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concepts about Print</td>
<td>~4.86 concepts</td>
<td>~6.07 concepts</td>
<td>14 concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters (upper &amp; lower case)</td>
<td>~22 letters</td>
<td>~28 letters</td>
<td>52 letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonological Awareness</td>
<td>~7.43 correct</td>
<td>~9.21 correct</td>
<td>23 questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Sample</td>
<td>~score of 1.29</td>
<td>~score of 2.07</td>
<td>Score of 7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Sample</td>
<td>11 submitted</td>
<td>14 submitted</td>
<td>14 submitted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Outcomes for our Learners: Test Results

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<th>Possible Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Letters (upper &amp; lower case)</td>
<td>~4 letters</td>
<td>~12 letters</td>
<td>52 letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonological Awareness</td>
<td>~4.25 correct</td>
<td>~6.75 correct</td>
<td>23 questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Sample</td>
<td>~score of 0.5</td>
<td>~score of 1.25</td>
<td>Score of 7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Sample</td>
<td>2 submitted</td>
<td>4 submitted</td>
<td>4 submitted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outcomes for our Learners: Comments

• There was a strong reduction in the number of “no response”s to assessment items

• Learners with complex communication needs had the largest drop in “no response”s

• 4 learners are ‘on the border’ of conventional literacy

• 1 conventionally literate learner improved half a grade level during 2013
Outcomes for our Teachers

• Confidence in the teaching of literacy skills and the use of augmentative and alternative communication systems

• Increased knowledge about planning and programming for the teaching of literacy

• Deeper understanding of ways to facilitate and support communication development in learners with complex communication needs

• Consistent approach to the teaching of literacy and communication
Outcomes for our Families

• All Kilparrin learners now have a recognisable mode of communication

• Increase in their communication skills has led to decrease in learners using behaviour as communication (eg crying or acting out)

• Improved communication and literacy skills has enabled families to better engage with their child (eg sharing books, communicating needs and preferences, recounting their day)
Give them a ‘voice’ and you give them the power of ‘choice’