

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 – Grade 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 disadvantaged students 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.

