

PrimaryConnections

Project Overview – December 2009

The 'PrimaryConnections – linking science with literacy' project is based on research and is well conceptualized

- It is an inquiry-based model.
- It links science with literacy and numeracy.
- It incorporates Indigenous perspectives.

It addresses problems in science education which include:

- Average time spent on the teaching of science in primary classrooms is less than 3% of total teaching time (Angus et al. 2007¹) or 45 minutes per week.
- Research indicates that primary teachers lack confidence in teaching science.
- There is a decline in the number of students choosing science and mathematics beyond the compulsory years of schooling.
- Students are losing interest in science as they progress through their schooling – current research indicates that if students are not 'switched on' to science by ages 11-14 they will not continue with science studies.

It is not just a set of units or workshops but a comprehensive approach including:

Professional learning

- Training of Master Facilitators to promote sustainability.
- 500 professional learning facilitators (three days training), 900 curriculum leaders (two days training) and 125 tertiary facilitators (two day workshop) have been trained.
- Developed in collaboration with State and Territory government and non-government education sectors.

Curriculum resources

- Aligned with the Australian curriculum in science.
- Nine further PrimaryConnections units will be developed making a suite of 28 units for primary school.

Communications strategy

- Promotion to support national uptake of PrimaryConnections – targeting Australian primary principals.

Indigenous perspectives

- Incorporation of Indigenous perspectives in the curriculum resources and professional learning.

Research and evaluation

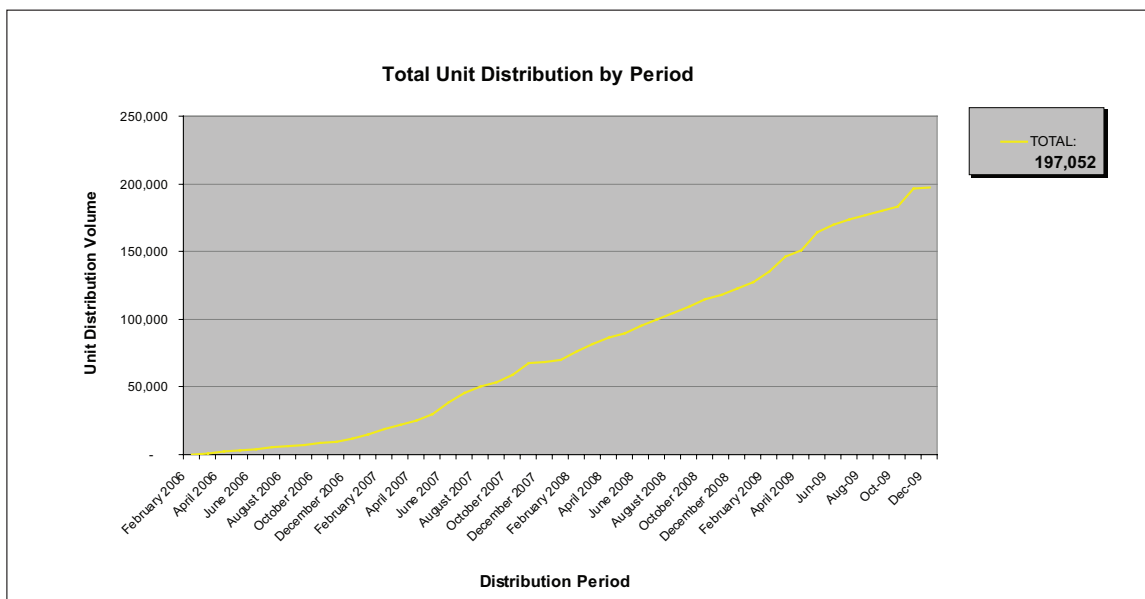
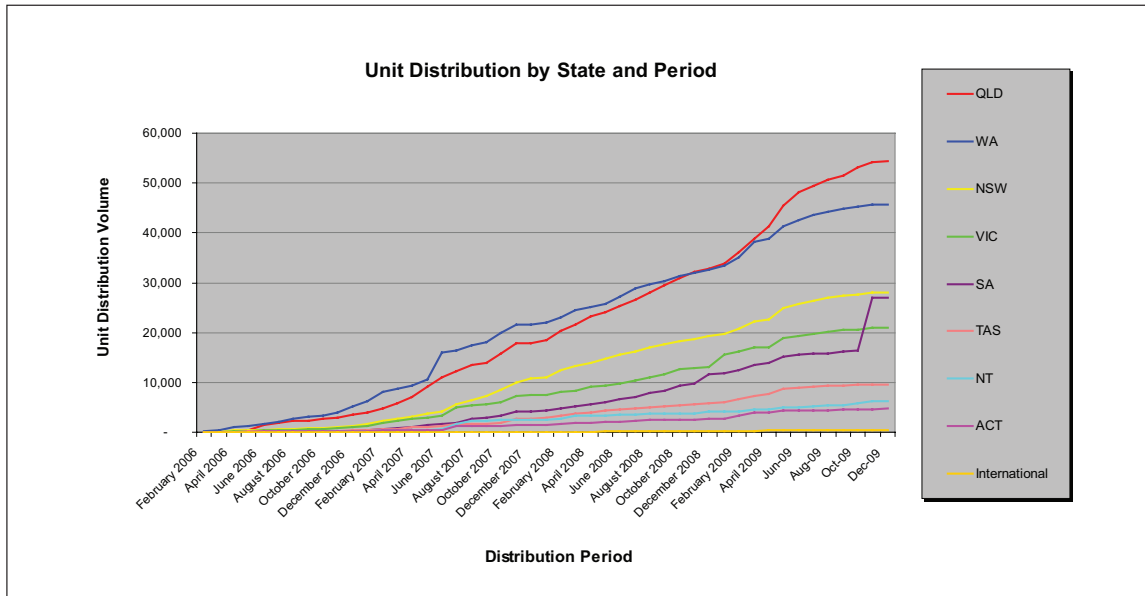
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the PrimaryConnections project.
- Twenty research and evaluation reports are on the website.

¹ Angus, M., Olney, H., & Ainley, J. (2007). *In the Balance: The future of Australia's primary schools*. Australian Primary Principals Association.



Unit distribution

- Units distributed to over 50% of Australian primary schools.



- Funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations 2005-2011.
- Collaborative Reference Group representatives from state and tertiary education sectors, Science, Literacy and English professional associations, ACARA, APPA and the Australian Council of Deans of Education.

www.science.org.au/primaryconnections

