

Primary Connections: linking science with literacy Stage 6 Research Evaluation (2018)

SNAPSHOT

Primary Connections works with and for teachers to offer opportunities, approaches, and exemplars in primary science education.

We invite regular feedback and evaluation of our program and have done so throughout our 15 years of operation. This ensures that the current needs of primary teachers and students are met, and that teachers are consulted every step of the way.

The most recent evaluation of our program is no exception. The University of Technology Sydney's external and independent evaluation of Primary Connections Stage 6, engaged with primary teachers, and pre-service teachers, from across Australia, and now available for download.

What do teachers say?

About their experience of Primary Connections

- More than half of the teachers surveyed and interviewed strongly agreed that the Primary Connections approach improves student outcomes in science.
- More than 97% of teachers reported they would recommend the Primary Connections workshop to other teachers.

About perceived value of Primary Connections

- Among in-service teachers, 98% said that Primary Connections supports them to implement the Australian Curriculum: Science.
- 4 out of 5 teachers stated that their confidence in understanding the relationship between science and literacy increased as a result of attending a Primary Connections workshop.
- Many participants stated that they had not previously realised the importance of the 5E model in the Primary Connections approach.
- Pre-service teachers advise that their understanding of primary science pedagogy and their confidence and interest in teaching science significantly increases following completion of a *Primary Connections* workshop.
- Primary Connections resources are highly regarded as *educative curriculum materials*, i.e. materials explicitly designed to support teacher *and* student learning.

About their preferences

- Teachers indicated that they prefer workshops that are face-to-face, or a combination of online and face-to-face delivery.
- Teachers prefer a workshop facilitator with recent teaching experience.

Moving forward

- While many teachers report a preference for face-to-face workshops, they also acknowledge difficulties attending workshops (location, cost, time, classroom management, resources). Teachers suggest that a combination of face-to-face and online professional learning as a potential solution.

What's next for Primary Connections and Australian teachers of primary science?

A digital transformation

- With input from primary teachers who are trialling new, and re-imagined resources in primary classrooms, we are increasing interactivity of Primary Connections resources.
- Providing teachers with greater opportunities to access professional learning by piloting online offerings.

For pre-service teachers

- Primary Connections collaborates with universities to enhance STEM understanding for pre-service teachers.

