

# NEiTA 2009 ASG National Teaching Awards

## National Award Recipient



## Kristy Thomson

Bachelor of Arts, Graduate Diploma in Secondary Education  
**Pittsworth State High School**, Pittsworth, Queensland  
Nominated by: Parents and Citizens' Association  
National Award Category: Leadership

*Position: Head of Department (Languages) • Category: Secondary • Level taught: Junior & Senior English teacher • Years teaching: 15 years • Years at this school/centre: 10 years • School type: Government • Town/Suburb: Pittsworth • State: Queensland • Postcode: 4356*

### *How do you inspire your students?*

Our community values education but many students are workforce bound rather than tertiary. I inspire my students through being positive about them and changing the way some of them see themselves. I have high expectations of them and I encourage open discussions about the possibilities offered by education and university. I engage them in the wider world through literature, films and the other texts – opening their eyes, not just to wonderful imagery and complex ideas, but also to the other worlds that are out there.

### **Fostering a love of language and literature**

Working in a rapidly growing rural high school, Kristy Thomson strives to foster a greater regard for language and literature. As Head of the Languages Department, she demonstrates an infectious love of the English language that has inspired many students. Kristy also tries to illuminate the possibilities offered by further education and university as a means of encouraging a love of learning among her students.

Kristy uses many techniques to bring the English language to life. She organises educational excursions such as visits to the Brisbane Writers' Festival or theatrical performances of relevant texts. As one of the school's debating coaches, Kristy dedicates many extra hours to assisting the debating teams, and she is always willing to provide extra tuition to any student, especially senior English pupils. Kristy has organised the school's own writing competitions and reading challenges, and runs a committee of students to produce the annual Year Book.

A keen interest in the education of boys has led Kristy to trial single sex classes. In an effort to increase the number of boys taking on senior English, she now runs a year 10 boys only English class. She has had to tailor her resources and learning environment to cater for the specific gender needs of boys. Her class aims to develop their regard for their own strengths and creativity, and develop a culture that is proud of success. The school pass rate for boys studying English is 79 per cent while in Kristy's classes the pass rate is 95 per cent. Across the school, 43 per cent of boys achieve a B grading or better, while in Kristy's year 10 boys class, 65 per cent of her students obtained a B or higher grading.

Kristy is described as the kind of teacher who will always go that extra step to help her students succeed and, as such, is held in the highest regard by students, parents and her fellow teachers.

#### **Contact details:**

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