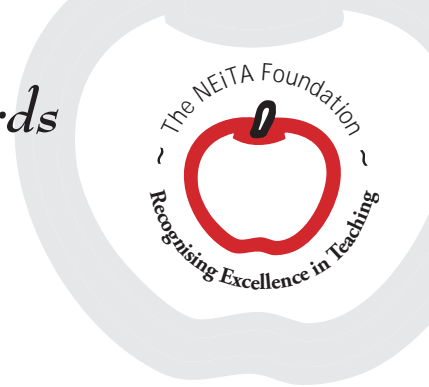


2007 National Excellence In Teaching Awards

State and Territory Teaching Excellence Award Recipient



Steve Jackson

Diploma of Teaching, Bachelor of Education
Bowen Public School, Orange, New South Wales
Nominated by: Parent Association, school parent

Position: Kindergarten Teacher • Level taught: Early Childhood • School type: Government • Town: Orange • Category: Early Childhood • State: NSW

Tailoring Early Childhood education to the needs of young boys

Steve Jackson has been a teacher at Bowen Public School for more than 24 years. He now teaches an all-boys kindergarten supported by a grant from the *Success for Boys* initiative. Steve noticed that many of the boys in his kindergarten did not have male role figures in their lives, so created programs to provide positive role models for these boys. Steve aims to break down the barriers for single parent families, and allow them to participate more fully in their boys' early childhood education. By employing different techniques and strategies, he has boosted attendance and punctuality in his kindergarten, and substantially increased literacy levels among his students.

Many parents comment that the enthusiasm for learning that Steve engenders in his pupils remains throughout the rest of their school years.

Insight

Q: *In your opinion, what makes a good teacher?*

A: Dedication; wants to make a difference; provides a stimulating and encouraging environment; challenges children to explore and think; and helps children reach their potential.

Q: *How do you maintain your enthusiasm for teaching?*

A: By knowing that I'm making a difference in children's lives. The stimulus and rewards of daily teaching and the challenge of providing programs, which deliver the desired outcomes, help maintain my enthusiasm.

Q: *In hindsight, what do you wish your training provided you with more of?*

A: Greater familiarity with the curriculum; methods of programming efficiently; teaching across multiple grades; and more small schools training.

Q: *What is the most difficult aspect of teaching today?*

A: Time management, as we try to teach both effectively and efficiently from a very full curriculum, and behaviour management for children with social/emotional difficulties.

Q: *What is your greatest challenge as a teacher?*

A: Ensuring that the outcomes of the curriculum are met for each child through on-going assessment and the planning that follows to help meet individual needs.

Q: *How has teaching changed over the years?*

A: The greatest change would be the introduction of technology such as computers, Internet, power-point presentations, digital cameras/videos etc. Tailoring my teaching to incorporate technology has required me to embrace this innovation.

Q: *What is the single most important thing you, as a teacher, can do to connect with individual students?*

A: Engaging children through interests, sports, hobbies, games and movies, and also through friendly and supportive dialogue.

Q: *If you were the Minister for Education, Science and Training for a week, what would you try to change?*

A: I would create numerous positions for young graduates - many of whom we often lose from the system due to lack of immediate full-time employment.

Q: *What keeps you awake at night?*

A: Maintaining goals and deadlines, engaging difficult students and maintaining best practice when it comes to delivering curriculum outcomes.

Q: *If your students could describe you in three words, what would they say?*

A: Organised, creative and encouraging.

Contact Details: Principal: Penny Small
Phone: (02) 6362 3655

Teacher: Steve Jackson
Phone: 0408 254 805
Email: hooby@tpg.com.au

For further information, please contact:

Janet Thomas, Public Relations, ASG on behalf of the NEiTA Foundation.
Telephone: (03) 9276 7758 Mobile: 0402 837 758 Email: publicrelations@asg.com.au

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