



Rosie's Creek

Teacher's Resource Booklet

A wetlands story experience about Mundy Creek in Townsville that uses the Storythread Approach developed and trademarked by Pullenvale Environmental Education Centre (Education Queensland)

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About the Rosie's Creek Storythread

Rosie's Creek is a wetlands story experience about Mundy Creek in Townsville that uses the Storythread Approach developed and trademarked by Pullenvale Environmental Education Centre (PEEC) (Education Queensland).

What is Storythread?

Storythread has been developed as a creative, arts-based approach to environmental education that supports schools in achieving quality teaching and learning. In its simplest form, it is a way of telling exciting stories about **people** and their strong **connections to place**. At a deeper level, all Storythreads explore what has been called '**the inner and outer work of sustainability**' (Senge, Laur, Schley & Smith, 2006).

The '**outer work**' of sustainability is about living more lightly on the Earth by reducing our ecological footprint in practical ways. The '**inner work**' of sustainability is about slowing down our lives in order to experience, notice and reflect on the interconnections around us. These combine to produce new connected ways of thinking, valuing and acting.

Storythread functions as a powerful pedagogical tool that allows students and teachers to engage emotionally and intellectually with nature, and the places around them, in ways that encourage positive and creative action.

Creating a unit of work using the *Rosie's Creek* Storythread

The class teacher's role is critical in making the Storythread process work. The Chapter Two excursion on its own can have a significant impact on students' learnings, but these learnings are enhanced considerably when they are part of an extended, four-chapter Storythread Unit.

We offer three essential elements to help shape your Storythread Unit:

1. An interactive **story** with an environmental education theme that is experienced piece by piece throughout your unit (*Rosie's Scrapbook*)
2. A four-chapter **inquiry** framework and sequence of activities aimed at facilitating deep thinking, reflection, communication and local action (these chapters link to a central excursion experience and can stretch over a whole term)
3. Opportunities to connect with and enjoy exciting **places** i.e. natural places and real and fictional story settings.

How you choose to weave these three essential elements of **story, inquiry and place** together with curriculum and classroom priorities, and breathe life into Rosie's story, is up to you and your students. No two Storythread Units are alike.

Using this booklet

This booklet contains **chapter-by-chapter resources and activities** to assist you in both planning and teaching your *Rosie's Creek* Storythread Unit. There is also a detailed **planning section** outlining key themes and concepts, links to curriculum priorities and helpful resources.

Overview—Rosie’s Creek Storythread

Shhhhhhh! Please do not read this to the students!

Chapter one—pre-excursion

Students engage with the story and begin to think deeply about the values and ideas embedded within it.

The students are engaged in the story of *Rosie’s Scrapbook* and begin to think deeply about the characters and their actions. The fiction comes to life when a treasure box arrives from the now grown-up Rose. The students receive and accept her invitation to become research assistants and begin preparing for a day exploring Mundy Creek.

Chapter two—excursion

This is a separate document.

Students connect to people and places by stepping into the story.

The students arrive at the creek and share their first impressions. As they are preparing to begin their walk along the creek, a discovery is made: Rosie’s *Mundy Map* and the *Mundy Moments* list! The students follow in Rosie and Archie’s footsteps along the creek and become *Mundy Mates* by experiencing each of the *Mundy Moments*. They find Rosie’s Tree, Grandpa Ficus, complete a series of activities along the creek and then walk to Soroptimist Park where they discover the remnants of the last lagoon. The day is celebrated through the creation of a group art piece in the park and by taking the *Mundy Mates* oath!

Chapter three—post-excursion

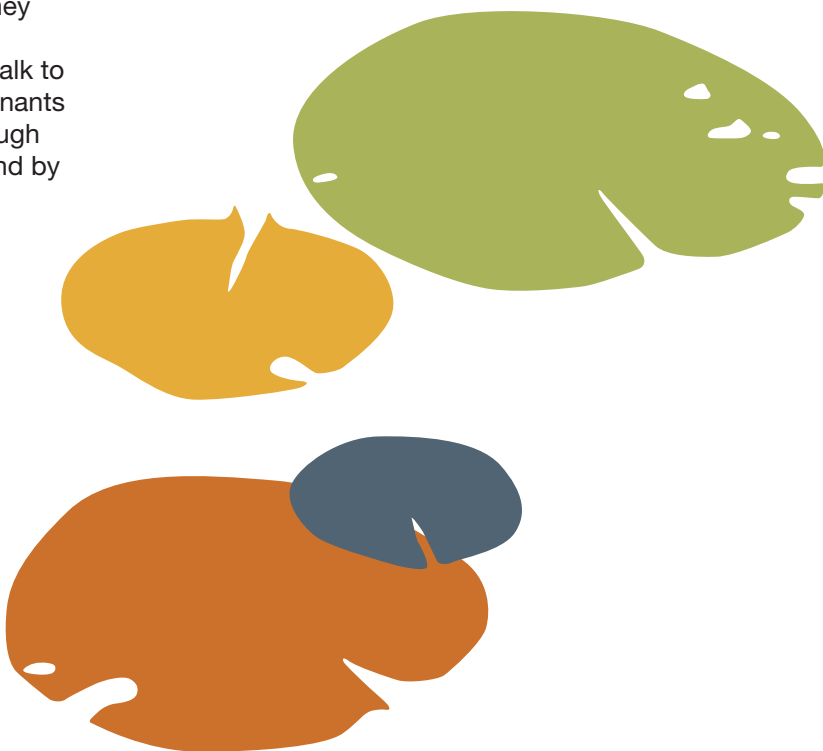
Students make links between the story and their own lives by reflecting on their experiences and then communicating personal insights and understandings.

Back at school, the children recap the excursion day and then reflect on and continue the story. By reflecting on their experiences so far in the Storythread Unit, the students consider and articulate what they have learnt about themselves and their connection to place, and identify the skills that they have developed. What now?

Chapter four—culminating activities

Students respond to the story as active citizens by finding ways to make life better in their place.

The children work together to develop and implement an achievable, student-led project that will link them with the community and make life better in their place.



Contents

Suggested timeframe	Storythread framework	Booklet contents – Sequence of story moments/activities	Page no.
Term:	Chapter one	Read and think deeply about Rosie’s Scrapbook:	8
Weeks:	Pre-excursion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through literacy • Through drama • Through attentiveness and deep listening 	9 10 12
		Make the commitment to step into the story:	15
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I Wonder... • An invitation to visit Mundy Creek • Preparing for the excursion • Pre-excursion letter to parents 	15 17 19 21
Term:	Chapter two	Connect to people and places by stepping into the Rosie’s Creek story:	22
Weeks:	Excursion	Please refer to the <i>excursion day handbook</i> for all excursion details and resources including research material on Mundy Creek	
Term:	Chapter three	Make links between the Rosie’s Creek story and the students’ lives by reflecting and communicating:	23
Weeks:	Post-excursion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recapping the excursion • Reflecting on the three P’s – People, Place & Problem • Continuing and communicating the story • Reflecting on the Storythread Unit 	24 25 28 29
Term:	Chapter four	Respond to the Rosie’s Creek Storythread experience by making life better in your place:	30
Weeks:	Culminating activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines for your project • Examples 	31 32
Prior to beginning the unit	Planning	Planning your Rosie’s Creek Storythread Unit:	33
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rosie’s Scrapbook • Deciding on a unit focus • Meeting curriculum priorities • Helpful resources 	34 35 36 38



Chapter one

Students engage with the story and begin to think deeply about the values and ideas embedded within it



Read Rosie's Scrapbook

The story for the Rosie's Creek Storythread is in the form of a scrapbook compiled by a 10-year-old, Rosie Thompson, in 1950. **Please print the pages and then paste them into a book so that it appears as though the owner of the scrapbook has posted a copy of it to your students.**

Read the scrapbook straight through or one section at a time, following each section with one or more of the activities on the following pages.

It is really important that you read Rosie's Scrapbook with your class during Chapter One and then once more just before your visit to Mundy Creek to refresh everyone's memories.

Deliver the scrapbook to your class

The scrapbook could arrive in an interesting way! Some suggestions are:

1. Hand it out with the students' exercise books and wait to see how long it takes them to notice!
2. Hide it somewhere in the schoolgrounds, perhaps in an old school port or satchel.
3. Package it up and arrange for a call from the office explaining that a mystery visitor delivered a package for the class.

I Wonder...

- How this arrived at the school?
- Who left this for us? Why?
- Why we only have a copy of this scrapbook? Where is the real one?
- What we should do now?

Read it!

Important:

Before you begin reading the scrapbook with your class, explain that you have a feeling you are all about to step into a story together. This may mean imagining and pretending to bring the story to life, getting to know the characters and maybe even becoming part of the story. Establish with the students that they are happy to play along. It is really important that they understand Rosie and the scrapbook are based on the experiences of real people, but are fictitious. **We are not trying to trick the children into believing this is all true.** It can be useful to agree on some sort of signal that can be used as a reminder that everyone is playing a story game together e.g. finger on your nose and wink.



Think Deeply about *Rosie's Scrapbook* through Literacy

Activities

1. Story map

Create a story map with the class showing the key events in Rosie's journey to get to know and connect with Mundy Creek.

2. Outpourings on paper

During the first reading of the scrapbook, stop reading at the point where Rosie's parents ground her for a week. Spread a huge sheet of paper out on the floor and ask the students to write and/or draw their responses to what is happening.

The students could suggest what might happen next!

3. Collective drawing

The class or small groups could create an artwork together of Mundy Creek in 1950 based on the descriptions and photographs in the scrapbook.

4. Writing-in-role

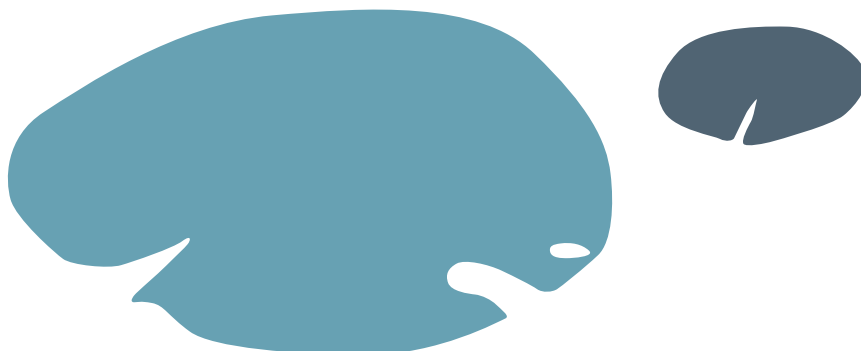
Write in role as one of the characters from the scrapbook. For example:

- Mum's letter to a friend explaining her day at Mundy Creek and how her attitude towards the creek has changed.
- A newspaper article about Rosie and Archie's feared disappearance.
- A postcard from Rosie to a friend back in Brisbane.
- Another invented page from the scrapbook.

5. Inventing from the story

Write about:

- Events that might have happened before Rosie moved to Belgian Gardens. What was she like before she moved to Townsville? Did she connect to her old place in the same way that she connected to Mundy Creek?
- What might or could happen next for Rosie.
- The adventures of minor characters such as Archie, Tippy or Rosie's parents.
- Rosie and/or other characters in another plot setting e.g. the first day back at school for Archie (in Townsville) and Rosie (in Brisbane) or a family holiday.
- Devise an alternate ending for Rosie's scrapbook. What would have happened if Rosie and her family had stayed in Belgian Gardens?



Think Deeply about *Rosie's Scrapbook* through drama

Activity: Freeze-frames (also called Tableaux or Still Image)

Bring Rosie's Scrapbook to life by creating freeze-frames of significant moments.

In small groups, students choose a moment from the scrapbook that they feel was significant in Rosie getting to know and love Mundy Creek. They then create a frozen picture with their bodies to represent that moment as if the pause button had been pressed during a movie version of Rosie's story. In order to convey meaning, the children may choose to represent people, objects or things.

Present freeze-frames in one of three main ways:

1. One group at a time, in which case it is most effective to ask the audience to close their eyes while the freeze-frame is being prepared and then open them to view it
2. More than one group at a time – great for comparing interpretations
3. As a rolling presentation in which each group presents one after the other without stopping.

Extension idea:

Ask the groups to build on the story by creating a freeze-frame to show what might have happened just before or after their chosen story moment. These freeze-frames could be viewed as a series of three and then even brought to life through improvisation!

Activity: Hot-seating

Get to know Rosie by putting her on the hot-seat!

The students question a student or teacher in role as (pretending to be) Rosie. The person in role answers as if they are Rosie i.e. thinking and speaking like her. This works well with the whole class questioning one person, in pairs taking it in turns to have one person in role and the other asking the questions, or in small groups taking it in turns to have one person in role and the other group members interviewing.

Tips:

- Begin by discussing the types of questions that could be asked and listing them on the board. *If the students could somehow meet Rosie, what would they want to find out about her? What questions were in their minds after reading the scrapbook?* Use this as an opportunity to encourage open, rather than closed questions and discuss good question starters and prompts.
- Also model hot-seating for the class before they try it, either by questioning one student for the class or by asking the students to question you using the list on the board. Emphasise the need for quick thinking, having fun and going with your first idea. After all, the students might not actually know the answer, but using their knowledge of Rosie, they can make one up. Who knows where their imaginations might take them?!

Extension idea:

Find out more about Rosie by hot-seating other story characters. *Who does she mention in her scrapbook? Who might be good to interview? What could the students ask them? Do they have any questions that are still unanswered?*

Activity: Role-on-the-Wall

Consolidate the students' thoughts by creating a role-on-the-wall profile for Rosie.

Draw an outline of Rosie on butcher's paper or on a whiteboard (you can draw around a student or just create a simple gingerbread man shape) and then add all of the information that is now known about her to the drawing.

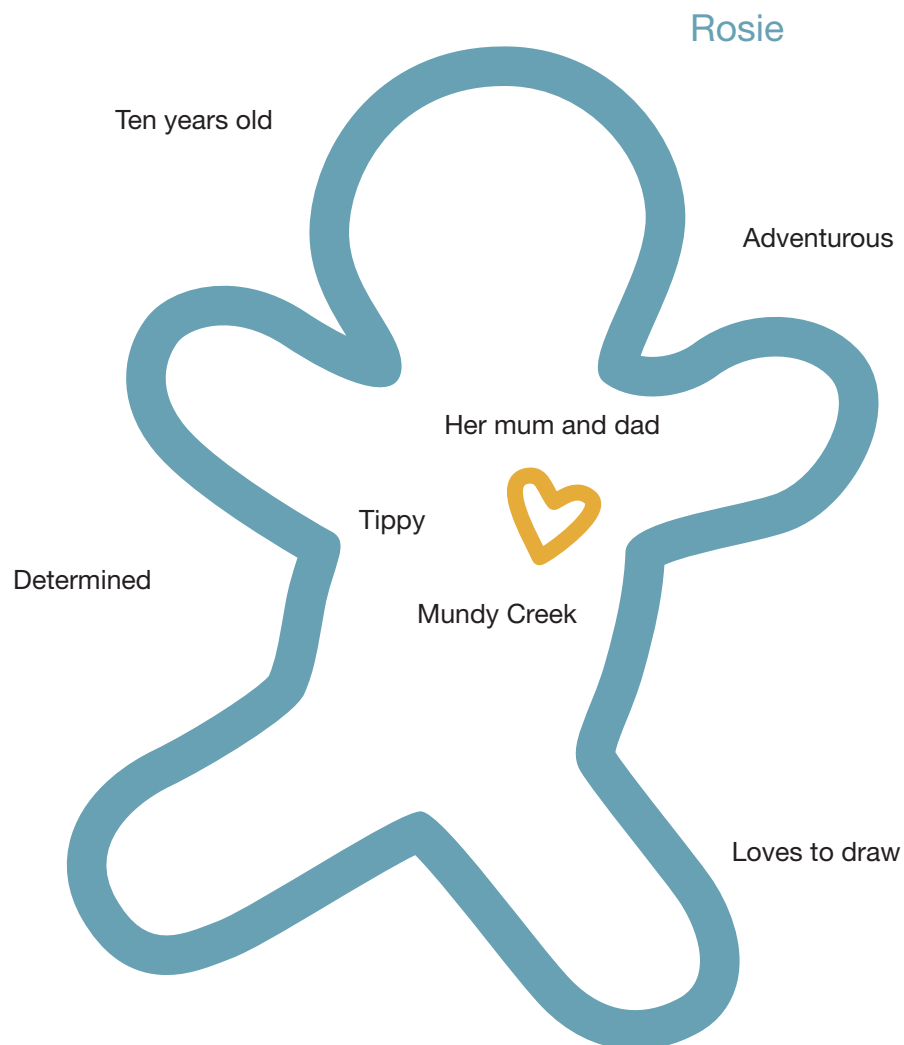
This can be done with the inside of the outline only containing ideas about what is important to Rosie i.e. what does she value, and all of the facts about her, her actions, thoughts, feelings and character traits written around the outside.

As with hot-seating, the class can decide upon information that is not given in the scrapbook, basing their decisions and imaginings on what they already know about Rosie.

For example:

Extension idea:

Keep the role-on-the-wall profile on display in the classroom and add to it during the unit, whenever something new is discovered about Rosie.



Think Deeply about *Rosie's Scrapbook* through attentiveness and deep listening

Attentiveness and deep listening

A great way to think deeply, and really get to know and understand yourself, others and the places around you is to be more '**attentive**'. Being attentive means taking the time to pay attention and really observe in detail what is actually going on around you. Scientists, artists, architects, historians, researchers and, in fact, anyone who is trying to understand the world, use this skill all the time.

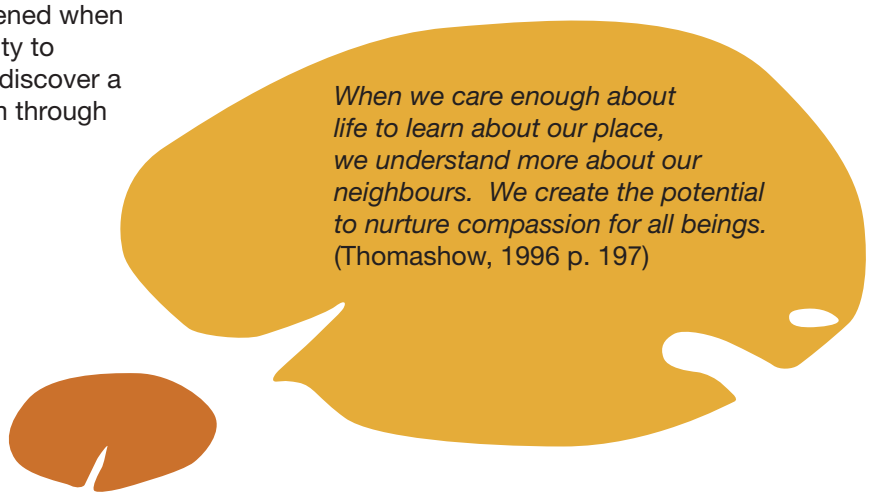
It means listening and paying attention with your ears, but also with your eyes, nose, skin, heart, mind and imagination. Another way to describe this whole body connection is '**deep listening**'. In a Storythread Unit, deep listening and the reflection that follows can be used to heighten students' awareness and connect them to 'place' in authentic ways.

Being attentive allows people to see, and value, the 'extra' in the most 'ordinary' of situations. At PEEC, we have discovered that when students are taught the skill of deep attentive listening or observation, they begin to discover what is special and important – about themselves, other people and the places around them. When they do this, they often begin to care more and to act with respect towards themselves, other people and the natural world. This is what we mean by '**Growing a sense of place**'.

A Storythread Unit is significantly heightened when students are provided with the opportunity to develop or grow a '**sense of place**' and discover a connectedness to the world around them through attentiveness and deep listening.

Each Storythread provides students with the opportunity to consider the extent to which story characters are engaging in deep, attentive listening to self, others and place. Key questions to consider once the students have begun deep listening sessions in the schoolgrounds (see next page):

- Is Rosie attentive? To herself? To others? To her place?
- How do you know? What does she do?
- How do you think she came to be like that?
- What about the other characters in the story? Mum? Dad? Archie?



When we care enough about life to learn about our place, we understand more about our neighbours. We create the potential to nurture compassion for all beings. (Thomashow, 1996 p. 197)

Activity: First Deep Listening Session in the Schoolgrounds

Using the role-on-the-wall profile, recap the students' discoveries about Rosie. *She really cares about her creek doesn't she? It's like she has an incredible connection to it! Some people might walk past Mundy Creek and not really even notice it is there, but Rosie seems to know every inch of it and appreciate what makes it special. How do you think that has happened? How has Rosie noticed things about her place that other people might not? What has she done to help her get to know Mundy Creek?*

(Once the students have responded) *You know, there is a word that describes people that do all of those things: I think Rosie was really good at being attentive! Let me explain what I mean...* (introduce the concepts of attentiveness and deep listening as described on the previous page).

It sounds as though Rosie has these skills! She probably doesn't realise that she is a deep listener; some people just do it naturally. Some of you might be like that! Other people find it really difficult. Some of you might be like that too! Let's go for a walk and find out!!

Find a natural place in the school grounds that can become the students' special spot. It doesn't have to be a mini rainforest, just a shady place where there are some trees and plants.

Discuss safety and then begin by giving the students a short time to explore and discover with a friend. You will be amazed by what they find!

Then give the students the opportunity to spread out and find a comfortable, safe spot where they can sit still and quietly to 'listen' with their eyes, ears, nose, skin, heart, mind and imagination. Focus the session by asking the students to decide, as they are listening, on the one thing that Rosie would love most about their special spot. They need to be silent and as still as a rock. This will allow them to see and hear fascinating things they have not noticed before.

Bring the class together at the conclusion of the session and note down their responses. **What did they notice? What would Rosie love?** What did they see, hear, smell, feel, think or imagine? It works well to read the responses back as a poem.

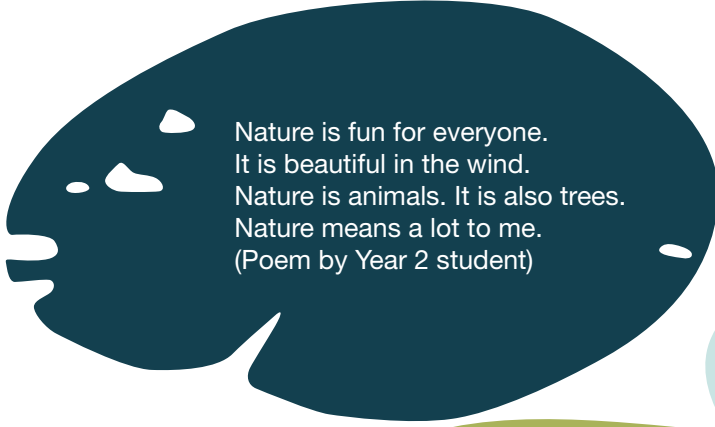
Follow-up sessions

Give the students as many opportunities as possible to spend time deep listening at their special spot. The aim is for the class to engage with their place using all of their senses, but it can work well initially to focus on one sense at a time. Some students will find deep listening really easy; however, some will also find it incredibly difficult. You may need to start by asking the class to sit for a couple of minutes only, or even just one!

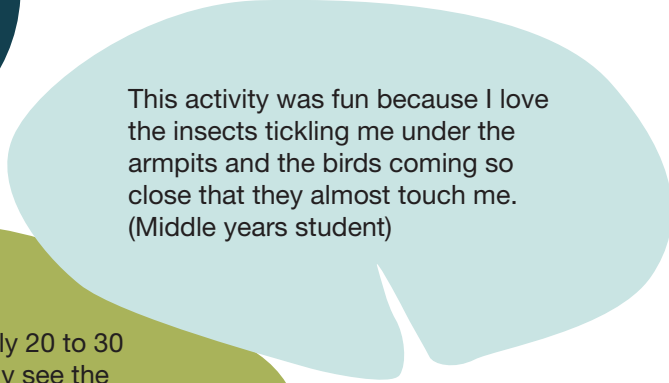
Student reflection

It is important after each session to allow students time to reflect through writing, drawing (**Perhaps in a nature scrapbook like Rosie!**) or discussion:

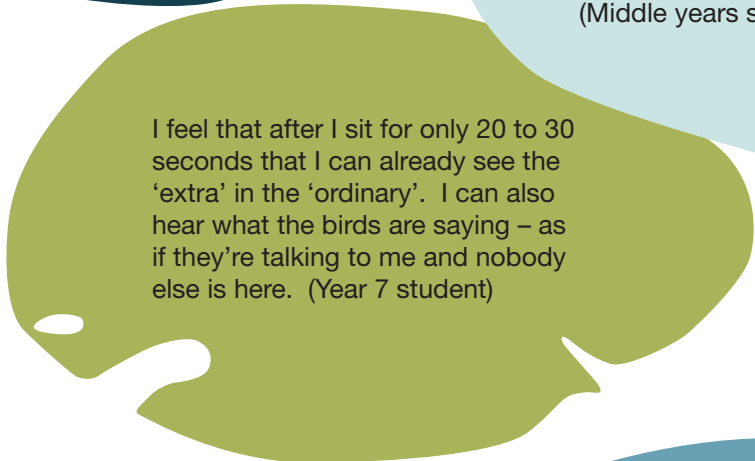
- On their deep listening sessions
- On what they are learning about the connections between Self, Others and Place
- On the characters in the story.



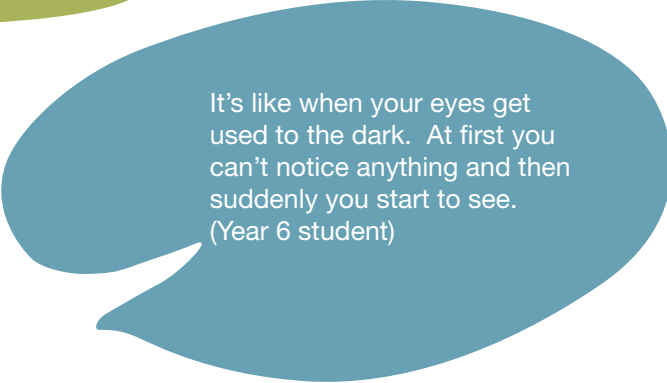
Nature is fun for everyone.
It is beautiful in the wind.
Nature is animals. It is also trees.
Nature means a lot to me.
(Poem by Year 2 student)



This activity was fun because I love the insects tickling me under the armpits and the birds coming so close that they almost touch me.
(Middle years student)



I feel that after I sit for only 20 to 30 seconds that I can already see the 'extra' in the 'ordinary'. I can also hear what the birds are saying – as if they're talking to me and nobody else is here. (Year 7 student)



It's like when your eyes get used to the dark. At first you can't notice anything and then suddenly you start to see.
(Year 6 student)

How to listen deeply

(procedure by Year 3 student)

Goal: To understand and enjoy attentiveness

You will need:

1. 1 pen
2. 1 notebook
3. An empty space in your brain

Steps:

1. Find a nice shady spot under a big tree
2. Try not to fiddle
3. Don't communicate with anyone
4. Listen with your whole body
5. Look for animals
6. Feel the breeze on your skin

Make the commitment to step into the story of *Rosie's Creek*

Activity: 'I Wonder...'

Understand the adult Rose's continuing connection to self, others and place by exploring her box of treasures.

The 'I Wonder...' technique is built on the idea that when people create and use objects in their daily lives, these artifacts have the potential to provide deeper insights into their thoughts, feelings, past experiences, values, hopes and fears. The students are taking on the role of investigators on the trail of important information. Without actually meeting the present-day Rose, but by analysing the "clues" in her box of treasures, they will be able to draw inferences about her, make links between Rose as an adult and as a child, and be led deeper into the story.

Follow the instructions in the 'I Wonder...' Artifacts Pack to create a treasure box for the present-day Rose. The artifacts are:

1. A poem
2. Two photographs of the lagoons at Karawatha Forest
3. Diary pages
4. A sketch of Rose's dog
5. An invitation to a family reunion
6. A certificate

Please also add:

- Natural objects such as a feather, special leaf, pressed flower or tiny piece of bark
- A piece of ribbon

(The pack also contains three other documents: Rosie's *Mundy Map*, the *Mundy Moments* list and a note from Archie. As outlined in the pack, **please save these three documents for the excursion day.**)

Signal to the students that imagining and pretending is about to happen (e.g. finger on your nose and wink) and explain that the box was found outside the classroom. Ask the students if it belongs to anyone in the class. Make a pretend call to the office to check if anyone has reported a box missing. At the office's suggestion, say that you will look through the contents of the box with the class very carefully to see if you can find any clues about the owner. Ask the students to sit in a circle and stress the importance of being very careful with other people's things.

Examine the treasures with the students in the above order (that way it will take the class a little longer to realise the box belongs to Rose). Ask the students to describe each item before placing it in the centre of the circle. Discuss what sort of person the owner of these items might be. Questions could include:

- What is that? What might it be used for?
- Why would someone keep it in this box? What does it tell us about this person?
- (Finally) Who do you think all of this belongs to? How do you know?
- What have we discovered about her today?

Extension Idea:

Start a role-on-the-wall profile for the now adult Rose. You may find out more about her as our story unfolds! What similarities can you identify between Rosie as a child and Rose now?

Activity: Students receive an invitation from Rose to visit Mundy Creek

1. Photocopy the letter on the next page or create your own using ours as a template and decorating it as you wish. Address an A4 size letter to each student or an A3 size letter to the whole class.
2. Arrange for the letter to be delivered to the class at an appropriate time or for it to be found by the students. You may choose to find an interesting way of presenting the letter to the students. For example, it could arrive by Special Delivery from the office or be hidden somewhere in the schoolgrounds. The letter could be accompanied by other information relevant to the excursion such as what to bring.
3. Read the letter to the class.
4. Reply to the letter in a way decided on through discussion with the students. It is very important that the students feel ownership of the decision to visit Mundy Creek. These replies could take any form you wish e.g. a class thank you letter, individual letters, a poster, artwork, a photo of the class and the work they have been doing, copies of student work, a CD, a song or a poem.

5. As part of the story, explain to the students that their reply has been posted and send a suitable response back to them from Rose. For example:

Dear students,

I was thrilled to hear that you are able to help. I just know that you are the right people for this task!

I look forward to receiving your research findings.

Warm regards,

Rose

(Mundy Mate)

6. You may wish to take this opportunity to discuss suitable clothing, food and drinks, along with the other details of the excursion day. Again, it is important to make the children feel part of the planning.

Invitation from Rose

50 View Road
Little Creek
Queensland 4444

Dear students,

I hope you enjoyed the copy of my old journal and had fun exploring my box of treasures. Now that you know a little bit about me, I am wondering if I might ask for your help.

Let me explain. Last month, my neighbour took me to a place in Brisbane called Karawatha Forest. The beautiful lagoons covered in water lilies brought back wonderful memories of Mundy Creek. My ten-year-old grandson, Andrew, lives in Belgian Gardens close to the creek and I rang him, excited to find out about all the adventures he must be having in my old special place. Do you know he had never even heard of Mundy Creek! I managed to convince him to visit it for me and do you know what he said? "Grandma, there is nothing left of your Mundy Creek. I didn't see anything. It's boring."

Children, I can't believe that could be true. I'm upset to see from a recent map (which I have enclosed) that the creek has changed a lot, but things can't be that bad. There must be hidden treasures and new special spots just waiting to be found. You just have to know how to really look!

Andrew is a lovely grandson but, like many of his friends, he does spend a lot of time playing computer games and watching television. I don't think he knows how to really look and find the magic in Mundy Creek and if he can't, then maybe a lot of other children will not be able to either. I am very worried. The future of my beautiful creek could be in danger. This creek is important to Townsville!

I need to collect information about Mundy Creek but I can't visit it myself. Can you help? I have heard that you know how to really look. Could you please visit the creek for me and be my research assistants? I think we need to discover -

- What's still left of my Mundy Creek and what's different?
- What hidden treasures and special spots you love.
- How the creek is being cared for.

Warm regards,

Rose Thompson

2005 Aerial map of Mundy Creek



Preparing for the excursion

Activity: Action Plan

To prepare for their visit to Mundy Creek the students come up with a plan of action.

1. Reflect on the content of Rose's letter.

Questions could include:

- What new or important information is in the letter?
- Had the students heard of Mundy Creek before they read *Rosie's Scrapbook*?
- Why might Andrew think Mundy Creek is boring?
- What effects might playing computer games and watching television be having on Andrew and his friends?
- Let's compare the map of Mundy Creek from the scrapbook and the new map. What has changed?
- What does it mean to really look?
- Why might Mundy Creek be so important? To Rose? To Townsville?

2. Revise the three key requests from the letter.

The students are to discover:

- What's still left of Rose's Mundy Creek and what's different?
- What hidden treasures and special spots they love.
- How the creek is being cared for.

3. Come up with an Action Plan. How can the class take on the role of research assistants and find out this information?

Some suggestions are:

- Use the scrapbook to make a list of things to search for e.g. a brolga, water lilies, a paperbark tree, waterholes, Grandpa Ficus and a tamarind. This list could be created individually, in pairs, in small groups or as a whole class. The list could even take the format of a checklist or treasure hunt.
- The students will need to know what the things on their list look like and/or sound like. Research and find pictures and/or descriptions of particular plants, trees, birds and anything else that the children wish to find.
- What information do the maps provide? How might the maps be useful on the day of the visit? Could the students create their own map(s) during or after their visit to Mundy Creek to show what they found?
- Practise deep listening. This skill will be vitally important on the day of their visit to fulfill all three of Rose's requests.
- How could the students record information on the day of their visit? Reflect on the ways that Rosie recorded information in her scrapbook e.g. photos, sketching, notes, poetry and mapping. She thinks like a scientist and an artist! The students could use these techniques too! What do they need to learn and practise?
- Do children today relate to nature differently to children in the past? How might this impact on the students' ability to discover hidden treasures and special spots on the excursion day? Speak with older family and community members about how they used to play in nature. Learn a little bit about the idea of *Nature Deficit Disorder* (visit the *Children and Nature Network* website and read excerpts from *Last Child in the Woods* – details are in the *Helpful Resources* section of this booklet.)

4. Why is it important that the students visit the creek and answer these questions?

Use the Excursion Day Handbook to find out about Mundy Creek and why it is so important.

Thinking tools

The thinking tools below will also assist students in beginning their research and planning for their visit to Mundy Creek.

Activity: KWHL – Sharing prior knowledge and identifying areas of inquiry

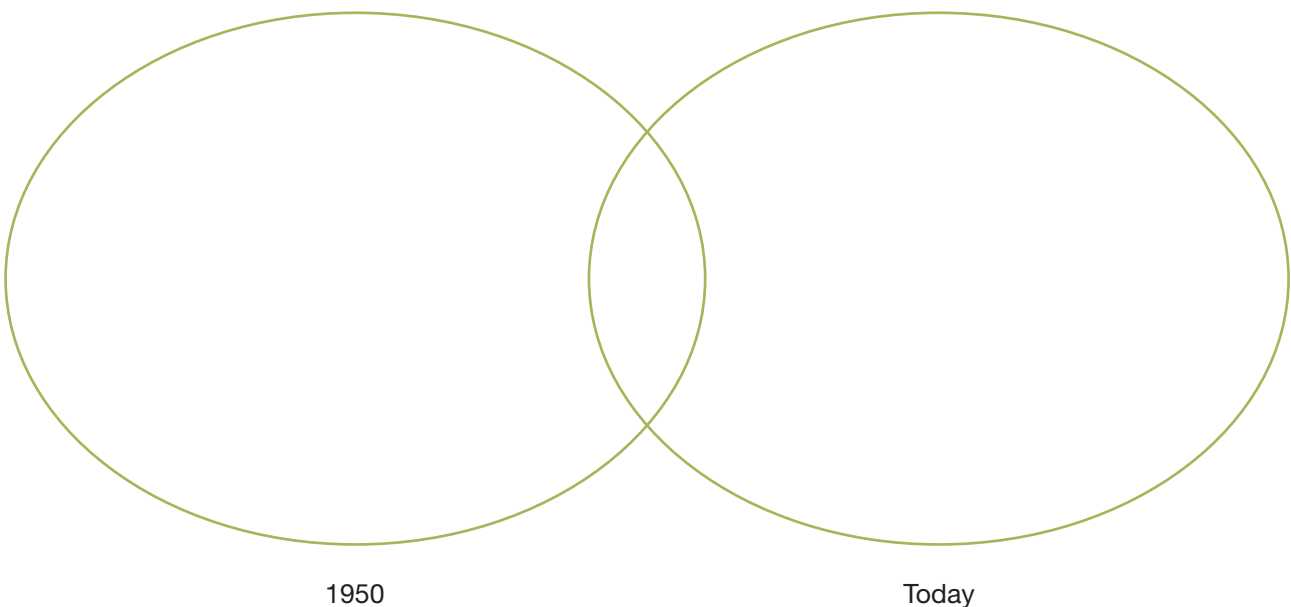
Topic: Mundy Creek

What I Know <i>Facts</i>	what I Want to know <i>Questions</i>	How I will find out <i>Research</i>	what I have Learnt <i>Findings</i>

Activity: Venn Diagram –

To demonstrate sets showing similarities and differences

Topic: Comparing Mundy Creek today and in 1950



These examples have been taken from *The Thinking Toolbox CD*. For more information on the CD, please refer to the *Helpful Resources* section of this booklet.

Pre-excursion letter to parents

Please use this as a guide in preparing your letter to parents.

Dear Parents,

Your child is soon to travel to Mundy Creek for a Storythread excursion. **Storythread teaches children about the environment by immersing them in exciting stories about people and their strong connections to place.** On the excursion day, the students will become part of a story that we have already begun in class. We are looking forward to discovering where it takes us!

The details of the excursion day are as follows:

Date:	
Time of Departure:	
Time of Return:	
Transport Details:	
Cost:	

Please note this excursion will involve a walk along Mundy Creek.

Your child will need:

- Closed in walking shoes
- Suitable walking clothes – long pants are strongly recommended
- Weather appropriate clothing e.g. jumper or raincoat
- Hat
- Sunscreen and insect repellent applied at home
- Morning tea and lunch
(*try an environmentally friendly lunch – reusable containers and biodegradable wrappings*)
- Plenty of water to drink – please no poppers or soft drinks

Please inform me of any special health problems and medication I may not be aware of.

Kind regards,

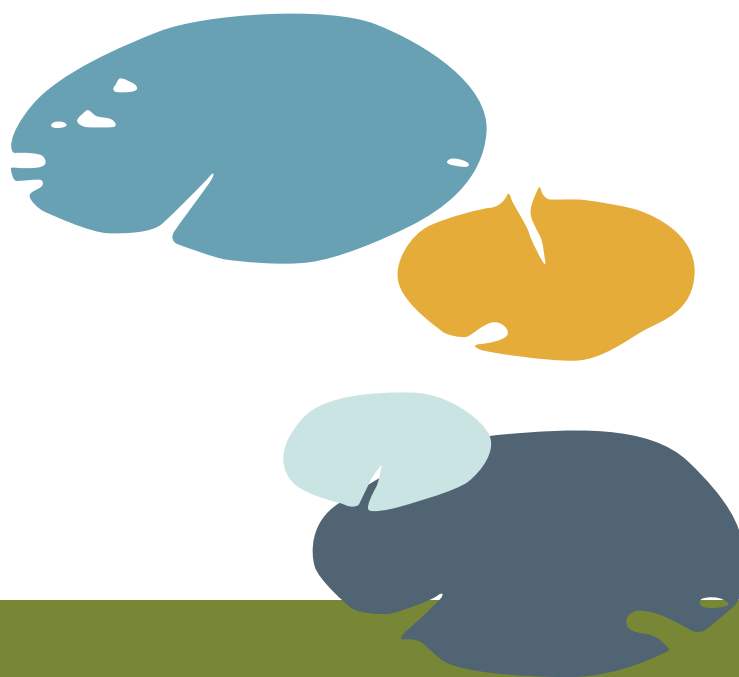


Chapter two

Students connect to people and places
by stepping into the story



Please refer to the *Excursion Day Handbook* for all excursion details and resources including research material on Mundy Creek.



Chapter three

Students make links between the story and their own lives by reflecting on their experiences and then communicating personal insights and understandings



Reflecting and communicating

So far, the children have thought deeply about the values and ideas embedded within the story, and then stepped into the narrative to connect to people and places.

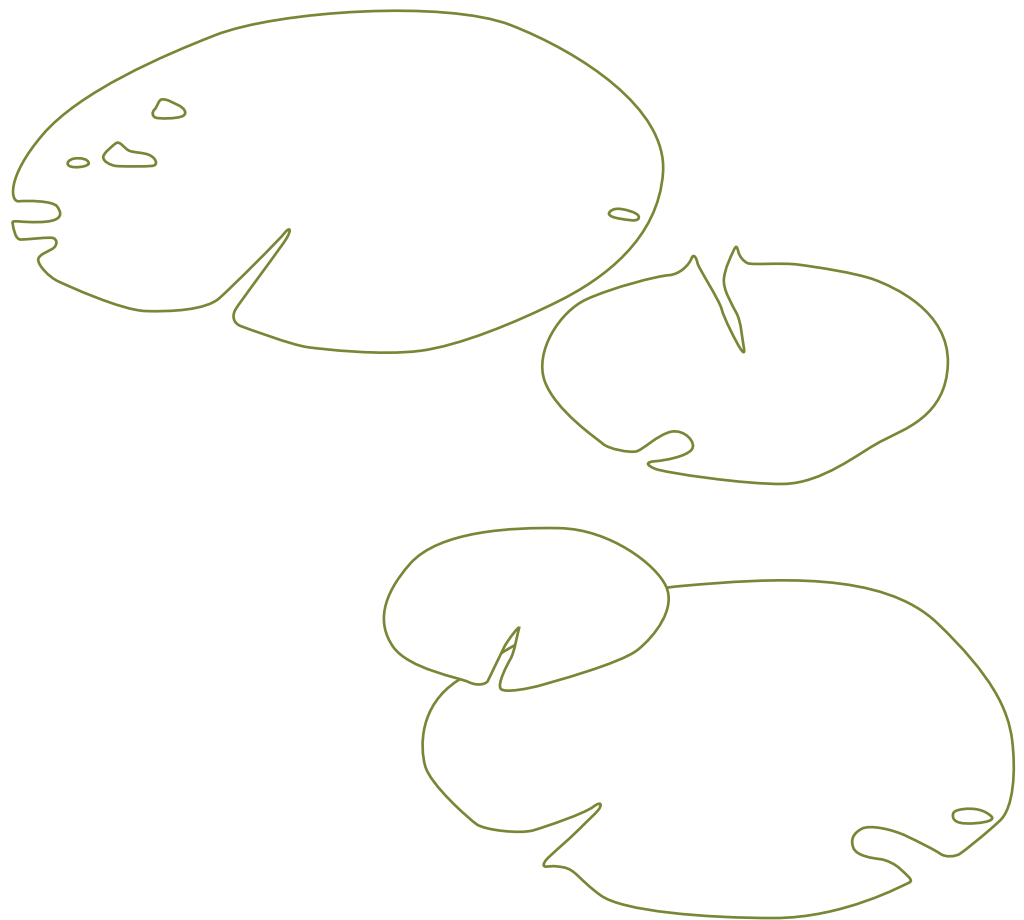
Reflecting on their excursion day experiences, and then continuing the story and communicating what they have learned to an audience will provide students with opportunities to:

- clarify and demonstrate their insights and understandings about the ideas and themes explored through the story
- analyse the values and actions of key story characters and then reflect on what they are discovering about themselves
- consider sustainable ways of thinking and living
- practise finding ways to make the world a better place before they tackle a real-life project in Chapter Four!

Activity: Recapping the excursion

Recap the excursion day together, individually or in groups. For example:

- Divide the excursion day into key moments. Split the class into small groups and ask each group to create a freeze-frame of one of the key moments. View the freeze-frames as a rolling presentation, as if you are viewing the excursion day on fast--forward (for more information on the freeze-frame technique, see page 17). Freeze-frames could be photographed for display.
- Create a class book, poster or display incorporating any research material, artwork or photographs that were produced or collected during the excursion.
- Compose a written recount.



Activity: Reflecting on the Three P's – PEOPLE, Place and Problem

What did the students learn about People on the excursion day?

Character	Head <i>What do they know and how do they think?</i>	Heart <i>What do they believe and how do they feel?</i>	Hands <i>What are their actions as a result of how they think and feel?</i>

1. What did the students learn about the key characters from the story?

Use the following table to reflect with the students on what they now know and understand about the key characters from the story.

Possible key questions for discussion:

- How are these characters different to one another?
- What do they have in common?
- What do you like about each of these characters? Why?
- What is the relationship between them?

2. What did the students learn about themselves?

Possible key questions for discussion:

- How are you different to these characters?
- What do you have in common with them?
- Are any of these things that all people have in common?

Activity: Reflecting on the Three P's – People, PLACE and Problem

What did the students learn about Place on the excursion day?

Developing a connection to place is a key element of Storythread, however, it can be something that is lacking in the lives of many students. It is often surprising to discover how many students have never been on a bush walk of any kind before the excursion day.

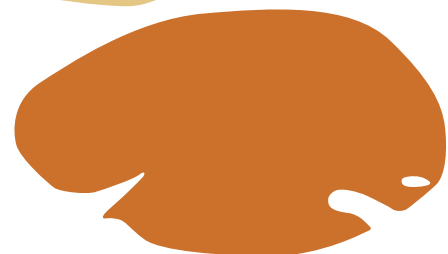
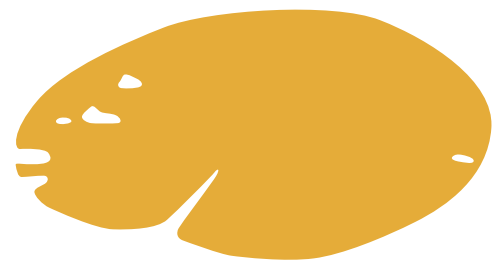
It is really important to give students the opportunity to reflect on the connection that the characters from the story have with their place, and then reflect on the students' own experiences in connecting to that place. Reviewing the photographs that the students took on the excursion day will help with this reflection and can often increase their appreciation of hidden treasures and tiny details that they may not have even noticed on the day.

- **How would you describe Rosie and Archie's connection to Mundy Creek?**
- **What did it mean for you to visit their place?**
The following prompts are from the activity Learning Journey (*Smart Thinking* p. 69)
 - When we first started our walk along the creek...
 - Then I...
 - After a while...
 - It was...
 - Now I...

Helpful ideas

I wanted to...
I tried...
I did...
I thought...
I could...
I wasn't...
I felt...

- **Reflecting on the students' thinking, feelings and actions**
 - In her letter, Rose mentioned the importance of knowing how to really look. How were your deep listening skills useful at Mundy Creek?
 - What was the most important thing you discovered about the creek? About yourself?
 - How did you feel at the creek?
 - What will you remember?
 - **Why do you think Mundy Creek is important?**



Reference: Wilson, J. and Wing, J. (2008) *Smart thinking: Developing reflection and metacognition*, Carlton, South Victoria: Curriculum Corporation.

Activity: Reflecting on the Three P's – People, Place and PROBLEM

What did the students learn about solving Problems on the excursion day?

Possible key questions for discussion:

- You actually stepped into the story and became part of it! What was that like?
- All good stories have a problem.
- What is the problem in this story?
- Who is helping to solve the problem?
- How are you solving the problem?

What would the class pack in a suitcase to help them solve problems together in the future?

For example, teamwork, deep listening skills, creativity, enthusiasm, knowledge



Discussion ideas for the above activities

- Write prompts and questions onto cards and place them into a hat. The class can list as many responses as possible to a card pulled out of the hat, or students can take it in turns to pull out a card and respond to it.
- Give everyone the same prompt or question and use the *Think, Pair, Share* strategy to structure the discussion.
- Introduce an object that can be used as a talking stick and set up the convention that the only person allowed to speak is the person with the talking stick.
- *Graffiti Wall* - Write a prompt or question on a huge sheet of paper and give students the opportunity to respond to the question by writing or drawing all over the paper.
- *Brainstorm Relay* - Write four prompts or questions on four separate sheets of paper and pin them up in a row. Divide the class into four teams sitting one behind the other in front of the sheets of paper. For a set length of time team members take it in turns to come out to the front, write up a response to their prompt or question and go to the back of their line. Rotate the teams so that they respond to all four prompts or questions.

Activity: Continuing and communicating the story

The students are continuing the story to clarify and demonstrate what they have learnt:

- about Rose and her relationship to her place
- about working together to solve problems
- about living sustainably
- about themselves.

The students finish the message to Rose that each of them began during the rotational activities on the excursion day.

It is important that the students' messages respond to all three of Rose's requests: What's left of her Mundy Creek and what's different? What hidden treasures and special spots did the students love? How is the creek being cared for?

The final messages that are sent to Rose could be in the format of your choice e.g. hand-written or typed and incorporating data such as photographs, in the form of a scrapbook, or recorded onto CD or DVD. As with the students' replies to Rose's invitation in Chapter One, explain that their messages have been posted.

Using the information below, bring the next part of the story to life in the form of a class book, short story, diary entry or letter by Rose, newspaper report, poster, drama presentation e.g. captioned freeze-frames, a short play or radio play, or a video.

Setting the scene:

Rose has received the students' messages in the post and has just finished reading them.

Where? *Where might she be?*

Who? *Who else might be there?*

What? *What might Rose be saying about the students' research? (E.g. What is she impressed by? How is she feeling about Mundy Creek?)*

What other important information will an audience need to know about Rose, the story and the students' role in the story in order to understand what is happening?

How? *How might she reply to the students' messages? Lead the students to suggest the following key question:*

What do they think the future might hold for Mundy Creek?

How would they respond to that question?

Communicate your story to an audience unfamiliar with *Rosie's Creek*.

For example: other classes; family members; school administration staff and invited community members.

Time to stop and think!

Before the students can move on to chapter four and implement a project to make life better in their place, it is important that they take the time to consider and articulate what they have learnt so far, the skills they have developed and how this has impacted on their personal values.

Activity: Reflecting on the Storythread Unit

Possible key questions for reflection: (based on Edward De Bono's *Six Thinking Hats*)

- **White hat—facts, questions**

*What do you think this unit of work is about?
What have we done?
What have we learnt?*

- **Yellow hat—positive, why it will work, success**

*What have you enjoyed?
What skills have you gained?
What are your strengths? As individuals? As a group?*

- **Black hat—caution, weak points**

*What haven't you enjoyed?
What would you like to get better at?
As individuals? As a group?
What do you think you need help with?*

- **Red hat—feelings, intuitions**

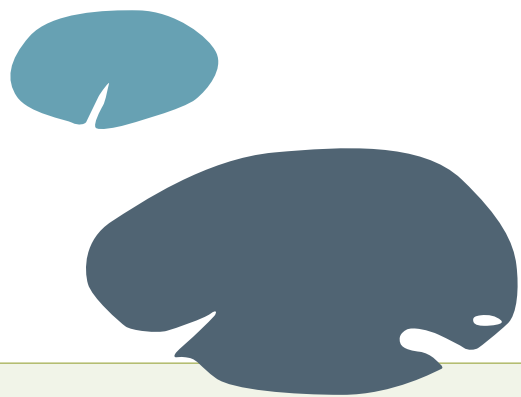
*How did you feel
... when we first started getting to know the story?
... at the end of the excursion day?
... after we had continued the story?
How do you feel now about our achievements so far in this unit?*

- **Blue hat—overview, summary**

*Why do you think I wanted you to have this experience?
What have we discovered? About ourselves, about people and about our place?
What has surprised you?
What has changed for you?*

- **Green hat—creative, alternatives**

We have learnt a lot about ourselves, about others and about our place.



What now?

The ultimate goal for each Storythread is for students to transfer their learning from the story to the real world through the development and implementation of a meaningful and practical environmental action. If the students don't begin to imagine and dream of a better future, who will?



Chapter four

Students respond to the story as active citizens by finding ways to make life better in their place



Making life better in your place

The students have gained knowledge, understanding, strengths and skills. Ideally, they have also connected to their place through attentiveness and deep listening. If they were to continue to develop all of this and be true to it, imagine what they could achieve! They really do have the ability to make life better in their place, particularly if they work together.

How do the students want to be, as members of their community in their place?

In Chapter four, students respond to the story as active citizens by implementing a project or projects that will make life better in their place.

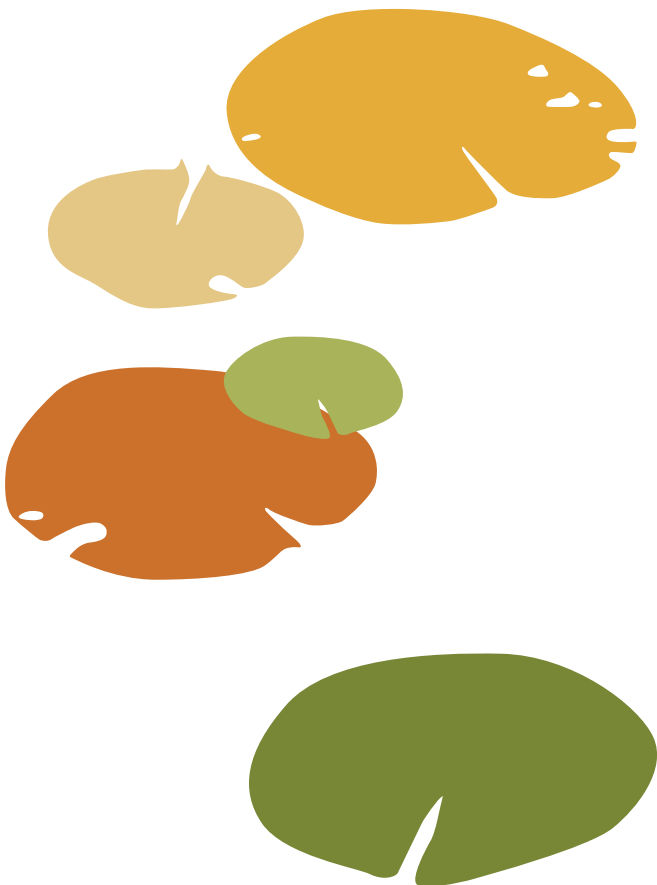
Guidelines for your chosen project

Ideally, the project will:

- **Be student-led.**
The students need to make a commitment to act in a positive way for their own natural environment. They can demonstrate this by working together to generate a list of possible projects, developing their ideas and then implementing their chosen project(s).
- **Make life better in your place.**
PEEC encourages sustainable choices and behaviours that “begin at home” but also links these choices with the national and global pictures for a sustainable world. Speak with students about the global, well-publicised issues, but then bring the discussion back to them and what is happening around them. How can they help to promote environmentally sustainable thinking, values and practices in their place?
- **Be realistic and achievable.**
Your project could be as simple as designing and constructing a possum box for the schoolgrounds or planting a tree.
- **Link students with their immediate and wider communities.**
How can the class communicate with others about what they are doing? Why would this be a good thing to do? Who would benefit from knowing about the project? Who could help? Consider drawing on local experts to inform and guide your project.

Other things to consider:

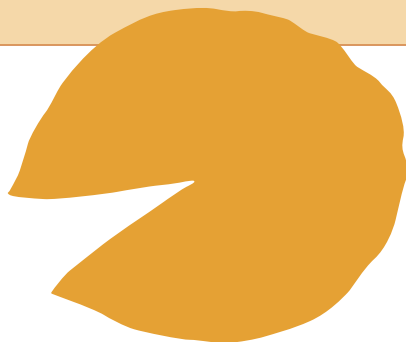
- How can the class work together as a team to make this project work?
- What skills do they already have which can be encouraged and built upon?
- What new skills will be needed to meet the goals of the project?
- How will the project be self-sustaining? Who will manage it in the future?
- How are other children making life better in their place? There are a number of websites with stories of ‘kid heroes for the planet’ and ‘young eco-heroes’.



Examples

To improve your schoolgrounds you could:

- plant native trees and plants
- streamline your recycling system
- generate water saving initiatives
- clean up the schoolgrounds and address the littering issue
- help to start a school garden and 'learnscape'
- rejuvenate part of the schoolgrounds. Your local Council Catchment Coordinator might be able to help
- work with an expert to identify significant native flora and fauna in and around the schoolgrounds and how to care for it e.g. through nesting boxes, or weed identification and eradication
- identify small gardening projects such as neglected areas under stairwells or unused garden beds
- conduct a school-wide survey to assess which parts of the school are liked or disliked and why. Create a wish list of changes and devise a code of conduct that would make learning and play spaces sustainable for all concerned including people, plants and creatures. How could this code of conduct be discussed and implemented?
- find out about projects that are already underway or in the pipeline. E.g. by speaking with the school principal, a representative from the P & F association or the school environmental club.



To discover more about your local area you could:

- find out about community groups such as your local catchment group and projects that the students could support or participate in
- discover more about the environmental history of the area - invite local community members to share their stories and then perhaps publish some of the stories
- invite local Indigenous elders to speak with the students
- investigate a local area of environmental significance e.g. a forest, park or waterway.

To communicate what you have learned about your project you could:

- set-up a display or hold an exhibition of student art – the art could be auctioned to raise money for your project
- create a map of the schoolgrounds and display the map. The map could identify a variety of different uses e.g. quiet places, good bird-watching spots, possum trees, native plants or 'hot spots' that are over-used and in need of care and attention.
- hold an information session for parents and community members. The session could incorporate a presentation about the story, a sharing session about the project and a nature walk in the schoolgrounds with the students as guides. The students could lead a deep listening session!
- create and display posters around the school and local community
- create a class book. It might be a children's storybook that could be shared with students in another year level
- prepare an item for the school assembly e.g. rewrite the words to a well-known song, write and perform a play, or make a movie
- prepare a brochure, magazine, newsletter, article, letter or information report. How could this be distributed and to whom? E.g. publish it in the school newsletter, organise a letter-box drop in the local area, or present it to the principal.



Planning your *Rosie's Creek* Storythread unit

A Storythread unit has the potential to be a powerful, engaging and fun-filled learning journey that enables students to connect to themselves, to others in their community and to real places in meaningful ways.



Rosie's Scrapbook

Why story?

The story form is a cultural universal; everyone, everywhere enjoys stories. The story, then, is not just some casual entertainment; it reflects a basic and powerful form in which we make sense of the world and experience (Egan, 1988: 2).

Woven through all Storythreads is a story (either fiction or non-fiction) that introduces and carries the environmental issues, ideas or themes.

The story is a powerful medium that can excite and engage students both intellectually and emotionally. It provides opportunities to explore environmental themes and issues through the characters' perspectives and encourages deep thinking and discussion.

Engaging with characters in an environmental narrative and reflecting on the impact of their choices and actions on their environment, gives students a vehicle for discussing and reviewing their own environmental values and understandings. Significantly, students are then able to transfer learnings from the story experience to their own contexts.

What is the environmental education theme of Rosie's Scrapbook?

Sustainability: developing a sense of place through 'deep, attentive listening', exploration, research and reflection.

What are the key values and ideas embedded within Rosie's Scrapbook?

- Connection to place through 'deep, attentive listening' that engages all of the senses
- Learning about a wetland area through active investigation and problem-solving
- Respect and care for nature, in particular wetlands, through understanding and reflecting on the importance of Mundy Creek, changes to the creek over time and the future of the creek.
- Finding sustainable ways of living
- Having fun through imagining and pretending

Reference: Egan, K. (1988) Teaching as storytelling, London: Routledge.



Deciding on a unit focus

The Storythread four-chapter inquiry framework and *Rosie's Scrapbook* provide the structure and themes for your Storythread unit. **You decide on the specific curriculum focus and content of your unit.**

For example:

- Wetlands
- Healthy waterways
- Human impact on the environment
- Native and introduced plant and animal species
- History of Townsville

Guiding Questions

In deciding on the focus of Storythread unit, you may find it helpful to consider the following:

- **What is already happening in your school or local community with regards to the natural environment that you could connect with?** Examples include regeneration of an area in or near the school grounds, the formation of an environmental club, the desire to begin a school garden or interest in local endangered species and their protection.
- **What would you like your students to gain from this unit?** Examples include an appreciation of and respect for each other's differences, becoming more engaged with the world around them, understanding that they can make a difference or discovering more about local history.
- **Why are the students engaged in this unit of work?** What role will they take on? Examples include trainee environmental historians, artists, scientists or writers.

Student outcomes with relation to the Rosie's Creek Storythread are flexible and dependent on the focus of your Storythread unit and the work that the students engage in at school.



Meeting curriculum priorities

The Essential Learnings and Standards

A Storythread unit can provide a powerful, real-life context for learning that can significantly enhance students' ability to 'wield the knowledge, understandings and ways of working in key learning areas to make sense of, participate constructively in, and reflect on their role in the world' (Essential Learnings and Standards: Position Paper, p.7).

The key concepts of the Storythread Framework are complementary to the four constructs underpinning the Essential Learnings and Standards for the QCAR Framework:

Storythread	Essential Learnings
Chapter one – Think Deeply	Knowing (and understanding)
Chapter two – Make Connections	Inquiring
Chapter three – Reflect and Communicate	Reflecting
Chapter four – Respond through Action	Responding

Significantly, both the Storythread approach and the Essential Learnings aim to empower students to become active, responsible citizens who think critically and creatively, interact with others, respond to diverse perspectives, communicate ideas and create solutions (Essential Learnings and Standards: Position Paper, p.14).

Phases of Learning

Pullenvale Environmental Education Centre is committed to creating Storythreads that are responsive to the distinct characteristics and needs of students within each phase of learning.

In the Early Phase of Learning, Storythreads focus on the active engagement of children in hands-on, sensory learning (chapters one and two) as well as the importance of student involvement in curriculum decision-making (chapters three and four).

Middle Phase of Learning Storythreads provide opportunities for authentic and relevant learning experiences that promote deep understanding, intellectual and emotional engagement, and student investigation of the world around them (across all four chapters).

Productive Pedagogies

All Storythreads support commitment to the Productive Pedagogies both in an outdoor learning context and within the school environment. The implementation of a range of Productive Pedagogies is encouraged as part of an extended Storythread unit.

In particular, the Storythread approach promotes:

- the power of narrative pedagogy
- engaging students in active citizenship through investigation, deep reflective responding, emotional and intellectual engagement, and above all, connectedness to the world.

Other Curriculum Priorities

A Storythread unit can also assist you in meeting the following Department of Education and Training priorities:



Helpful resources

Supporting Texts

Baker, J. (1991) *Window*, London: Random House Children's Books.

Emmerton, S. and Elliott, J. (2004) *My mob going to the beach*, Thuringowa, Queensland: Black Ink Press.

Oktober, T. (2000) *Wetlands*, Sydney: Hodder Headline.

Queensland Wetlands Program Wetland Education Products—www.epa.qld.gov.au/wetlandinfo

WetlandCare Australia—www.wetlandcare.com.au

Storythread

Egan, K. (1988) *Teaching as storytelling*, London: Routledge.

Pullenvale Storythread Approach—www.storythread.eq.edu.au

Tooth, R. and Gulikers, S. (2006) *The Pullenvale storythread: Education for sustainability through arts based inquiry learning*, Pullenvale, QLD: Pullenvale Environmental Education Centre.

Environmental Education

Children and Nature Network—www.childrenandnature.org

Kids' Place Maps—www.kidsplacemaps.wa.edu.au

Louv, R. (2008) *Last child in the woods: Saving our children from nature deficit disorder*, 2nd edition, Chapel Hill, North Carolina: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill.

Sustainability Education: Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative—www.deh.gov.au/aussi

Thomashow, M. (1996) *Ecological Identity*, Cambridge: MIT Press.

Drama in the Classroom

Cusworth, R.A. and Simons, J. (1997) *Beyond the script: Drama in the classroom*, Marrickville, NSW: Primary English Teaching Association.

Ewing, R.A. and Simons, J. (2004) *Beyond the script: Take 2: Drama in the classroom*, Newtown, NSW: Primary English Teaching Association.

Neelands, J. (2000) *Structuring drama work: A handbook of available forms in theatre and drama*, 2nd edition, Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press.

O'Toole, J. and Dunn, J. (2002) *Pretending to learn: Helping children learn through drama*, Frenchs Forest, NSW: Pearson Education.

Thinking Tools

Wilson, J. and Wing, J. (2008) *Smart thinking: Developing reflection and metacognition*, Carlton, South Victoria: Curriculum Corporation.

The Thinking Toolbox CD – www.tmela.com.au

Philosophy in the classroom

Many teachers have used Philosophy in the Classroom strategies as part of their Storythread units. These strategies work well within the Storythread inquiry framework as they promote deep thinking, reflection and discussion.

We recommend the following text produced by teachers from Buranda State School and available from the ACSA Australia website: Cam, P., Fynes-Clinton, L., Harrison, K., Hinton, L., Scholl, R. and Vaseo, S. (2007) *Philosophy with young children – A classroom handbook*, Deakin West, ACT: Australian Curriculum Studies Association Inc.

Below are some other helpful links:

Buranda State School—burandass.eq.edu.au

Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC) - www.montclair.edu/cehs/academic/iapc

Philosophy for Kids—Philosophyforkids.com

Philosophy for Schools links—ehlt.flinders.edu.au/philosophy/schools/links.php

Philosophy encourages students to ask 'big' questions about a story. For example:

Do all people have a special place?

Can a place be like a friend?

What makes people feel like they belong?

Integrating ICT

The Learning Place website contains many helpful and practical resources that can assist you in integrating ICT into your Storythread unit:

- **Switched On Teachers—**
<http://www.learningplace.com.au/ea/sot/>
A web community for all state school teachers in Queensland who are interested in making information and communications technology (ICT) integral to learning. This site includes teaching tips, resources and stories of teacher's ICT journeys.
- **Curriculum Exchange—**
<http://education.qld.gov.au/learningplace/cx/>
The Curriculum Exchange Resource Centre contains cross-curricular resources under the heading ICT Integration. As well, the 10 Practical Ideas for Teachers booklets provide practical, step-by-step examples of ICT activities across a range of year levels, key learning areas and student groups. For example:
 - **Science –Life and Living—**
Life Cycle Animation
Shows the different stages of a life cycle by creating a stop-frame animation using Movie Maker, Word and Paint.
 - **The Arts – Drama—*****Our Australian History***
Explores the historical context of Australian History through dance and drama using PowerPoint and the Internet.

To find these booklets at the **Curriculum Exchange Resource Centre**, type 02246 into the **Search** box.

- **Virtual Field Trips—**
<http://www.learningplace.com.au/cop/vft/>
Virtual Fields Trips enable students and teachers to share information about places they may not be able to visit in person. Check current VFTs on offer to see if there is one that may link in with your Storythread unit. Past Virtual Field Trips have included: *Restoring the Habitat to the Development and Where Am I*, and *Who Lives Here?*

