Hi to all school and public library contact people for 2014!
A huge welcome to everybody - both new contact people and ongoing contacts! I am delighted that you are supporting the Premier’s Reading Challenge in 2014.

I will be sending monthly email updates to keep you informed about upcoming events and the Challenge and encourage you to read them as many of your questions will be answered in them. I thank you in advance for passing on relevant information to leaders, staff, students and the school and public library community and for your great support.

Posters and Premier’s Letter
All posters and a letter from the Premier should have arrived in schools and public libraries, sent to Principals via Infoconnect.

This year, for the first time, we have a primary and a secondary poster for the Challenge, as voted by students in 2013. They are, I believe, the best posters we have ever had and are aimed to engage students from Reception to Year 12. Both versions were sent to all sites, in a combination that is appropriate for your site’s student population.

The secondary poster was the result of a suggestion from one of our secondary schools, as a means to appeal to and to engage secondary students in continuing the Challenge. Many thanks, and keep the ideas coming!

If you have not seen yours yet, please check with others at your school.

We have had a lot of very positive feedback and it is fantastic to see so many schools ordering some more posters for classrooms. They are a great visual literacy resource. More posters are available, please contact me.

If there are any corrections to be made regarding the hall of fame reader for life awards, please email with full name, ED ID (where possible), DOB and year level before 28th February, as this will be the final amendment date for the 2013 awards.

Fast Facts 2013
Please find attached the Premier’s Reading Challenge Fast Facts for 2013, which was the 10th successive year of growth for the Challenge. A greater than 2% growth overall was achieved from 2012. DECD student completion of the Challenge increased by 1.577%, which was more than double the DECD student population increase of 0.7%.

New Award - reader for life gold (R4Lg)
The R4Lg will be presented for the first time this year to students who have completed the Challenge for eleven years. It is a gold stamped certificate personalised with the student's name and signed by the Premier, with a gold band to acknowledge eleven years of reading. The R4L series of certificates are impressive and are very useful for older students to place into their portfolios as evidence of persistence over a period of many years towards a program/initiative.

Student Reading Records
Don’t forget the electronic version of the Reading Record, which can be a way for older students to record books read, then email the completed form to the teacher for verification and electronically filing, using the school’s intranet.

Hall of Fame - Honour Roll
We currently have 14 879 students listed on the Honour Roll for 7 years of reading for the Challenge. 3 287 students were added in 2013.

There is to be an update of names of eligible students who have not yet been featured on the Honour Roll at the end of April 2014. Any students who would like to have their name included on The Challenge Hall of Fame Honour Roll on the website need to have indicated ‘consent to print’ on their reading log.

Please check against the Awards Completed by School report emailed with Update 1 for all students with consents.
If you have any more students to add to the Hall of Fame Honour Roll, or any other discrepancies, please fax or email me confirmation of this consent by April 4th to be included this year, using the attached sheet. There are no further updates until fourth term.

Data Entry
Data entry will be opening from Monday 7th July if you have completed the Challenge at your school. This will give you an extended period for data entry and enable you to enter data earlier in the school year, if applicable.

Please note: you don’t have to enter all of your school's data in one sitting.

Ambassadors
It is with great pleasure that I can let you know Scorpions SA – Australian women’s cricketers - have become a joint ambassador team for the Premier's Reading and be active Challenges!! Welcome!

If you would like an ambassador team to present their school program including the Crows, Power, Adelaide United Football Club, Scorpions SA and Thunderbirds, please contact them directly. For Adelaide Lightning, please submit a request through our website.

For visits from our individual ambassadors, please submit a Request Form. These visits require a lot of planning and you are requested to plan and place requests early. They are generally organised in the last weeks of the term prior to the visit. We do ask schools visited to take photos and obtain consents using the DECD consent form (if student faces are in the photos) and send them to us in order for them to be posted on the Challenge website. Schools are also requested to manage and submit a short article (often written by students) to accompany the photo.

Please be aware that the opportunity for our currently interstate-based ambassador (Adam Liaw) to make school visits is very limited and depends on SA visits. His promotion of reading and the Challenge will primarily be on the website.

Matthew Primus, Che Cockato-Collins and Guy Sebastian are based interstate and cannot make school visits. They are now past ambassadors and I thank them for the immense input, energy and effort they have each put into being an ambassador for the Premier's Reading Challenge over the years.

Initiatives for 2014
• 11th year of the Challenge: reader for life – gold (R4Lg) award.
• 140 new books added to the Challenge booklists. Please note: many books are part of a series and these are automatically added to the booklists.
• The Challenge now has a twitter and facebook presence.
• TEENSPACE for secondary students
• Blog for students to discuss books now has a primary ‘Kidspeak’ and secondary ‘Teenspeak’ blog.
• Hall of Fame Honour Roll is live on the website with over 3,280 students added for 2013.
• Public Libraries are continuing to conduct a rolling promotional display for the Challenge to be circulated in both libraries and schools.
• For the first time, the 2014 Challenge has primary and secondary posters.
• Schools with 100% of students completing the Challenge will go into a draw to win a collection of 12 books for their school library.
• The website has been redesigned with separate Students, Teachers and Staff and Families sections with content directed to each of these audiences on their page.

Thank you to all Zoomerang survey respondents in 2013 who contributed so much useful feedback to inform decisions for 2014 and beyond. I will be working on some fantastic ideas - keep them coming!

Keys to the Challenge’s success at school level
• Enthusiastic, persistent and energetic school contact people
• Supportive classroom teachers, literacy coordinators, leaders and English teachers
• Encouragement from the school community for the Challenge to be seen as an integral part of the whole school literacy approach
• Secondary schools find it most successful when English teachers incorporate the Challenge into the secondary English curriculum
• It is easier for everyone if children fill in their Student Reading Records as they go – students may complete electronic logs, with teacher endorsement
• Regular promotion at assemblies, through newsletters and staff meetings
• Active encouragement of the parent and wider community to read to and with their children.
Website

Don’t forget to explore the website for loads of ideas and information and promote its use by students, staff and families. Of particular note is the Guidelines section to refresh your memory on the parameters of the Challenge.

It is a good idea to keep the website on display or have a quick link on the desktop in the library or ICT suite so students, teachers and parents have easy access.

In 2013, there were 183 606 visitors which is an increase of almost 80%, with an average of 511 visitors per day and 1 783 181 page views. Over 71% of visitors were from Australia, followed by United States at over 11%, China at over 3%, then United Kingdom with over 2%.

Please promote KIDSPACE and TEENSPACE section to students. We had many students submitting Rate-a-reads to win a book prize each month and get them involved in the blogs with new topics being posted regularly. Don’t forget the new ‘Teenspeak’, which compliments ‘Kidspeak’ for students to blog about books read.

The Links are great for finding out about other related initiatives that contribute to the encouragement of reading and improving literacy levels for both students and adults.

Aboriginal Students

In line with State and National strategies, schools are asked to encourage and support Aboriginal students to complete the Challenge.

Numbers of Aboriginal students completing the Challenge increased to 3 750 in 2013, which is a 3.7% rise. There may have been more Aboriginal students in the non-government sector who completed the Challenge but information is not available.

Banners

Due to their increasing popularity, we have 4 Premier’s Reading Challenge roll up banners and one vertical banner for schools to borrow, for school library displays, assemblies, etc. They are very popular, so please plan and book your request as soon as possible: booking form.

School Annual Reports

Many schools are including Premier’s Reading Challenge statistics and information in school annual reports and school literacy plans. We sent out with update 1 the following reports for your information:

- Participant award summary 2013 shows how many students received each award and the gender breakdown for your school.
- School summary results shows the number of students completing the Challenge each year at your school since the Challenge began in 2004 and breaks this down by the bands of schooling.

Parents

The parent survey responses in the past have indicated that parents would like to be kept more informed about the Premier’s Reading Challenge at their child’s school. Some schools may like to consider getting parents more involved in the Challenge, perhaps by helping organise at the school level, class level or family level. A comment that was made was: I do wish that more parents would encourage their child to do the challenge as it would help my son feel that he is not one of a few completing it but one of many.

Don’t forget the attached draft newsletter insert / note home to parents/carers to help promote the Challenge and reading, if you would like to use it.

Participation in a Reading Challenge in other states and territories

Guideline 19 - Could you please let students and families new to the school from interstate know about this guideline?

Awards

If you have any more queries about correct awards from 2013 please contact me to sort them out as soon as possible. If there are any corrections to be made regarding the hall of fame reader for life awards, please email before 28th February, as this will be the final amendment date for the 2013 awards.

Booklists

The Premier’s Reading Challenge continues to contribute towards literacy achievement, by encouraging students to enjoy reading and improve literacy levels.

If a student has special literacy needs, books can be read from a lower level or books not on the booklist that may be more suitable can be read, at the teacher’s discretion.
In purchasing books for your library collections, you might like to download the updated annotated booklists from the website and make selections based on these lists. The booklists are reviewed by a panel of teachers and librarians, to ensure a range of quality literature.

**The booklists are useful for teaching the literature strand in the Australian Curriculum: English.**

In response to requests for the Challenge website to be more interactive and engaging for students, we have included a ‘like’ feature for all books on our booklists, with a live tally of the Top 10 books for each level. Students and teachers find the top 10 a great reference point, to find out what others are reading. Teachers might also find the tally of likes useful in selecting books for students to enjoy.

Students are also able to leave a review to go in the running for our monthly book prize.

Please encourage students to make use of these features, which are great opportunities to explore informed appreciation of literature.

“Digital and online technologies continue to profoundly transform how members of Australian society work, meet, keep in touch, express themselves, share, build and store knowledge, and access material for pleasure and learning. Clearly, digital and online materials present the English curriculum with new teaching opportunities. Enhancing the access of all teachers and students to these resources is critical.”

*Shape of the Australian Curriculum: English - May 2009, pp: 15*

School staff and students are invited to recommend books for the booklist panel to consider.

A great idea for your school community is to paste the link to the booklists on the school’s homepage on the intranet, for students and families to have ready access to them.

**Teachers’ Pet Reads**

Don’t forget our Teachers’ Pet Reads! Thanks to the teachers and librarians who have sent in their reviews.

While we are promoting the many benefits of reading to our students, it is fantastic for teachers to model good reading habits and participate in ‘Teachers’ Pet Reads’. These reviews assist busy teachers in choosing good books to enjoy in their spare time, or to share with their students.

Teachers are invited to go to the website and post a short review of favourite books to share with their students or to recommend for colleagues to enjoy. They are posted in two lists: 1: recommended for sharing with students and 2: for personal reading.

Note: the content you are providing will be going onto the web for all to see, provide the title/name you wish to identify yourself by.

**Changed and Deleted Items**

Please note that there are no deleted book changes to the booklists for 2014.

**Challenge your students!**

Please encourage students to challenge themselves and read a range of books rather than reading extensively from one series. Lists of all series: [Printing Booklists](#)

Challenge your students to:
- read a book from each of the categories
- cap their reading of a series at 2 books
- read 12 different authors
- read one book from the next reading age
- share a read with friends, like a reading group and discuss it
- post a review on the Rate a Read section of the Kidspace page of the website to win prizes
- write blogs for the website about their reading in ‘Kidspeak’ or ‘Teenspeak’
- recommend a book to the booklist panel, who meet once a term
- develop a literacy-based Research Project in the Senior Years.

**Student Reading Records from Past Years**

I have been asked by a number of people whether they should keep the Student Reading Records from previous years. I advise archiving them for 2 years after students have left, just in case they are ever needed. As time goes on it is more difficult for teachers or parents or students to remember when they first started the Challenge or whether it was completed.
in a certain year. We do have central records but when they can be backed up by school records, they can be critical in resolving issues.

**Staff News**

It is with a mixture of sadness and joy that I would like to bid farewell to Brooklyn Ley who replaced Kaleen Raethel while on maternity leave and welcome back Kaleen. Her and her husband Colin had a beautiful baby girl, who is nearing her 1st birthday! We are also delighted to have Stewart Earl with us on the program – many of you would have had contact with and from him!

Thank you for your efforts in and involvement with the Challenge. Without your dedication, enthusiasm, perseverance and support, the program could not run. Please contact me with any suggestions or ideas that you might have.

All the very best for a successful Challenge in 2014, keep up the momentum and encourage and support your students to enjoy their reading!

*Carmel Jones*

Project Manager - Premier’s Reading Challenge,  
Level 2 West, 31 Flinders Street Adelaide SA 5000  
Courier R11/9A Phone: 8226 2006 Fax: 8226 2005  
Email: carmel.jones@sa.gov.au