

**Note:** The sections in the Paper which are headed “What this tells us” will be the basis for the Panel’s recommendations.

Where questions are broken into life stages (early years, school years and adult years), you can provide responses to any or all life stages.

Please indicate clearly at the beginning of any responses you wish to remain confidential.

Unless indicated as confidential, responses will be treated as public information and published on our website. Please see the [Public Submissions Policy](#) for further information.

**Name:** Karen Lucas

**Organisation:** DECYP

**Question One: Are there any key themes we have not identified to improve literacy across:**

**The Early Years (0-4 years-old)**

**The School Years (5-17 years-old)**

- Understanding the relationship between spoken & written language
- The Scope & Sequence for phonics used in 99% of schools in NSW is the carmine order. There are some distinct advantages in this, ie. teaching vowel sounds that are more different from each other first ('o' before 'e'); teaching digraphs that are more different in a sequence that reduces confusion (alternating consonant & vowel digraphs rather than teaching sh, ch, th, wh, ck all together). It would make sense to have a sequence that makes it easier for the students who struggle.

**The Adult Years (18+ years-old)**

**Question Two: What are the three main things we should prioritise doing in:**

**The Early Years (0-4 years-old)**

- Access to public speech therapy for children with speech & language needs; this needs to be publicised to LiL groups at schools, GPs, Child Health nurses, etc.
- Opportunity for children to interact with peers
- 4 yrs hearing checks (I've heard anecdotally that these have recently been dropped by CHAPS nurses?)

**The School Years (5-17 years-old)**

- Helping school staff understand the relationship between spoken & written language (ie. how the big 5 relate to both). The big 5 was formulated at University of Oregon; oral language was added as a 6<sup>th</sup> in South Australia. The 5 components are all parts of spoken language.
- Ensuring children know how to read words before they are given books to read; ie. not developing bad habits but ensuring phonics & decoding are early priorities
- Supporting/promoting PL based on scientific evidence for literacy development (including by SLPs/School Psychologists in the areas of language, learning & literacy), eg. SOLAR, Jocelyn Seamer, Science of Reading, Five from Five

**The Adult Years (18+ years-old)**

**Question Three: Are there any data sets not considered in this paper that should be used to monitor literacy achievement in:**

**The Early Years (0-4 years-old)**

**The School Years (5-17 years-old)**

Some schools are using:

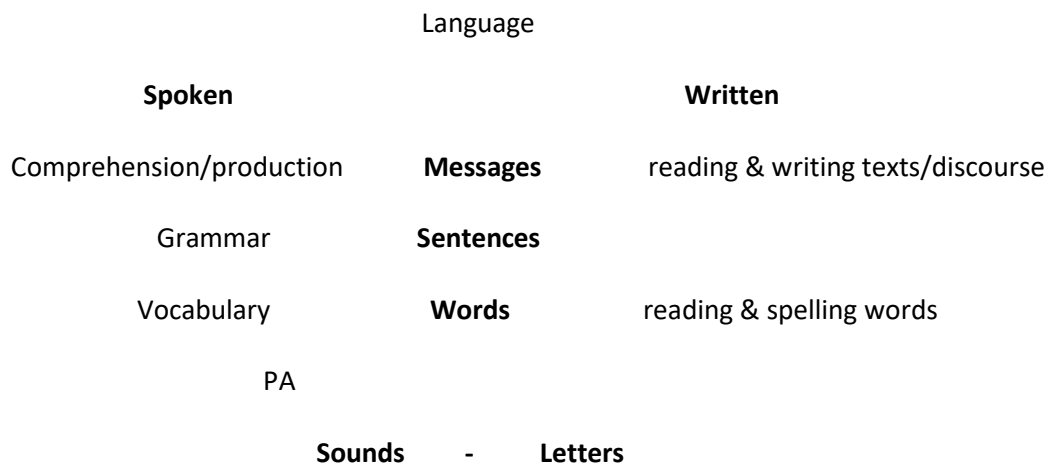
- DIBELS
- Astronaut Invented Spelling Test
- TOWRE
- YARC

which provide helpful data around where students are at in relation to the big 5 (rather than levelled readers)

**The Adult Years (18+ years-old)**

**Question Four: If you are a provider of a service, what kinds of guidance would you hope to see in the Community-wide Framework?**

- Specificity around different aspects of language and literacy & how they relate to each other, eg.



**Question Five: Are there any other comments you would like to make?**

- Skills lead to confidence; the focus for anyone having difficulty with literacy needs to be on developing skills at a pace & rate that supports them. As a student's skills develop, so will their confidence in their literacy skills.
- There are far too many referrals at tier 3 in DECYP for SLPs/Psychologists which means long waiting lists & less time for intervention/programming. It would be far more efficient & economical (as well as potentially life-changing for students) if there was good literacy instruction at tier 1 level in classrooms. Some schools have data showing rapid improvement because of changes to their classroom instruction.
- There is a problem with definitions; people have different understanding around what is 'explicit', 'systematic', 'evidence-based'. It is easy for us all to say these are important but doesn't make sense if they include polar opposite approaches.
- Excellence (quality) trumps consistency as a value. We don't want schools/classroom instruction to be consistent if they are just attuned to the needs of students who don't need extra support. Students who learn to read easily will in no way be disadvantaged by instruction that is explicit which will also help the students who need more support.
- Undergraduate training for teachers in cognitive science as a base for learning is key.
- There are powerful lobby groups that will seek to sway thinking towards teaching implicitly with a meaning focus that excludes clear instruction in decoding. This negates that the most efficient way to comprehending a text is to decode the words in it.