

VIBE ACTIVITIES

Helping Out – School Matters Yirara College page 25

YIRARA COLLEGE NEAR ALICE SPRINGS, NT, HAS A GOAL OF BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN SCHOOL LIFE AND COMMUNITY AND FAMILY LIFE. THE BOARDING SCHOOL, WHICH IS FOR STUDENTS 12 YEARS AND OLDER FROM REMOTE COMMUNITIES ACROSS AUSTRALIA, AIMS TO MAKE THE SCHOOL AS 'USER FRIENDLY' AS POSSIBLE.

"Most of our students come from the outback and all have different personalities and are from different areas and communities. We try and make the school as user friendly as we can, and offer a curriculum that is relevant to students' long-term goals," says the school's principal, Roger Ashcroft.

"We want our students to go into jobs or training when they finish at Yirara. We want to see them succeed in life and have all the opportunities that are open to them."

Yirara operates under the auspices of Finke River Mission, which is the mission arm of the Lutheran Church in Central Australia. Finke River Mission has a long and positive history with the Aboriginal people of Central Australia and has contributed to the success of the school and the confidence of the parents in choosing it as a safe Christian school for their children to go to.

Located 7km south of Alice Springs on the Stuart Highway, the school offers the same curriculum as other schools and attracts teachers from a variety of backgrounds who support the students socially and academically, and also help to preserve their culture.

"In terms of training and employment, we look at what the students' communities need. As most of the students return to their communities, we look at what they can take back and contribute to their communities," Roger says.

"We have a number of students in paid traineeships, including retail and administration. We have one student in a traineeship with a bakery as he is interested in becoming a baker when he leaves school. We'll also be partnering with Qantas in the near future to offer work experience."

Viv Prebble is one of the teachers at Yirara who has a background in broadcasting. She has been guiding students through broadcast skills, which encompasses vocal techniques operating a multi-audio desk, and interviewing and producing radio shows for the local Alice Springs community radio station 8CCC.

"We want students to express their creativity," Viv says. "They have been undertaking training in how to panel a multi-audio desk, writing scripts, interviewing and programming music. We've had country music star Bill Chambers and local singer/songwriter Jacinta Price in for interviews. We are aiming to develop their inner confidence and self esteem, as well as developing skills to take back to their communities."

As well as radio broadcasting training, Yirara has also offered skill development in TV broadcasting from interviewing and scripting through to reading from an autocue.

"We have produced our own TV program through Yirara TV that includes stories on our school and sporting activities and the weather. We have recently received

an invitation to present a youth news television program for ICTV [Indigenous Community Television Limited]."

As well as broadcast training, there have been dance workshops and performances, and the students even created a form of the Indigenous flag.

"We want to show the value of connecting as one, that it doesn't matter where you come from," Viv says.

"And it's about standing strong in culture and identity, and allowing the students to see for themselves how strong they can be as individuals."

Literary and numeracy are the foundations of the curriculum at Yirara, but by offering a variety of activities and the opportunity to develop skills that are relevant to students, it builds their confidence.

"We don't just want our students to scrape through, but to believe in themselves," says school principal Roger Ashcroft.

For more information on Yirara, head to yirara.nt.edu.au

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Helping Out

School matters

Yirara College aims to offer skills to take back to community

Students at Yirara College have been learning broadcasting skills, including operating a radio panel and scripting.

Yirara College is located 7km south of Alice Springs, Northern Territory. It is a boarding school for students from rural and outback communities.

READ *School Matters* on page 25

ACTIVITY 1

BUILDING READING SKILLS

- skimming and scanning for information
- reading headings, text boxes and pictures
- reading for meaning
- making connections between the text and your world

There are three levels of comprehension questions:

Literal The answer is located in one sentence in the text.

Inferred You need to make links between sentences and graphics (such as illustrations, maps and tables) and what you already know.

Applied The answer is in your background knowledge, what you already know or feel.



1 What are two goals of Yirara College?

(inferred)

2 Fill in the gaps using words from the Word Box below.

Located 7km _____ of Alice Springs on the Sturt Highway, Yirara College
 _____ the same _____ as other _____ and
 attracts _____ from a variety of _____ who support
 students socially, _____ and culturally.

Word box

academically
backgrounds

teachers
south

offers
curriculum

schools

Place the words from the Word Box (page 2) in ABC order.



3 Explain what you would like most about going to Yirara College. (applied)

ACTIVITY 2

LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS – SPELLING

1 The spelling mistakes in these sentences have been underlined. Write the correct spelling for each word in the box.

The college is a way of bridgeing the gap between school and home.

Students come from communitys all over Australia.

The students all have different personalitys.



2 Unscramble these words from the text.

u c c r r i u m l u	
s o p r p o t n u i i t e	
g t r n n a i i	

3 Each sentence has one word that is incorrect.
Write the correct spelling of the word in the box.



The school has a positeve history.

They have contribyouted to its success.

The students are supported academicy.

ACTIVITY 3

WRITING A NARRATIVE



1 TOPIC – My best day at boarding school
Write an entertaining and engaging narrative about your best day at boarding school.

The common Stages and Phases of an effective narrative often include:

Stages	Phases
Orientation	This sets the scene, creating a visual picture of the setting, atmosphere and time of the story. Characters are introduced and clues are set in place for the coming complication.
	Sequence of events that is expected.
Complication	An unexpected problem or complication occurs that affects the main character. This usually creates tension.
	Characters react to the problem.
	Problem seems to be resolved.
	A new problem occurs, which is now often worse than before.
Resolution	The problem is solved and the story ends.

Brainstorm your ideas for your story.

Orientation – characters, setting, background information, problem.

Complication – major problem that the main character (protagonist) has to solve.

Resolution – how the problem is solved.

Remember to:

- engage your audience through descriptions and building tension.
- write in a narrative structure.
- connect your ideas clearly.
- start with an attention-grabbing Orientation.
- make sure you have a clearly developed Complication.
- extend your vocabulary.
- write in sentences.
- use a new paragraph for each new idea.
- pay attention to your spelling and punctuation.
- check and edit your writing so that it is clear for a reader.