

# STORY HUBS 2023

## PROGRESS REPORT AND CASE STUDY



NOVEMBER 2023





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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background

This report presents the year 1 progress report and case study 1 for the Story Hubs evaluation 2023-2025. This evaluation's aim was to surface principles and outcomes, and what works and how it works in each Story Hub for the first year of implementation. The evaluation is also aimed to inform accountability to funding partners and supporters. The evaluation considered all activities between January – August 2023 across three new Hubs.

The evaluation findings draw on 11 teacher interviews and four student interviews, and 15 survey responses from teachers across the different Hubs. In addition, the 100 Story Building team recorded observations they heard from teachers during professional learning and coaching sessions.

### Snapshot of activities delivered in Story Hubs

Story Hubs key deliverables are Professional Learning (PL) and coaching for teachers, and a process to co-design the creative space in new Hubs with students. In 2023, Story Hubs delivered both PL and the co-design process in **five schools** across three Hubs. PL and coaching reached all teachers in four schools, which means that teachers from all grades (Foundation – Year 6 for primary school) participated in PL, in addition to some teachers from Year 7-8 in one secondary school. The evaluation estimates that Story Hubs reached 506 students with lived experience of disadvantage in 2023 across the five schools.

### Outcomes

#### STUDENT OUTCOMES

Evidence shows that Story Hubs, in a relatively short timeframe, was able to achieve all the intended student outcomes. These outcomes included **shifts in students' mindset and attitudes towards writing such as improved student agency, engagement and creativity**; and **improvements in students' literacy, critical and creative thinking skills**.

The evaluation found evidence of **significant improvements in the English and Critical & Creative Thinking curriculum outcomes**.

The Story Hubs teaching approaches worked especially well with reluctant writers, including English as an Additional Language (EAL) and low-literacy students. The program has helped 'reset' and transform student relationships with their teachers, with their writing practice (and themselves and their peers as writers), and with the learning environment.

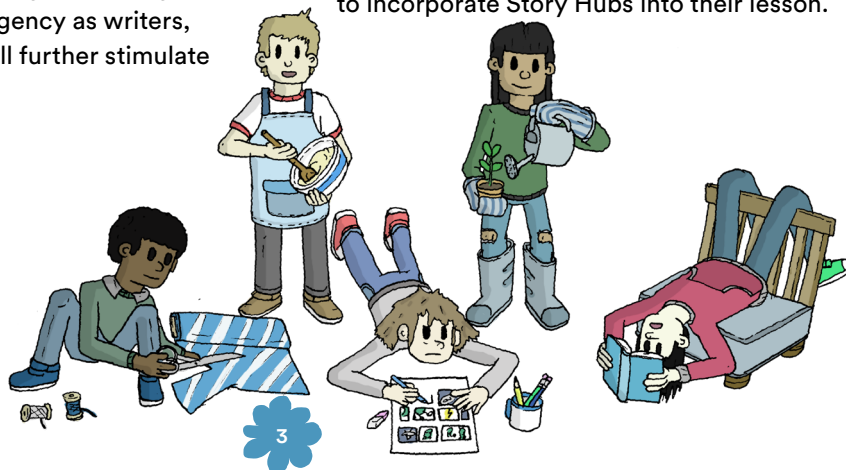
The report explains how teachers have repositioned their role in relation to students during the writing process, how students feel more agency as writers, and how the co-designed space will further stimulate student ideation.

#### TEACHER OUTCOMES

Teachers have **improved capability to teach to key curriculum outcomes, improved lesson planning and design, changed attitudes towards teaching writing, and increased sense of joy and support**.

Story Hubs worked well in schools where teachers worked in teams – teachers could attend PL, plan units and lessons, and reflect on their practice as a collective. Nurturing both this collective dynamic and teacher capability to link Story Hubs to the curriculum supported broader use of Story Hubs PL within schools. Evidence suggests that Story Hubs PL benefitted both graduate and more experienced teachers, although may have worked best for the former.

There were fewer outcomes in schools with a decentralised organisational structure and individualist norms around how teachers do PL and lesson planning, and when teachers lacked the confidence to incorporate Story Hubs into their lesson.



# 1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the year 1 progress report and case study 1 for the Story Hubs evaluation 2023-2025. This evaluation's aim was to surface principles and outcomes, and what works and how it works in each Story Hub for the first year of implementation. The evaluation is also aimed to inform accountability to funding partners and supporters. This report is structured as follows:

1. Introduction
2. Snapshot of activities delivered in the Hubs
3. Student outcomes – what worked, for whom and why?
4. Teacher outcomes – what worked, for whom and why?
5. Conclusion
6. Recommendations
7. Case study



## About Story Hubs

Story Hubs is an educational program run in schools around Victoria that aims to foster creativity and literacy for children and young people through the co-design of creative spaces, art-based professional learning for teachers, and peer-to-peer collaborative networks.

100 Story Building will deliver nine new Hubs during 2023-25, reaching at least 18 schools through the

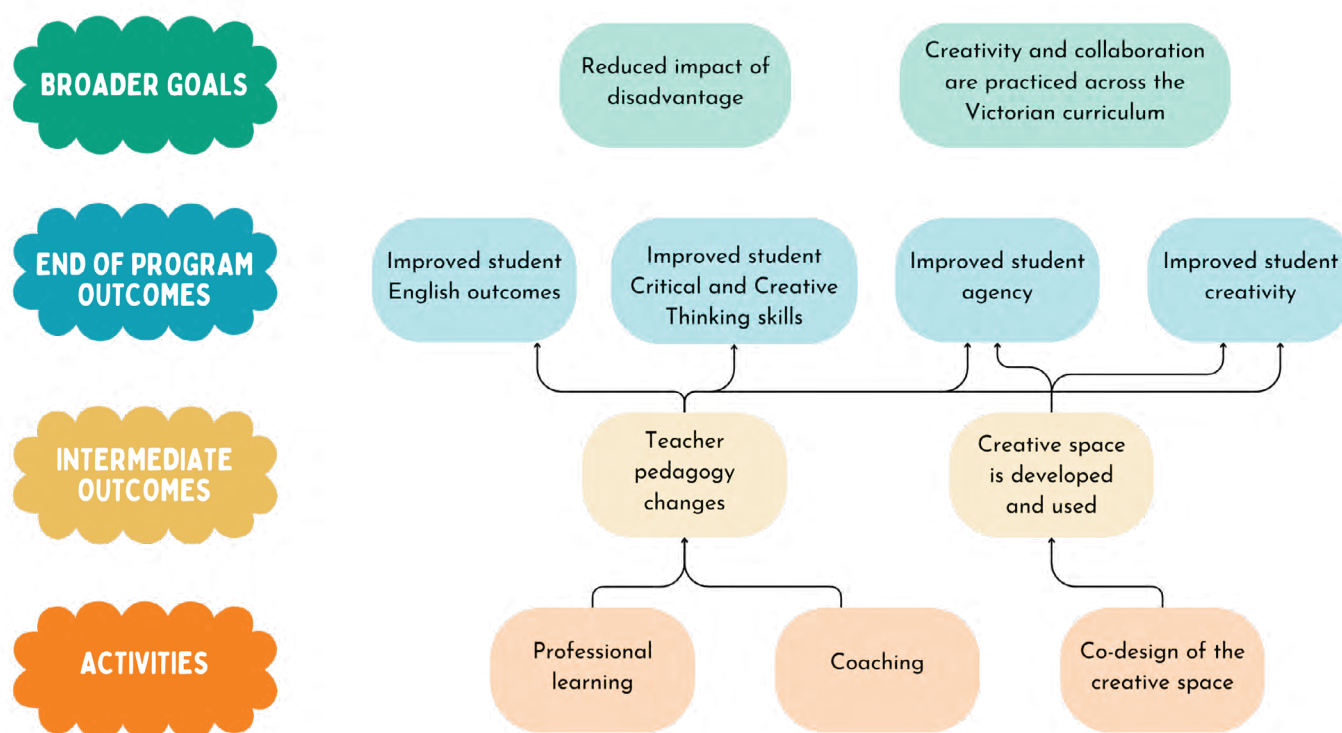
program. Each Hub is a partnership between two schools or a community organisation. Currently all Story Hubs are located in Melbourne and Geelong.

## SIMPLIFIED THEORY OF CHANGE (TOC)

Figure 1 shows the simplified Theory of Change (TOC) for Story Hubs. The program aims to reduce the impact of disadvantage and increase the practice of creativity and collaboration across the Victorian Curriculum.

FIGURE 1

### SIMPLIFIED THEORY OF CHANGE





The program aims to achieve this through delivering Professional Learning (PL) for teachers and a co-design process. The PL will contribute to changed teacher pedagogy, including lesson design and planning and how teachers interact with students in the classroom.

Teachers' changed pedagogy will contribute to improved outcomes for students, including literacy, critical and creative thinking skills, student agency and engagement, and student creativity. The co-design of the creative space will result in a space conducive to creative and collaborative teaching and learning, which will in turn enable changes in both teacher pedagogy and student outcomes.

The student outcomes are split into Victorian curriculum outcomes, and outcomes recognised within the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes 2.0 (FISO 2.0). The Victorian curriculum defines the key learning areas and capabilities that all students should achieve at each year level across the state. **Story Hubs aims to contribute towards one learning area (English) and one capability (Critical and Creative Thinking skills).**

The key strands within these English learning area are Creating Literature, Creating Texts, Language for Interaction, and Interacting With Others, and the strands within the Creative and Critical Thinking capability are Questions and Possibilities and Metacognition (these strands change for each year level – for more details please see the [Victorian curriculum website](#)). The FISO 2.0 outcomes are

improvements in student agency, engagement and creativity, which are recognised in FISO 2.0 as contributing to student achievement, even if these are not defined as particular strands or capabilities in the curriculum.

### Evaluation approach

#### EVALUATION PURPOSE

The purposes of evaluating the Story Hubs program are to:

- Evaluate the principles and outcomes, which teaching and learning approaches work and how they work in each Story Hub.
- Support accountability to funding partners and supporters.

The evaluation considered all activities between January – August 2023 across five Hubs.

The evaluation sought to answer the following high-level questions:

1. Which school-level activities worked and did not work to change teacher outcomes and pedagogy, and why? For which teachers did the work and not work?
2. Under what conditions did teachers' changed pedagogy and the co-designed creative space work and not work to improve student outcomes, and why? For which students did outcomes improve?



**FIGURE 2**  
Students and artist co-design their Story Hub.

This evaluation used a realist approach, which seeks to understand ‘how and why does a program work, for who, and in what circumstances?’. This was achieved through defining the Context, Activity, Mechanism and Outcomes (CAMO) for the Story Hubs program and developing a series of statements to help explain why and for whom the outcomes occurred.

## DATA COLLECTED

Evaluation findings draw on 11 teacher interviews and four student interviews, plus 15 survey responses from teachers. In addition, the 100 Story Building team recorded comments and reflections from teachers during professional learning and coaching sessions.

**Table 1** shows the data collected for each method and school. Data was collected from all three new Hubs, with the most data collected from North Primary and North College. All data collection was approved by the Victorian Department of Education and Training’s (DET) branch which manages all research conducted in schools and early childhood centres (RISEC).

**TABLE 1**  
**EVALUATION DATA SOURCES**

METHOD	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	SCHOOLS
<b>Teacher surveys</b>	6 classroom teachers 9 school leaders	5 schools
<b>Interviews</b>	11 teachers 4 students	2 schools
<b>Impact log</b> <i>100 Story Building recorded observations that they heard from teachers during PL and coaching sessions</i>	37 impacts recorded	4 schools

The evaluation team also facilitated a ‘data party’ with staff from 100 Story Building, North Primary, and North College to review the evidence and discuss ‘why does it work, when it does work?’ Notes from the ‘data party’ were recorded and referred to as ‘evaluation participants’ in this report.

## LIMITATIONS

The following limitations are associated with evaluation findings:

- Interview evidence is not representative of all schools: all interview data was collected from two schools. The survey and impact log responses give indication of outcomes achieved in the other Hubs (4 schools).
- Survey responses may not be representative of all teachers: the low number of survey responses mean that positive respondent bias (where survey respondents are more positive about Story Hubs) is possible. The evaluation has drawn upon impact log responses to help triangulate whether responses are representative of all teachers, which had partially mitigated this limitation.
- The creative spaces in each Hub were yet to be launched at the time of writing. These spaces provide an environment and set of tools for teachers to spark student ideation and learning – these were out of scope for the year 1 evaluation. This evaluation considered the completed co-design process and asked interviewees what impact they expected to come from these spaces.



**FIGURE 3**  
Artwork commissioned by a co-design team for their Story Hub.



## SNAPSHOT OF ACTIVITIES DELIVERED IN HUBS

Story Hubs key deliverables are Professional Learning (PL) for teachers, and a process to co-design the creative space in new Hubs with students. In 2023, Story Hubs delivered both PL and the co-design process in five schools across three Hubs. PL reached all teachers in four schools, which means that teachers from all grades (Foundation – Year 6 for primary school) participated in PL, in addition to some teachers from Year 7-8 in one secondary school.

There was no PL delivered in 2023 to the two existing hubs, except for student facing workshops at one school. This evaluation focuses on the three new Hubs and the outcomes from the PL and co-design processes delivered in 2023.

**Table 2** summarises Story Hub activities and reach in 2023 for the three new Hubs.

**TABLE 2**

### REACH OF KEY STORY HUBS ACTIVITIES, BY HUB

HUBS	SCHOOLS	PARTICIPANTS	REACH
North Hub	North Primary	All teachers	Yes
	North College	Year 7-8 Literacy teachers	Yes
Central Hub	Central Primary	All teachers	Yes
Regional Hub	Regional East Primary	All teachers	Yes
	Regional South Primary	All teachers	Yes

## 2.1

### Did Story Hubs reach students with lived experience of disadvantage?

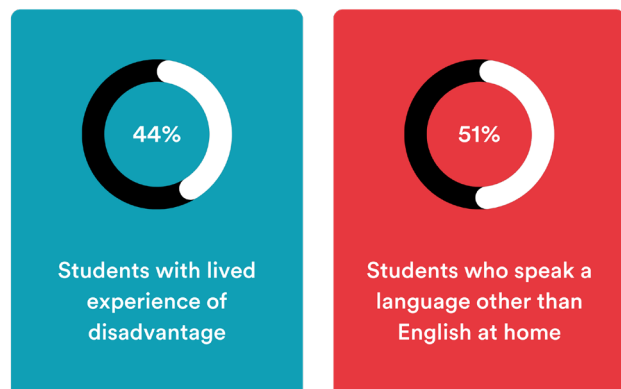
Story Hubs worked with school populations facing a high level of disadvantage. The potential reach of Story Hubs in 2023 (defined as the number of students reached through new Hubs) was 1230 students. Of these, an estimated 506 students (44%) have lived experience of disadvantage, defined as living in the bottom quartile of socio-educational advantage (see MySchool website for further details on this definition), and an estimated 560 students (51%) speak a language other than English at home.

Teacher survey respondents illustrated the types of disadvantages their students faced: 3/6 said students in their class had low socio-economic status, 3/6 said some students were neurodiverse, and two said some of their students have a trauma background. The following is an example of the types of disadvantage faced by students in one teacher's class.

*EAL, low socio-economic status, neurodiverse, lack of books and oral discussions about their learning taking place at home, low participation in home learning opportunities, low abilities (due to EAL background and lack of life experience), poor handwriting and attention spans due to overuse of technology.*

**FIGURE 4**

Potential reach of Story Hubs in 2023, by percentage



## STUDENT OUTCOMES - WHAT WORKED, FOR WHOM, AND WHY?

### 3.1

#### Outcomes for students

Evidence shows that Story Hubs, in a relatively short timeframe, was able to achieve all the intended student outcomes. These outcomes were: **shifts in students' mindset and attitudes towards writing** (such as **improvements in student agency, engagement and creativity**); and **improvements in students' literacy, critical and creative thinking skills**. The findings show that Story Hubs is already achieving its end-of-program outcomes within nine months of implementation into a three-year program, and in demonstrating contribution to improved curriculum outcomes **Story Hubs helps offset the impact of disadvantage of student learning and wellbeing**.

#### STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING

In relation to improvements in student engagement, all survey respondents (6/6) agreed that:

- Students are more enthusiastically engaged in ideation and class discussion
- Students are more excited about their writing

Furthermore, most (5/6) survey respondents agreed that students are now writing for longer and have more writing stamina. Also, one interviewee provided an example of a student, whose writing stamina as well as articulation has improved since using the Story Hubs' creative yet structured approach to writing.

*I've got a student who has improved a lot in expressing himself. He is now using specific words, rather than basic words, even writing the right noise like 'boom' and 'stomp'...he was excited because he put together a longer story than just a basic one.*

With the Story Hubs approach incorporated into the classroom teaching and learning activities, students now look forward to writing sessions. These sessions have become a space for them to apply themselves, with intrinsic motivation, to writing and idea generation broadly.

*Students have been enthusiastic and authentically engaged in writing tasks that have been developed from the Story Hub approach.*

*[Since the Story Hubs sessions] they've come up with their own ideas...We missed out on writing this morning and a group of kids were like, 'oh no!'.*

This outcome of improved student engagement in writing has been observed as class-wide, with all survey respondents (6/6) agreeing that students who are normally disengaged in writing are now much more engaged.

*Students who wouldn't normally be super engaged or produce much writing are now doing so.*

*Through using the Story Hubs approach, we have seen numbers of reluctant writers reduce. At the start of the year I had eight reluctant writers and now I have two.*

#### CONTRIBUTION TO WRITING OUTCOMES

By increasing students' enthusiasm for and engagement with writing, Story Hubs contributed to a variety of curriculum outcomes related to writing. Some (2/6) teachers surveyed reported significant or very significant improvements particularly in the following English curriculum outcomes due to their changed practice:

##### Victorian Curriculum outcomes

Student **persuasive writing** shows critical and analytical skills (associated with the English curriculum sub-strands labelled 'Creating Texts' in the Literacy strand; and the Critical and Creative Thinking capability curriculum strands labelled 'Questions and possibilities', and 'Metacognition')

Students **write stories** based on characters, settings and experience from students' own and other cultures (associated with the English curriculum sub-strands labelled 'Creating Literature' in the Literature strand, and 'Creating Texts' in the Literacy strand).

In the Impact Log, teachers from four schools cited instances of improved student writing and engagement in writing for their classes. These writing improvements were not restricted to creative writing, which is the writing style that the Story Hubs professional learning sessions for school teachers predominantly focused on.



Evidence shows that student writing improved across multiple different styles of writing, including fiction, non-fiction, persuasive, letters, and diary entries, as they have learned to apply creative writing techniques to a variety of writing styles.

*Persuasive [writing] can be one of the driest lessons to teach. But the unit this term has been extraordinary. Kids who usually wouldn't have been writing are writing letters and surveying kids about why they should swap soccer days/canteen.*

*The students have been excited and up for writing no matter what writing we are doing.*

## STUDENT LEARNING AND CREATIVITY

Incorporating the Story Hubs approach in teaching and learning increased students' agency in their learning and creativity, with most survey respondents agreeing that:

- Students have increased creative risk-taking (5/6)
- Students have a greater sense of agency in their relationships with peers and the school environment (4/6)

Similarly, in relation to Victorian Curriculum outcomes, Story Hubs contributed most consistently to learning outcomes focused on **generating ideas and participating in classroom discussion**. Teachers who incorporated Story Hubs teaching practices in their classes reported significant or very significant improvements in the following Victorian Curriculum outcomes due to their changed practice (4/6 teachers surveyed):

### Victorian Curriculum outcomes

Student **brainstorm and generate imaginative ideas** through alternative learning strategies and visual models (associated with the Critical and Creative Thinking capability curriculum strands labelled 'Questions and Possibilities', and 'Metacognition').

Students **participate in discussion and contribute ideas** including sharing, listening and interpreting (associated with the English curriculum sub-strands labelled 'Language for interaction' in the Language strand, and 'Interacting with others' in the Literacy sub-strand).

These outcomes manifested in students feeling that they have a license to come up with and experiment with creative and outside-the-square ideas without a fear of being dismissed or embarrassed (see the 'Why did it work for these students?' section below). One teacher member offered in the interview that:

*[Students' general literacy level] is definitely improving, and being more creative when it comes to writing and they have more ideas. They're not shy to come up with an idea because we aren't knocking it back.*

Students are also working collaboratively together. For example, some teachers reported that students were **more willing to work beyond their friendship groups**. One teacher explained that, normally asking students to work with others outside of their friendship group is a challenge, but student collaboration with others had improved in their classes during Story Hubs activities.

*Usually, [with group activities], they are like 'I don't want to be with that person' and complain, but with these sorts of tasks they didn't complain once...I feel like because the activity is so fun and so diverse it doesn't matter who is involved in it, it can still happen, they were happy to just do the activity. That is why.*

*Everybody (all the students in her class) was okay to give feedback to other students they wouldn't normally share with, possibly because the animals they created were SO different, the uniqueness interested them. There were no 'cliques' doing the same animals. This willingness to collaborate and share with students they wouldn't usually share with has echoed since into other work.*

Another teacher observed that, during this collaborative work, **students are supporting each other through peer-teaching**. These instances show that students are taking responsibility for their own and others' learning.

*[Impact of Story Hubs has been] well spread out and that's been really good too, because [students] are talking, sharing, and working [together], they're supporting each other. The kids who maybe don't know that narratives have a beginning, middle, end, there's kids who do know that, so they support them. There's kids who might not understand characterisation, so then there's kids who can support them.*

Another teacher from North Primary observed that students who were involved in the co-design process have started taking on a leadership role in classroom teaching and learning by volunteering to mentor

other students in writing sessions.

*Especially the kids who are struggling a bit, [the students who were in the co-design group] have taken them under their wing and supported them. Even if it's just something as simple as a mini game and they're all over it.*

### 3.2

#### For which students does this occur?

Interviewees and evaluation participants agreed that all students benefited from Story Hubs teaching strategies, and it benefits students in different ways.

The Story Hubs approach, when incorporated into the teaching and learning practices, ensures that “all students are writers” (evaluation participant). This means that it can both uplift the ‘reluctant writers’ so they feel able to write, while students who are already confident writers benefit from the Story Hubs tools and approaches to improve their writing.

As we discussed in Section 2, this is significant as the schools in which Story Hubs have been implemented all have a larger than average proportion of ‘reluctant writers’ enrolled. It was suggested by evaluation participants that these ‘reluctant writers’ often become disengaged in class, and this can, in some cases, result in behavioural problems.<sup>1</sup>

**Reluctant writers**, as observed by evaluation participants and survey respondents, may include one or more of the following oft-interlinked characteristics:

- English as an Additional Language students;
- Low socio-economic status;
- Students who have limited access to books and/or exposure to reading and oral discussions in English at home;
- Students who are not good at spelling, and therefore feel self-conscious when writing;
- ‘Box tickers’, who might be competent writers, but only complete the bare minimum work required, rather than continuing to explore ideas or writing fuller stories, because they are afraid of getting it ‘wrong’ with their answers;
- Neurodiversity;
- Students who normally don’t take feedback well;
- Quiet students who aren’t confident to express their ideas.

There is strong evidence that reluctant writers benefit from Story Hubs. Data collected from all schools through the survey (6/6), teacher interviews, and the Impact Log consistently show that outcomes have improved for reluctant writers, such as those who felt self-conscious about their writing or their ideas. A teacher in an interview mentioned an example:

*There was one student who wasn’t that confident in writing. But he had such great ideas, seeing him involved in conversations. In the group [discussions] though, if his idea got dismissed, it actually affected him. [With Story Hubs] it showed how engaged he was and how much he wanted to participate in the activities provided, without being dismissed.*

One key subset of this group is English as an Additional Language (EAL) students. Four teachers surveyed (4/6) and four teachers interviewed said that engagement and writing stamina improved for students with EAL background.

*Talking about and drawing our ideas has been successful in helping our EAL children to access the English language and words applicable to life experiences they might have otherwise missed out on due to their EAL background.*

However, regardless of students having an EAL background or not, all reluctant writers (and those who are already confident writers) benefitted from the Story Hubs approach, which included ‘accept all ideas’ mentality and using creative tools that support multimodal expressions of ideas. Below, we explain the ways through which the Story Hubs approach facilitates “engagement for all” (evaluation participant) in generating the outcomes as outlined above.



<sup>1</sup> An evaluation participant suggested that Years 7-8 students at a secondary school with a large proportion of ‘reluctant writers’ would greatly benefit from Story Hubs, even more so than in primary schools. It was because, with creativity focused programs being a rarity at the secondary school level, the gap between ‘reluctant writers’ and others at the time of starting Year 7 would further widen in more conventional academic writing programs. This can lead to disengagement, and eventually behavioural problems.



### 3.3

#### Why did it work for these students?

Story Hubs produced student outcomes as described above by turning students, especially 'reluctant writers' into engaged and enthusiastic writers. It did so by offering an opportunity to – as put by an evaluation participant – “reset”, then shift and/or regenerate various relationships in the classroom and beyond. The way through which these occurred beyond the classroom is explained in the school teacher outcome section below. In this section, we outline how Story Hubs, when incorporated into teaching and learning practices, shifts various relationships for students in the classroom. These include relationships that students have with:

- Their teachers
- Their writing practice
- Themselves and their peers as writers
- The learning environment

#### STUDENTS' RELATIONSHIP WITH TEACHERS

Evaluation participants suggested that Story Hubs offered students and teachers an opportunity to “reset” their relationships. This also involved repositioning their roles in their relationships as students and teachers as outlined below. One evaluation participant reflected that it was helpful that this “reset” was prompted by an external learning organisation that is 100 Story Building.

Invigorated by the Story Hubs approach they learned at Professional Learning (PL) sessions and student workshops; teachers passed their excitement onto students. This excitement and enthusiasm for creativity was infectious:

*I think we did one PL with Story Hubs and we really got stuck into it...Just because the teachers were invigorated and excited and wanting to try things, the kids are invigorated and excited.*

In incorporating creativity in their teaching practice, teachers are **modelling creative risk-taking explicitly with their students**. Most (5/6) teachers surveyed said they have modelled creative risks and failing with their classes, such as by doing a bad drawing.

This demonstrates to students and normalises the value of failing and the idea that imperfection is okay. With this, students feel safe to come up with and experiment with creative ideas without a fear of being dismissed by their teachers.

In fact, teachers follow **student ideas explicitly when interacting with their classes**, as most (5/6) survey participants reported, rather than try to ensure 'correct ideas' are discussed by the class. Evaluation participants reflected that this is a shift from a conventional teaching practice where teachers lead class discussions to a practice where “teachers not talking at students” and instead, “students become leaders [of idea generation, by] flipping the script [to create] equality” in student-teacher relationship around writing. This meant that, in the words of one evaluation participant, “the wall has come down for students and teachers”.

This approach also highlights a different role of the teacher – as a facilitator of the ideation process, rather than manager and disseminator of pre-formulated ideas. In this reframing of roles, as one survey respondent suggested, “students are the ‘experts’ in their ideas, so there are no wrong/right answers” (survey respondent).

Evaluation participants also reflected that by treating students as ‘experts’ in their ideas meant that teachers were “making writing more relevant to students’ life experiences” by “linking to and privileging students’ experiences” in writing.

One interview participant commented on the benefit of this approach of enabling students to experiment with ideas:

• • • • •

**“With the activities [Story Hubs] have provided us, [the students] are really engaged. It is all about THEM being creative and THEM with their ideas and [teacher] not knocking it back. Just letting them go with the ideas they have and I feel like they flourish from that.”**

## TRANSFORMING STUDENTS' RELATIONSHIP WITH WRITING, THEMSELVES AS WRITERS, AND THEIR PEERS AS WRITERS

The Story Hubs approach and its creative, yet structured, activities using visual, walks/movement, personalisation, drawing, oral and tactile story construction strategies engage and excite students.

Most (5/6) survey respondents reported that using the Story Hubs approach allowed them to **hook students into writing tasks through imagination**. Rather than asking students to write straight away, teachers are creating a space to plan writing using multi-modal techniques to stimulate ideas, and then guiding students to begin writing their well-formed ideas. This has transformed writing from a boring task to fun activity for students, where they are more engaged in their story and excited to write.

*We have done other types of writing programs, but it has never been creative enough. The kids aren't engaged, whereas this is tactile, visual, oral, all of those things wrapped into one where kids can get involved.*

The fun activities, as well as the safe space created by shifted student-teacher relationships as discussed above, meant that students were eager to seek and/or receive feedback. Survey respondents (5/6) agreed that students were more responsive to feedback on their writing.

*I said to the kids, let's draw because she didn't know how to start, and then she told me what she want to write and I said 'okay the character and then what?' and the next step and next step. And then in between, she drew the character and wrote some sentences to add to the story. At the end of the day, she is like oh my god I have all the information to put my story in.*

Feedback is a crucial means to improve student learning<sup>2</sup>. Evaluation participants reflected that “feedback from teachers keeps disengaged students on track, and confident writers on a creative upturn”.

Evaluation participants also explained that the combination of willingness to follow student ideas, role modelling creative risk-taking, and increasing time for student ideation at the beginning of writing sessions, have transformed writing practice for students into “student-owned learning” which provide them with opportunities to “have their voices heard”.

This also transformed their relationship with themselves as writers. They feel more agency over

their own learning as a writer. Evaluation participants also suggested that this especially “repositions ‘reluctant writers’ by focusing on their voice and ideas”, and “exciting them to create”. This means that the way students see themselves and their peers as writers have shifted, which leads to students writing more and improving their writing.

*The enthusiasm and the respect for their writing craft has definitely picked up. I think they respect themselves a bit more as writers and respect the kids around them as writers. And they're sort of pushing each other to do better. So if someone is writing one page, the child next to them will be like I can write two pages.*

As we discussed in the ‘What were outcomes for students?’ section, the shifting relationship with peers also entailed peer-teaching and mentoring in writing activities. Evaluation participants theorised this process as follows:

*First, inherent value is given to creativity by teachers. Second, the creative process allows everyone to be able to be part of it and participate, because there's a space for creativity for everyone. Third, this benefits everyone, including students and teachers, because sharing ideas and voice is normalised. Then, fourth, the exposure to others' ideas then feeds into more creativity and builds more confidence and higher expectations of themselves.*

With more respect for themselves and each other as writers, the students are proud of their writing outputs. They are confident and proud to share their work with other students and adults.

*We did a book launch last semester with their creative stories...and we shared it with the whole school. They came around and kids would read their books. We had designated a couple of hours and they came around and they heard their stories. I've got them to share their books [with their parents].*



<sup>2</sup> <https://www.aitsl.edu.au/docs/default-source/research-evidence/spotlight/feedback.pdf>



## SHIFTING RELATIONSHIP WITH LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

While the creative spaces are yet to be launched, teachers and students interviewed suggested that spaces co-designed for writing will further stimulate student ideation. Reflecting on the co-designed creative space at the school library, two interviewees suggested that the co-design process reshaped their relationship with the library.

*Student 1: [The co-designed space] makes us feel like 'wow, I can't believe we came up with this idea, it looks amazing'. It makes me feel creative.*

*Student 2: Makes me feel calm and relaxed. And creative... Before Story Hubs, it felt like a random library. Now, it's more creative but still feels like a library [...]*

*Student 1: The library has changed my life. Because before Story Hubs for some reason, I felt less creative. I felt like I was just a bore.*

It is worth noting here that Student 1's view of themselves was reflected in their view of the learning environment. Before the co-design process for the library this student said. "I was less creative and a bore", rather than "the library was less creative and boring". It was the change in their external environment, as the co-designed space, which turned

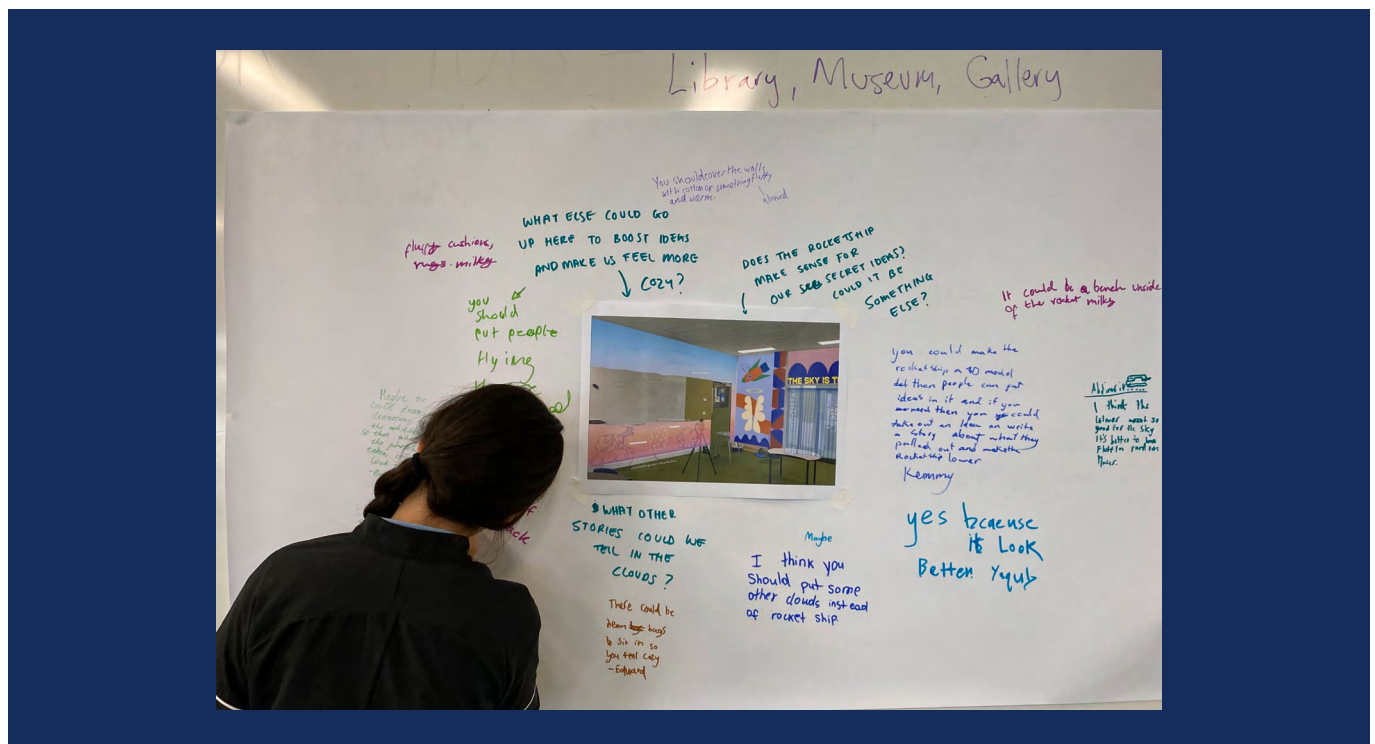
them into a more creative person. This shows the potential of the library as a learning environment in transforming how students view themselves as a writer and learner.

Also, the co-designed creative space is inspiring and exciting students from across the school who were not involved in the co-design. The co-design process is shifting the students' relationship with their learning environment to further facilitate transforming their relationship with their selves as writers.

The relationship between students and their learning environment is two-way: in addition to the environment influencing students, there are signs that students outside of the co-design group want to influence their learning environment. In one school there are early signs that the creative classroom will be extended from one classroom into all classrooms.

*The kids will be inspired by it and there is talk about extending it out into the classrooms. I think that'll really inspire them.*

This section has explored why Story Hubs practices have worked for students. The next section will explore how the Story Hubs approach was embraced at schools in producing school teacher outcomes, and the ways this occurred.



**FIGURE 5**

As part of the co-design process, students provided feedback to the artists on ideas for their creative space.

## TEACHER OUTCOMES - WHAT WORKED, FOR WHOM AND WHY?

### 4.1

#### What were the outcomes for teachers?

##### TEACHER CAPABILITY

Story Hubs PL contributed towards improved teacher capability to teach key writing components of the curriculum. Four classroom teachers surveyed (4/6) and five school leadership staff surveyed (5/7) reported that teachers were more equipped:

- To increase student capacity for persuasive writing (linked to Reasoning and Metacognition components of curriculum)
- To support students' critical and analytical skills (components of Critical and Creative Thinking, Questions and Possibilities, and Metacognition components of curriculum)
- To support students in creating literature and texts based on characters, settings and experiences from students own and other cultures (Literature component of curriculum)
- To support student brainstorming and generating imaginative ideas (linked to Metacognition component of curriculum)

Teacher capability improved through a combination of changed **lesson planning** and improved **interactions with students**. The below sections explore these changes.

##### LESSON PLANNING AND DESIGN

Allocating time for idea generation at the start of the writing process is one key element of Story Hubs lesson planning and design. Allocating this time allows students to develop and share ideas before moving into the writing process. The Story Hubs pilot evaluation also illustrated the positive effect of allocating upfront time for multimodal idea generation.

Half of the survey respondents (3/6) said they were allocating more time at the start of their writing lessons or units.

*I now feel comfortable to implement more talk before beginning writing. I have implemented the 'Yes, and' approach and continued with the drawing before writing approach.*

*I've been planning writing this year, so for me, I've been trying to incorporate plenty of drawing and talking time into our lessons each day, which the kids have responded really positively.*

A second key element of lesson planning is to draw upon creative tools and multi-modal approaches.

Teachers used the allocated writing time to deliberately use creativity and get students to engage with different modes – through sounds, drawing, physical movement, collaboration, and tactile objects.

Half of the survey respondents (3/6) said they were drawing upon more creative tools and approaches. Impact log data across four schools suggests that teachers are teaching more creatively.

*There has been a huge shift in planning within the staff. They are incorporating more creativity into their planning and we are seeing huge results. Teachers taking creative risks within their planning is exactly what we have been aiming for, and the results are apparent across the school.*

*We have done other types of writing programs, but it has never been creative enough. The kids aren't engaged, whereas this is tactile, visual, oral, all of those things wrapped into one where kids can get involved.*

##### INTERACTIONS WITH STUDENTS

Teachers reported changes to how they interact with students – becoming more accepting of all ideas, prioritising fun and excitement in classes, and taking the role as facilitator of student ideas – rather than manager and disseminator of pre-formulated ideas. The student section above discussed these changes.

*Yeah, I feel like...all teachers are actors and actresses. It is really good to put on that persona with the activities that SH provides us with. It is really good. I love it, I feel like I have become more confident when it comes to teaching writing because it is fun and I love seeing the kids be happy when they are learning.*

##### TEACHER SENSE OF JOY AND SUPPORT

Teachers reported a sense of joy and feeling of support from the Story Hubs program. Survey responses from school leadership (4/7) and teachers (4/6) reported that teachers were taking more joy in lesson design and planning and felt a greater sense of support. For some teachers it was creating excitement, while for others it was a reinvigorating/rediscovering the joy of teaching writing that had stagnated. A common theme was the collective teacher experience, which is explored further below.

*I'm excited about teaching writing!!*

*[2 other teachers] were so excited during our planning session about my time travel idea.*

## 4.2

### Why did it work when it did?

#### THE COLLECTIVE TEACHER EXPERIENCE

Evidence shows that the team dynamic between teachers was a key factor for change. Evaluation participants highlighted the value of undergoing their Story Hubs journey as a collective with their teaching team (such as a whole school, a 3/4 teacher team, or a faculty team in a secondary school).

These teachers attended the PL together, conducted their unit/ lesson planning together, and reflected on their lessons together.

*We bought those ideas like morphing two characters into one, that idea, we brought that into our lessons as a team.*

There were several plausible explanations why the team dynamic supported uptake of practices from PL. Some evaluation participants suggested that having another teacher member to share their excitement, ideas, and accountability to act with helped maintain the momentum for change.

Participants said that because unit planning (in primary schools) occurs in teams then the team-based PL and coaching works well.

*The accountability as a teaching team to plan collaboratively for using Story Hubs as a teaching tool.*

While the team dynamic fostered stronger uptake of content from PL, teachers explained that Story Hubs PL and coaching also strengthened team synergy around teaching strategies for connected literacy blocks.

Evaluation participants explained that the writing and reading units (in primary schools) were normally planned separately and tend to become disjointed. The desire to incorporate Story Hubs into unit planning meant these teachers came together to plan their units.

*Normally I do the writing and she does the reading unit planning... but we had to sit down together to plan it based on [Sparkling Creativity].*

The collaborative experience meant that teachers heard from other team members who had applied Story Hubs teaching strategies in their classes. The evaluation survey found the teachers surveyed who had changed their lesson design and planning were more likely to have also heard about others incorporating what they learned at PL in their teaching practice.

*[In the PL] the teachers were talking about the*

*creativity and what they had learned. And so one teacher was sharing with the other two, reminding them of some of their key elements of maybe how they could apply the process that they were thinking for using the tools and strategies that Simon had shared with them.*

The whole-school approach multiplied this experience, because in addition to increasing the number of teachers to reciprocate excitement and shared practice, it supported a school culture where creativity is prioritised and normalised.

*The 'whole-school' delivery of PL actually brings teachers together.*

This collective experience also worked across schools – evaluation participants discussed some benefits for teachers from partner hubs coming together to attend PL. This mechanism and the extent it contributed to outcomes is unclear and shall be explored in future case studies.

#### BUILDING TEACHER CAPABILITY TO MAKE LINKS TO THE CURRICULUM

Story Hubs contributes directly to key curriculum outcomes (as detailed in Section 3.1). While Story Hubs staff assured teachers that the PL would link to the curriculum, many teachers felt the need to confirm the links for themselves. Three interviewees reported doing “curriculum mapping” to see how Story Hubs links to their curriculum outcomes, both independently and with Story Hubs staff. Story Hubs staff drew links alongside teachers during the PL and coaching sessions, which increased teacher capacity to make those links themselves. Evaluation participants found it “easy” to make the connection from PL to the curriculum.

*Went home and did it myself, I mapped Story Hubs to the curriculum, because I wanted to see it...*

The data indicates that supporting teacher capability to make the links themselves gives them reassurance and helps alleviate teacher concerns that Story Hubs does fit into the curriculum and therefore enables teachers to use Story Hubs practices more often. Surveys and interviews suggest that almost all teachers want to incorporate Story Hubs into their lessons – they just lacked the capacity to link it to the curriculum, or else cited the constant challenge of ‘fitting everything in’ and the pressure to exclude lessons that do not fit within the curriculum.



The flexibility of Story Hubs teaching strategies allows for it to be applied across multiple areas of the curriculum. Rather than being limited to 'creative writing' or another single topic, three teachers interviewed indicated that the PL could be applied to multiple types of writing, relevant for different components of the curriculum.

*We've turned Perilous Quest into a Time Travel themed thing, so they can use the concept to do different kinds of writing - fiction, historical fiction, sci fi, diary entries and letters... it's really flexible for the whole unit.*

Coaching during lesson planning also helped teachers appreciate this flexibility and link Story Hubs practices to more curriculum outcomes than they otherwise would have. For example, teachers may understand that Story Hubs could be linked to a creative writing unit, but not how it could be linked to a persuasive writing unit.

By building the capability to make those links to other curriculum units, teachers could incorporate Story Hubs into more lessons with students, deepening the outcomes from the program.

*It's nice to sort of have someone else who goes 'yes, we know you have to do this in the curriculum, but what about this? How can you then align what we're suggesting with the curriculum?' They [help] mesh [curriculum and creativity] together.*

### TEACHERS IMMEDIATELY SAW AND FELT THE BENEFITS OF STORY HUBS TECHNIQUES

Evidence indicates that many teachers were convinced of the usefulness of Story Hubs techniques straight away. Story Hubs staff role modelled their practices with both teachers and students during the initial PL series so teachers could immediately see first-hand both the teaching strategies and the impact on student outcomes. These benefits were apparent immediately, rather than waiting for several lessons or months. The evaluation findings suggest that the immediacy helped kick-start buy-in and uptake by teachers.

Evaluation participants suggest that teachers saw the benefits from encouraging and celebrating student ideas straight away, which motivated teachers to apply these teaching strategies. That is, teachers were not simply replicating the teaching strategies because they had been told they would work, rather they had seen them work and witnessed the benefits from leveraging student interests and imagination through the teaching strategies given.

*We did one PL with Simon and the teachers and we really got stuck into it. We [saw writing levels] improve straight away. Just because the teachers were invigorated and excited and wanting to try things, the kids are invigorated and excited.*

### REGULAR WRITING LESSONS

Teachers with regular writing classes could incorporate more of Story Hubs teaching practices into their lessons. Some teaching teams reported weekly writing units where students had consistently benefitted from Story Hubs, whereas teachers in one secondary literacy faculty reported that they only did writing once every 4-6 weeks in their faculty (due to a focus on language and reading); which limited student exposure to Story Hubs methods.

*We have a weekly Funday Friday writing class.*

### THE SCHOOL ENABLED TEACHERS TO ATTEND PL

For most teachers, attending the PL series was the first step on their Story Hubs journey. The PL is the main activity available to influence teachers. The evaluation found that the following factors enabled teachers to attend – school leadership and the heads of faculty setting an informal requirement for their teams to attend PL, booking the PL at times where all teachers could attend, and the existence of and budget for CRTs to cover teachers when required.

These three school factors were identified as significant because teachers did not attend PL in their absence. In one school where the head of English did not set an expectation for their team to attend PL (and the PL was not available at suitable times for teachers) this team did not attend. Teacher surveys showed that PL take up was higher when school leadership encouraged teachers to take up PL, such as by allocating curriculum days for this purpose.

*We took a curriculum day for that. And a curriculum day for the second PL too – we did a 3 hour session with Simon.*

Story Hubs took steps to influence two enabling factors – Story Hubs worked with school leadership to oversee hub implementation in their school and were flexible to provide PL at times when all teachers could attend. Story Hubs staff influence these factors through meetings and planning with school leadership and heads of faculty.

Furthermore, the need for CRTs to be available and budgeted was a lesson from the previous pilot evaluation, which occurred in a COVID-affected context, where teachers had much less time available for everything, including PL.

### Where were there fewer outcomes, and why?

Story Hubs delivery was largely consistent across the three Hubs, and this evaluation generally found consistent outcomes across the Hubs. For the schools, teachers, and students where outcomes were less frequent, this evaluation investigated if any features of the context hindered how Story Hubs ‘works’ in those cases.

## SCHOOL CONTEXT

One Story Hubs school had teachers and students participate in the co-design process with their partner Hub and had teachers attend PL at their partner school. However, this school had lower teachers PL attendance (and in turn fewer student outcomes) than the other Hubs. This difference is likely caused by a different school context compared to the other schools participating in Story Hubs – see the case study below.

### Case study - secondary school context

One of the 2023 Story Hubs schools is a large secondary school, which has an existing partnership with the local Story Hubs primary school. More than half the students are in the bottom ICSEA quartile and have a language background other than English, similar to the other participating Story Hubs schools.

This secondary school has a focus on reading and writing, like the other participating Story Hubs schools. Students in Years 7-10 are required to take both English and ‘SunLit’ classes. The English classes include a weekly writing program called ‘Writers Notebook’, and the SunLit classes write once a month.

The school has a more decentralised organisational structure compared to other participating primary schools. The school has two campuses – each with their own separate heads of operations – and separate faculties for each subject.

Teachers normally undertake PL and unit planning on a more individualised basis compared to other participating primary schools. Teachers generally take PL as individuals or as small groups rather than an entire teaching staff or subject faculty. Unit planning is also usually undertaken by individuals rather than in collaboration as a team.

*continued in the next column...*

Student attitudes towards English and creative writing changes in the first year of secondary school. Students often don’t enjoy writing or English lessons, and students are comparatively more risk-averse and less likely to take creative risks.

Pressure to contribute towards VCE outcomes affects lesson planning for Years 7-10. Evaluation participants reported this ‘curriculum focus’ is higher in secondary school compared to primary school.

Evaluation attendees spoke about how the different context in secondary schools influences how Story Hubs professional learning works.

The decentralised organisational structure in secondary schools means that Story Hubs needs to gain buy-in from both school/campus principals and the different heads of faculties. This was different to primary schools, where school principals had more ability to influence what PL their teachers took.

In North College, Story Hubs was championed by leadership on one campus and the Literature faculty, but this did not lead to buy-in and PL attendance from teachers in the English faculty or on the other campus.

The individualist norms around how teachers do PL and unit planning inhibits the collective teacher’s dynamic of Story Hubs. Section 4.2 above detailed how the collective teachers experience and team dynamic was significant, as teachers attended PL together, lesson planning together, and reflecting on lessons together, which supported uptake of Story Hubs teaching strategies. Story Hubs asks teachers to attend PL together, which fits awkwardly with teacher norms and systems.

*As a secondary school it is hard to do ‘whole staff PL’; it’s not like a primary school where you do PL for all teachers at once, in secondary school it is just for a cohort of English teachers, and we need to schedule in chunks of PL time when people are free...there is a different context.*

The pressure to hit curriculum outcomes means teachers feel like they have less room to be creative and want to clearly see direct lines between new programs and curriculum outcomes. While primary school teachers also wanted to see clear links to the curriculum, this need may be greater in secondary schools.



## TEACHER CONTEXT

Evidence suggests that many teachers who attended PL incorporated Story Hubs strategies into their lesson planning.

There were mixed perspectives about whether graduate teachers were more likely to change their practice than experienced teachers. While one teacher member from Central Primary observed that graduate teachers “in particular” are getting a lot from the PL, teachers from North Story Hubs observed that the changes were for graduate and experienced teachers alike. Evaluation participants acknowledged that graduate teachers are still building up their ‘toolkit’ of strategies and tools, and experienced teachers have their favourite ‘tried and tested’ tools, but both groups have benefitted.

There were no clear differences between the characteristics of teachers who did and did not incorporate strategies into lesson planning – they were similar in terms of “feeling like they are a creative person” and seeking opportunities to learn and improve their teaching.

However, teachers who did not incorporate strategies into lesson planning saw the following things less often than those teachers who had changed lesson design and planning.

- Saw and/or heard about others incorporating what they learned at PL in their teaching practice

- School leadership supported them to incorporate learnings from PL into lesson planning

Furthermore, one teacher member reported that they lacked confidence in how to incorporate the PL into their lesson planning.

*I really enjoyed the lesson plans/ideas shared with us but I wasn't sure/ confident how to include them in my planner to utilise them fully.*

## CLASSROOM CONTEXT

Evidence showed that most classes showed improved student outcomes when teachers changed their lesson planning and interactions with students.

For classes where there was limited or no improvements in student outcomes:

- There was no difference in visibility of student ideas within the school, relationships amongst the students, and student participation in regular classes.
- Teacher relationships with students and student literacy levels were slightly lower than the other classes.

Given the lack of data for these classes these results are indicative but inconclusive for why changes would not occur in a classroom context – further investigation would need to occur on a class-by-class basis.



**FIGURE 6**  
Students exchanging ideas during a creative writing session.



## CONCLUSION

This evaluation has shown that Story Hubs is reaching its end-of-program outcomes within the first year of implementation into a three-year program: there are **improvements in student curriculum outcomes within both English and Critical and Creative Thinking** for some classes. The **Story Hubs teaching approaches worked especially well with reluctant writers, including EAL and low-literacy students, which suggest that the program is reducing the impact of disadvantage**. The breadth of outcomes may broaden in the final two years of the program.

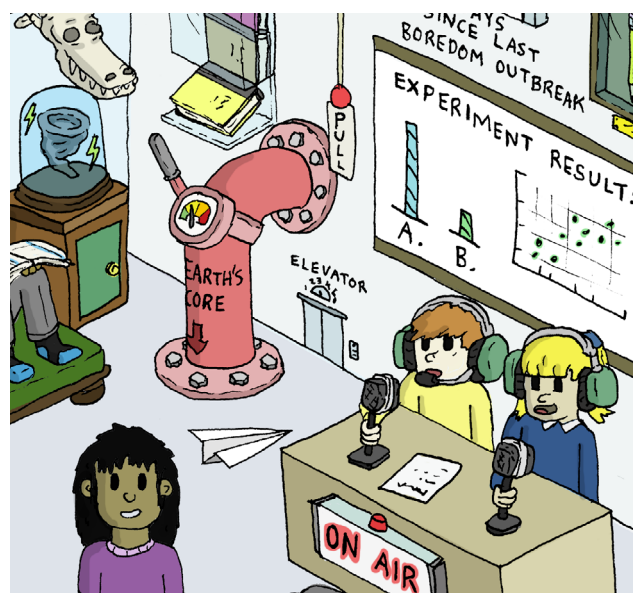
In addition to identifying the outcomes, the evaluation has sought to explain **why** these outcomes occurred, and for which groups. The evaluation team developed the following statements based on the above findings to help explain why student outcomes occurred.

1. In classes where teachers deliberately incorporate time before writing for structured and creative ideation and planning, and using multi-model tools (movement, drawing, oral discussion) for expressing and exploring ideas, then reluctant writers can develop and plan their ideas without being held back by their normal barriers for being reluctant writers. This is one reason why reluctant writers are more excited to write and have greater writing stamina.
2. In classes where teachers use multi-model tools, model creative risk-taking, follow student ideas explicitly, and take a role as facilitator of the ideation process – rather than manager and disseminator of pre-formulated ideas – then students (including quiet students) feel safe and a licence to be creative and contribute to discussions without fear of their ideas being rejected. This exposure to others' ideas then feeds into more excitement and creativity in writing. This is why students are generating more ideas and participating in more classroom discussions.
3. In classes where students developed divergent ideas and took creative risks, students were more interested in their peers' work because it was so creative and unique. This is why students were sharing their ideas and were more willing to work beyond their friendship groups. This collaboration in turn leads to students supporting each other through peer-teaching, which is another reason why student writing improved.

Story Hubs has also contributed towards changes for many teachers – teachers improved capability to teach to key curriculum outcomes, improved lesson planning and design, changed attitudes towards teaching writing, and increased sense of joy and support. These changes led directly towards the student outcomes observed above.

The evaluation team developed two finding statements to help explain why some teachers changed practice.

1. Where teachers undergo their Story Hubs journey as a collective (such as a teaching team or faculty), then they can attend PL together, share their excitement and discuss Story Hubs methods together, and keep each other accountable for using Story Hubs in their lesson planning and practice. They are more likely to hear about others applying it into their teaching practice, and seek out coaching as a team. This collective dynamic is one key reason why many teachers implemented Story Hubs strategies in their lesson planning and classes.
2. In a school with an authorising environment for all-staff attendance at PL and for Story Hubs to be implemented as a whole-school approach, then the collective dynamic is enhanced, teachers have greater licence to prioritise creativity and implement Story Hubs strategies across the curriculum, and the entire school culture shifts towards a culture where creativity is prioritised and normalised.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

This evaluation provides two recommendations based on our understanding of what works in different school contexts.

### Recommendation 1: Continue the program

In schools with an authorising environment that allows Story Hubs to be implemented as a whole-school approach, continue the program in its current form. The whole-school PL sessions followed by team-based coaching has worked well in these schools.

### Recommendation 2: Develop strategies with school leadership to enable teaching team to work together more

In schools with individualist norms around how teachers do PL and lesson planning, collaboratively develop strategies with school leadership that enable teaching teams (particularly within faculties and year levels) to work together more. These strategies should be developed before PL commences and may involve changes both to the school (culture, systems) and to the Story Hubs program (such as team-based PL courses).

## CASE STUDY - STORY HUBS PRIMARY SCHOOL

### SCHOOL CONTEXT

One of the 2023 Story Hubs primary schools is a medium-sized primary school in Melbourne's western suburbs. 90% of students have a language background other than English, and half the students have lived experience of disadvantage. Many teachers have deep connections with the school, and/or have worked at the school for a long time.

The school is actively trying to create a sense of community, with initiatives like converting an old building into a community space.

*We have a [existing] community hub that we have opened up, parents come in and have coffees and we do some professional learning and stuff, that is their little space.*

Literacy is a major focus area for this school, and the school focus has recently shifted from reading to writing. The school focus and priorities are shared across all teachers, who often take PL in teams.

*Writing [skills for students] was very low and we could never get any traction because we were worried about reading. But now we have a great reading coach, it is time for writing.*

There has been a regular writing rhythm in the existing curriculum, but it was segmented and prescriptive, and not as exciting as it could have been for students.

*In the past, writing was, 'here is the process to write a persuasive, do two arguments and do the conclusion'. There is no creativity in that. No thinking outside of the box and no trying to get great vocab or going orally before [writing]. That is what we have been missing for a very long time.*

### STORY HUBS ACTIVITIES

Story Hubs commenced in the school in 2023, with the professional learning series for teachers. Story Hubs staff modelled responsive and collaborative student-centred approaches and activity design principles enable writing to be a creative process. These inspired and excited schoolteachers, who incorporated them into their teaching.

*A [facilitator] came in to conduct a lesson and she was just taking the most extraordinary ideas from the students, some of the things that I never would have imagined we would speak about...It was really good to see. I have followed that trend and it works, it is so good.*

## CASE STUDY - STORY HUBS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Seeing straight away that Story Hubs' creative and structured activities produce positive engagement from students further excited the teachers about the approach. Teachers communicated how they are implementing the Story Hubs teaching strategies with other teachers, which supported the environment of creativity in other teachers

*[After the Professional Learning sessions, I saw teachers] were talking about the creativity and what they had learned...[and talking about] how they could apply the process, tools and strategies.*

*Students are responding to [me] being excited about writing.*

Lesson planning with SH teachers offered teachers a different perspective, placing creativity and engagement first and then working backwards to link to curriculum outcomes.

*It's nice to sort of have someone else who goes 'yes, we know you have to do this in the curriculum, but what about this? How can you then align what we're suggesting with the curriculum?'. They [help] mesh [curriculum and creativity] together.*

A select group of students from North Primary and North College collaborated to co-design the creative space in the school library. Teachers spoke about how the co-design process promoted student voice.

*Sometimes in the classrooms, children aren't given the opportunity to be their genuine selves, the rush of reading, writing, lunch order, a teacher's life is hectic. So this [codesign process] was giving her time where she knew she was part of something pretty special, her voice counted and all of a sudden she had all this power to create.*

Teachers and students spoke about the benefit of the new creative space, which is still in development.

*Yeah, it would give me ideas to make a story! Like the fungi door. Like we just landed on a fungi planet. Fungi is pretty poisonous.*

*The kids will be inspired by it and there is talk about extending it out into the classrooms. I think that'll really inspire them.*

## OUTCOMES

The whole school implementation of Story Hubs has normalised creativity, and made teachers feel they have a license to be creative in teaching. Implementing the responsive and collaborative student-centred approaches and activity design principles in creative writing has given the teachers confidence to apply them in the wider curriculum.

*I feel like with what we have learnt from Story Hubs, it can be used in the curriculum quite easily. You just have to have that creative mindset, the confidence to allow students to roll on with whatever it is. We did it with two genres and we didn't even know how to do it with informational text, but it was doable. Anything in the curriculum can be done in those sorts of ways.*

The teachers have incorporated multi-modal (visual, oral, and sharing) strategies for getting students to plan for their writing.

*A lot of our students do speak languages other than English at home. An area we probably didn't focus on as much was speaking and listening, because you tend to think of it as a reading skill, but I feel like this year it's been something that has been very prevalent during writing instead.*

Six teachers interviewed said that they had seen improvements in student engagement in writing. Students are enthusiastic about writing and creative ideas, and this is having a positive impact on the whole classroom.

*The enthusiasm and the respect for their writing craft has definitely picked up. I think they respect themselves a bit more as writers and respect the kids around them as writers. And they're sort of pushing each other to do better. So if someone is writing one page, the child next to them will be like I can write two.*



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### EVALUATION PARTNER

**Clear Horizon**

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