Dear Parents

One of the many great things about our school is that Edge Hill State School is truly a community of learners. Learning is our main game and the focus of all we do. This special edition newsletter focuses on reading and our QAR strategy. However, learning is much more than letters and sounds and numbers. Learning is about the growth of the whole child and all they do. Our aim is to challenge and support students to grow in all areas. Obviously this includes literacy and numeracy and other curriculum areas. It also includes life skills as well as social and emotional growth and the opportunity to nurture the talents that we all have.

Last week a Grandmother of a student at school came up to me before school and simply said “I love Edge Hill School”. She then told me that she has had a connection with the school for over 40 years and that she loves being involved with the school through her grandson. Community is important at Edge Hill State School and we value the role that parents and extended family members play in making this a great learning community.

State Education Week provides us with an opportunity to celebrate the wonderful learning that happens at our school.

Paul Campbell  Principal

21ST CENTURY LEARNERS

World-class 21st century learning is a very important objective for our school and an educational approach that is widely recognised and supported both nationally and internationally.

So what is 21st century learning?

• Learning that is relevant to life in the 21st century and changes as knowledge itself changes and evolves;
• Competence and confidence with new information technologies for accessing, processing and sharing information;
• Learning in the service of a better world, and promoting human potential to solve problems, be productive, creative, think deeply about issues and care for others.

For several years now, Edge Hill State School has been proud to be part of the Microsoft Partners in Learning program. The focus of this partnership has been to develop innovative and engaging 21st century curriculum that challenges our students to think and act as global citizens.

One exciting outcome of the partnership for EHSS has been our "Grand Designs“ unit in year 6, in which students create and showcase model houses that demonstrate the application of their learning about energy conservation and environmentally sustainable design.

Grand Designs is just one example of the many ways that Edge Hill teachers are redesigning the curriculum to challenge and support our students, to equip them to become lifelong learners who can operate with confidence in a complex, information rich and globalised world.
At Edge Hill State School, we believe that comprehension is an essential life skill that helps students become successful learners. **QAR - Question Answer Relationships** is our whole school approach to teaching reading comprehension. It develops students’ literacy and critical thinking skills and can be used across all subject areas. **All students in Prep to Year 7 are taught QAR.**

**Benefits of QAR**

- QAR provides teachers and students with a shared language to talk about comprehension strategies.
- QAR supports students in analysing, comprehending and responding to texts.
- QAR builds student confidence in question-asking and question-answering situations.
- QAR provides a way to think and talk about sources of information for answering questions. i.e., answers can come from the text or from students’ background knowledge.
- QAR supports students to use higher order thinking.

**How is QAR taught?**

QAR is **explicitly taught** during reading lessons and across all subject areas

- eg Maths, Science, Geography, History

**When is QAR used?**

Students use QAR to help them answer questions **before, during and after reading** or viewing a text

- eg story, poster, recipe, chart, poem, advertisement

**What are the QAR question categories?**

QAR question categories tell the reader **where to find the answers:**

- **In the Text**
- **In My Head**

**What are the QAR question types?**

Each question type gives the reader a **cue to help find the answers:**

- **In the Text - Right There and Think, Search & Find**
- **In My Head—Author & Me and On My Own**
Teachers at Edge Hill have worked together to develop QAR goals for students in each year level. Our **QAR Steps to Reading Success** describes the goals that students will achieve at each year level “step” to develop the skills that will help them become successful, confident and critical readers.

### Our Vision of a Student who is Proficient at using QAR
- Generates and responds to appropriate question types at each stage of the reading cycle
- Applies a range of active comprehension skills and strategies when answering the 4 question types
- Uses the language of QAR to explain their thinking and justify answers and opinions
- Uses QAR when engaging with fiction and non-fiction text types across all subject areas.

| YEAR 6/7 | I can independently generate and answer appropriate QARs before, during and after reading |
| YEAR 5 | I can use the language of QAR to explain my thinking and justify answers |
| YEAR 4 | I can independently use QAR questions and strategies after reading |
| YEAR 3 | I can independently identify key words in questions to help me get the answers |
| YEAR 2 | I can independently identify key words in questions to help me choose the right strategy to get the answers |
| YEAR 1 | I can independently use QAR questions and strategies during reading |
| PREP | I can independently use QAR questions and strategies before reading |

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**QAR STEPS TO READING SUCCESS**

1. **PREP**
   - I know what good readers do before and during reading
   - I know the difference between a question and a statement
   - I can ask “In the Text” questions
   - I can ask “In My Head” questions

2. **YEAR 1**
   - I know what good readers do before and during reading
   - I know the difference between “Author & Me” & “On My Own” QARs
   - I know how to make up “Right There” & “Think, Search & Find” QARs
   - I can create “Think, Search & Find” questions

3. **YEAR 2**
   - I can independently use QAR questions and strategies before, during and after reading
   - I can identify “Right There” & “Think, Search & Find” questions and explain how I got my answers
   - I can independently identify key words in questions to help me get the answers
   - I can use my reading strategies before, during and after reading

4. **YEAR 3**
   - I can independently use QAR questions and strategies during reading
   - I can identify “Author & Me” & “On My Own” QARs and justify my answers
   - I can independently identify key words in questions to help me get answers
   - I can identify all QAR question types and justify how I got my answers

5. **YEAR 4**
   - I can independently use QAR questions and strategies after reading
   - I can identify “Author & Me” & “On My Own” QARs and justify my answers
   - I can locate key words in questions to help me get the answers
   - I can identify “Right There” & “Think, Search & Find” QARs and justify my answers

6. **YEAR 5**
   - I can use the language of QAR to explain my thinking and justify answers
   - I can independently use QAR questions and strategies after reading
   - I can independently identify key words in questions to help me choose the right strategy to get the answers
   - I can independently identify key words in questions to help me choose the right strategy to get the answers

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**Student and parent resources to support QAR**

- Bookmarks for all students in Prep - Year 7
- Posters in every classroom
- Home Reading Journal for students in Prep - Year 2
- Information for parents via EHSS newsletters, Facebook, Website
**Introducing the Reading Coach**

In 2014 we are pleased to welcome, **Karen Blakeley** in her new role as Reading Coach. Karen works across the school as a mentor for teachers with a focus on the *what, when and how* of teaching reading.

You will find Karen in classrooms working with teachers and students; she often models new and innovative approaches to the teaching of reading and supports teachers to address the needs of all the students in their classes.

Karen also works alongside our Head of Curriculum, monitoring student progress and planning next steps in improving reading outcomes. In the near future she will be running some parent workshops that will support parents to assist their children as they read at home.

**Tips for Reading with Your Child**

A love of reading begins at home. Over the next few months we will include in the School Newsletter and on the EHSS Face Book page parent tips on how to help your child be a successful reader. We encourage you to give them a go.

Here is one to get you started—

**Be your child’s #1 Fan - Praise, Praise, Praise!**

Your child will be bringing a book home to show you how well he/she is reading and to practise reading with fluency and expression.

Avoid the comment— “That was too easy for you!”

Try saying— “I enjoyed listening to that story—you read that expressively, and made it sound interesting.”

Watch them smile and they will be keen to read more.

**Join the EHSS Readers Club**

**Read to Succeed**

Where: **Library**

When: 8:15 – 8:50am

Every Wednesday

**Starting Wednesday 28th May**

- Open to all ages
- Come along on Wednesday to receive your very own **Readers Club Card**.
- Fabulous prizes for regular readers.
- Come along to the library to **read, listen to** and **talk about** favourite stories.
- **Parents** are encouraged and **very welcome** to join in.
- **Theme for June** …….. **Comics and Mysteries**

**Premier’s Reading Challenge**

The Premier’s Reading Challenge is an annual state-wide event. It is designed to help **students develop a love of reading for life**.

The Challenge runs from its launch on **May 28 up until September 5**.

It is open to all Primary students (Years Prep – 7)

To meet the Challenge:

- students in **Years P-2** must read or experience *(have the book read to them)* **20 books**
- students in **Years 3-7** must read **15 books**

Students successfully completing the Challenge will receive a signed certificate from the Premier of Queensland. There will also be prizes and fun activities at Edge Hill School throughout the Challenge period.

So as a family, let’s……..

**Connect 4 Reading!**