

Name of Library	Cunnamulla Library	
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Title of project/innovation/initiative	After School Reading Club
Date initiated	10 th April 2013
Date completed	23 rd August 2013

The issue/challenge – Getting children to come to read after spending all day at school, and involving community members to volunteer their services.

Project details – Being that Cunnamulla is a very low socio economic area and our population consists of a lot of Indigenous people, I wanted to not only attract children to the library but improve their literacy skills as well. Having worked for Education Qld before starting at the library, I had a lot of experience in tutoring children with literacy problems and reading. During the summer the children all go to the pool, but in the winter they are a bit stuck for something to do. So, I decided to trial reading after school two days a week.



Every Wednesday and Friday from 3 pm – 4 pm they would come to the library. I employed two casual staff on these days and had a teacher volunteer from Cunnamulla State School (who I used to work with) and a couple of Aboriginal Elders, as well as some other community volunteers. We would assess what reading level the children would be on and put them in groups according to that level. Each person then took a group.

We would speak about the title, author and what the book could be about. The person heading the particular group, would then read the book to the group. Then we would say “okay, it’s your turn now”. We would then start to read the book around the circle, with the volunteer in the group going first. Everyone in the group read a page. After we read the book, we would talk about the book in length. To reinforce the

reading we then played “snap” with sight words and “Pop” another sight word game that the children absolutely love.

I was pleasantly surprised by the number of children who were coming. They came consistently for four months! Who would think children would love reading and doing sight words after doing them all day at school?! But they did! I kept a spread sheet on who attended, whose group they were in, what book they read and how they did reading the book. There were a couple of children I noticed whose reading level was very low for their age. With these children we did one on one reading sessions and felt very rewarded when we saw them improving week by week. Teachers and parents noticed their improvements. Public Libraries Connect did a story on it for their newsletter.



While at After School Reading Club we provided the children with an afternoon tea of hot chocolate or orange juice, saos and vegemite and cheese/tomato/tomato and cheese. At the end of the four months, I looked back at the spreadsheet and children who attended more than three times (which 90% of them had) received an SLQ bag full of beautiful books that were kindly donated by Random House, Hardie Grant Egmont and Indigenous Literacy Foundation. The wonderful volunteers who we couldn't have done without, received flowers and a gift bag from the children as a thank you for donating their time.