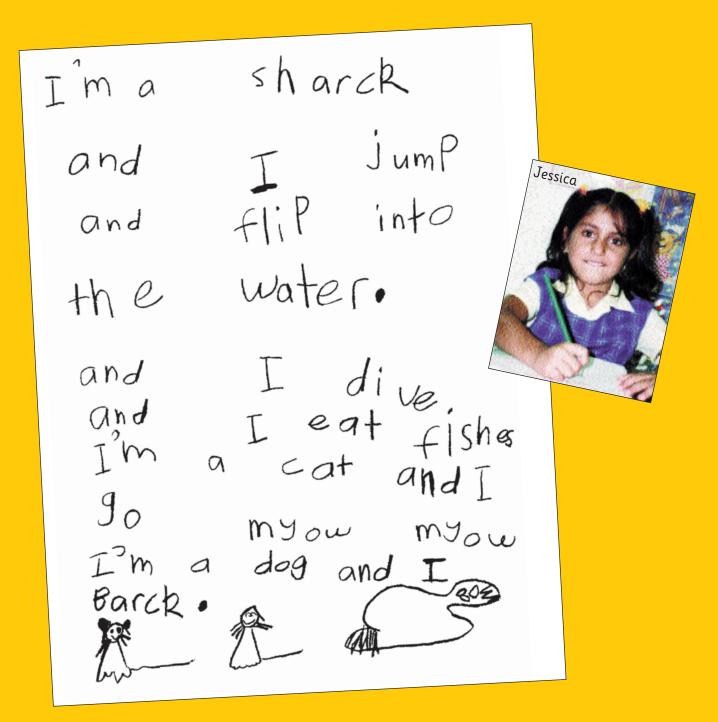
# Jessica wrote this:



- She's 5,
- in her first school year,
- and English is her second language.

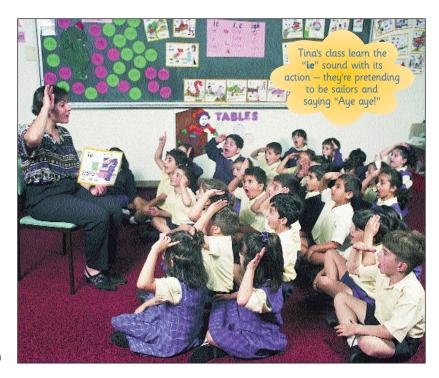
So what is her school doing right?

A Phonics Case Study

# And why are the children so excited about it?

**Let Our Lady of Lebanon School**\* tell you in their own words...

\*Sydney, Australia



# Why we adopted Jolly Phonics

## by Celeste Musgrave & Tina Di Mauro, kindergarten teachers

At our school, we have always been concerned about the children's literacy standards. With our old phonics programme combined with a whole language

approach, the "The multisensory children had approach was ideal for our sounds at good knowledge

of the 26 alphabet letters

and sounds by the end of their kindergarten year. But they didn't know how to blend these sounds for reading, or identify them in words for writing, and were unaware of sounds made with more than one letter: digraphs and blends.

Jolly Phonics teaches these things, and we realised that the programme had other advantages for our school community. The children come from non-Englishspeaking backgrounds, and while a small percentage receive parental support with their schoolwork, the vast majority rely on the teacher as their sole educator. The multisensory approach of Jolly Phonics sounded ideal; teaching the 42 sounds with actions and letter

shapes would really help the and remember

Introducing the programme ... We attended an inservice on Jolly Phonics by author Sue Lloyd, and soon afterwards first we adopted a flexible approach to suit our school's special needs; we decided to introduce

began to trial the programme

with our kindergarten classes. At

the letter a slower **ESL school community**" rate than The Phonics

Handbook suggests.

#### The initial stages ...

We used phonemic awareness activities in the kindergarten pre-reading programme to help the children identify the sounds in words. After a few weeks they were already doing this by themselves, choosing a word and sounding it out with the actions they had learnt. The Jolly Phonics multisensory approach made the learning great fun for them.

In this first term, we had only planned to explore one new sound each week. However, each letter sound is introduced with a story, and we found that the children grew impatient for more stories and actions, so informally we began to introduce all the sounds. During

"All the children could subsequent children learn **read and write by the end** terms the pace was increased of kindergarten" until eventually

we were teaching all 42 sounds in the first term.

As suggested by The Phonics Handbook, the children took home a Soundbook containing each week's new sounds, and later Word Boxes and lists of irregular or "tricky" words. The children enjoyed this as they began to experience their own reading success. Meanwhile changes were made to our reading programme, to

complement the whole language approach with phonetics-

based games and activities from The Phonics Handbook.

#### ... And the success

Over the course of the year we saw how the children's confidence increased with their understanding of the 42 sounds. With the phonetics component of our reading programme and Jolly Phonics as our phonics programme, all the children were able to read and write by the end of the kindergarten year. Ability

levels varied, but the standard was high. Jessica's work (shown on front cover) is typical of a fiveyear-old's writing towards the end of kindergarten, since we started using Jolly Phonics. She has

used words with both single-letter sounds and digraphs, as well as a repertoire of "tricky" words that cannot be sounded out.

The handwriting style in Jolly Phonics did not confuse the children, who were being taught the "foundation" style set by the NSW Dept. of Education. We thought this difference insignificant, since children are exposed to so many different styles of print in books, signs and computers.

"The children loved it

in spare moments!"

All the children began to succeed in - they would ask to write reading and writing very early in their

schooling and they loved it. They would often ask if they could write in spare moments! This success is yet more astonishing when one considers how many of these children are not given parental support and speak English only in school. We can only imagine the success that Jolly Phonics could have in schools where the parental support is high and English is the children's main language.



# **Using Jolly Phonics**

"The children

remain positive even

when confronted with

difficult words"

## by Julie Figuero, Year 1 teacher

have been using *The Phonics Handbook* for two years now, focussing mainly on reading. Through weekly phonics lessons,

I have taught the children all the sounds of English in the recommended order, giving all of the spelling

possibilities for each sound. In comparison with our old phonics programmes, *Jolly Phonics* gives the children more information, significantly extending their word attack skills. As a result, their attempts to sound out new words are more successful.

The children's response has been very positive. They have shown far more interest in reading than in previous years, and are more confident about reading new words. They often describe aloud how they are tackling unfamiliar words, and I can see that they are modelling strategies from phonics lessons. When confronted with a difficult word they remain positive, simply labelling the word "tricky" and then moving on without feeling that they have failed. The children are more positive even when they make mistakes. Instead of being discouraged, they are interested in finding out how the word should be read correctly. Phrases such as "That's a tough word", or "That time the rule didn't work", really helped in maintaining a positive atmosphere and developing good selfesteem in the children's reading and writing experiences. I believe these positive feelings towards reading are a direct result of using Jolly Phonics.

87.5% of the children were ahead in reading and 96.4% were ahead in spelling!

Initially, I was anxious about preparing classroom resources from the reproducible material in *The Phonics Handbook* – and it

did take time to make all the books, flashcards, board games, charts, etc. for the children's hands-

on activities. With hindsight, though, I realise that the preparation was more than worthwhile, in creating fun activities for the children to practise their word attack skills. I was also able to use many existing classroom resources with only minor modifications, and I had fun making up games of my own.

In my second year with Jolly

Phonics, as well as being better prepared in terms of resources, I felt more confident in my personal understanding of the teaching principles. I made a more determined effort to encourage the children to use the word attack skills they had learned during phonics lessons whenever they were reading and writing during the normal school day. So, in effect, phonics became a natural part of daily work, taught formally in specific timetabled lessons and informally

throughout everyday learning across the curriculum.

Parental response to the programme is very positive. Parents of ten say they notice children's reading has improved"

much their children enjoy reading to do so for a long time to come!



and on the improvements they have noticed themselves.

So far I have only used Jolly Phonics for two years – but I feel sure I shall continue

## **Results of Standardised Reading and Spelling Tests**

Kindergarten Red (Celeste's class)					Kindergarten Blue (Tina's class)				
Pupil:	Boy/ Girl:	Actual Age:	Reading Age:	Spelling Age:	Pupil:	Boy/ Girl:	Actual Age:	Reading Age:	Spelling Age:
ВН	b	5:4	6:7	6:2	FF	b	5:11	8:0	8:10
BN	b	5:11	6:1	6:3	IN	b	6:0	8:4	9:3
CK	g	5:6	7:7	7:9	FS	g	5:10	6:7	8:10
CM	b	5:5	6:7	6:2	CD	b	6:2	5:7	6:2
DO	b	5:4	6:0	5:8	IB	b	5:5	5:3	6:0
DD	b	5:7	8:1	8:7	LD	b	5:10	6:1	NS
FB	b	5:3	6:3	6:1	GE	g	5:4	5:7	6:2
FU	g	5:10	5:8	6:4	NN	g	5:8	5:9	6:7
GO	g	5:8	6:9	6:7	NB	b	6:1	7:0	7:3
HF	g	5:11	8:0	7:6	SN	g	5:7	6:7	6:2
HS	g	5:6	6:7	6:4	JK	g	5:4	6:0	7:5
HB	g	5:6	6:7	6:4	BN	b	5:6	7:9	8:7
HD	b	5:4	6:1	6:0	GK	b	5:3	6:0	6:3
IB	b	5:10	6:3	6:1	ON	b	5:7	6:2	6:4
IT	g	5:7	6:5	6:4		b	5:3	5:8	6:6
IS	b	6:1	6:8	6:10		b	5:11	6:6	6:11
IN	g	5:3	7:2	6:6		b	6:0	7:3	7:9
LD	g	5:9	6:7	6:11		g	5:9	6:0	6:5
MC	g	6:2	6:4	6:4		g	6:2	5:9	6:11
OS	b	5:9	7:2		MS	g	5:11	5:7	6:2
SA	g	5:8	6:5	6:4	NK	b	5:6	5:8	6:4
TF	g	6:2	5:9	6:5	KM	g	5:7	6:4	6:5
TB	b	6:0	7:8	8:0	NB	b	6:1	7:3	7:9
UT	g	5:4	6:4	6:1	NK	b	5:6	6:1	6:1
UD	g	5:11	6:8	6:4	GK	g	5:9	6:3	6:5
AH	g	6:0	7:0	8:3	HN	g	6:2	6:0	6:7
AN	b	<u>6:2</u>	<u>7:4</u>	<u>8:3</u>	HF	b	5:6	5:8	6:5
					OT	g	5:4	6:6	6:8
					AR	b	<u>5:11</u>	<u>5:2</u>	<u>6:8</u>
Average: 5:8		6:8	6:9	Averag	Average:		6:3	6:11	
Boys:		5:9	6:9	6:11	Boys:		5:9	6:5	7:2
Girls:		5:8	6:7	6:7	Girls:		5:8	6:1	6:8
% above Actual Age:			92.6%	100%	% abo	% above Actual Age:			93.1%

Reading Test: Daniels and Diack Standard Test of Reading Skills Spelling Test: The South Australian Spelling Test (NS, or no score, considered as 5.8) All ages shown in years and months.

## Jolly Phonics in a balanced literacy programme

### by Angela Hassarati, Reading Recovery teacher

"The children's

independent"

Reading Programme, I administered Observation Surveys to those Year One children who were at risk of becoming poor

readers. The results showed the success of the Jolly Phonics programme in kindergarten, especially phonics-based tests. The children had few problems identifying letters by their names or sounds, and confusion over letters with similar sounds or shapes was

t the start of the year, as part of our minimal. The children were Recovery successful in transferring their

> knowledge to their writing. Dominant writing is fluent and vowel and conwere represented correctly with the

> > appropriate graphemes, and were almost always sequenced in the right order. "Remarkable Thanks to their easy recall of consonant results!"

the children's writing was fluent Literacy Programme. In the two and independent.

blends and digraphs,

In reading, unfamiliar words were sounded out slowly with minimal teacher support. The only danger, as with any phonicsbased literacy programme, was of the children's seeing reading purely as a word-decoding exercise. Emphasis should also be placed on reading for meaning. Ideally Jolly Phonics

should be used to provide the phonics component of a school-based Balanced

years since its implementation



here, Jolly Phonics has certainly helped us to produce some remarkable results!



s principal, I encourage the Astaff to explore and implement changes which may benefit the children's learning. Due to our non-English-speaking school community, the

## Welcoming beneficial changes

### by Sister Irene Boughosn, Principal

children's level of literacy has often been a concern. When two of my kindergarten teachers approached me, I welcomed their suggestion that we try a phonics programme, provided that a trial period proved it to be beneficial.

Jolly Phonics was noticeably different from our old phonics programme. Now I have seen what the children can achieve, I realise that the old programme did not equip them with the necessary tools for becoming efficient readers and writers. I

have now seen the kindergarten children growing in confidence and literacy achievement in

ways I had never seen before. It is also a blessing to see the Year One teachers

implement the programme, allowing this success to continue and develop. Jolly Phonics has given our children the chance to succeed in reading and writing. Our teachers become more confident each year they use it, and the results are astonishing.

The children now begin to read and write in their first year of school, and continue to develop these skills in Year One. Parents have begun to notice a difference between the skills their older children had acquired in their early years of schooling, with younger

ones who have just completed kindergarten or Year One with Jolly Phonics.

I am delighted with the level of literacy achieved by teachers and children over the past two years with Jolly Phonics. I hope that the benefits can be maintained as the children progress onto the higher grades of their schooling.

# Jolly Phonics and my children

"My son, 7, enjoys

difficult books"

### by Emilie Khoury, mother of two

As a parent, I believe reading and writing are two of the most basic skills for life. Thanks to Jolly Phonics both my children have made an excellent start towards acquiring these skills.

The programme gives children understanding of the alphabetic code, introducing the

42 main sounds of English, including digraphs such as "ch", the challenge of reading "ow","ai" and "er". Each sound has a

related action which makes it memorable. Through the actions, my daughter Chantal has learnt the sounds of letters, and when to use which combination of them. Jolly Phonics also shows how to use the sounds to decode words - Chantal has not only

learned to decode new words by working out all the sounds, but can also recognise a wide repertoire of words by sight. As her kindergarten year has progressed, I have seen Chantal develop in reading and writing and maintain high levels of achievement in both. What is

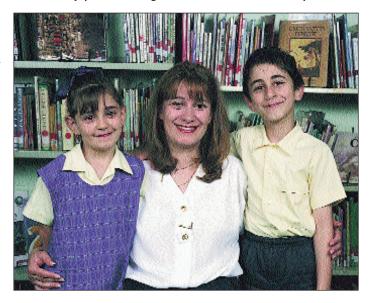
more, thanks to Jolly Phonics she enjoys reading and writing, and does not see

them as tedious chores.

Jolly Phonics was also taught to my older child Charbel, who has just completed Year One. Charbel is seven, but has an aboveaverage reading age. He reads at a level similar to many children in the grade above, who did not

receive Jolly Phonics at the start of their schooling. Charbel's comprehension and vocabulary skills have also progressed dramatically, along with his story writing. He finds reading difficult books an enjoyable challenge.

I am amazed at the eagerness with which both my children read the words around them, and the enjoyment they display as independent readers writers. Jolly Phonics has helped them both enormously.



"I am delighted with

the new literacy level"