LITERACY PROGRAMMING FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL AGED CHILDREN
WA PUBLIC LIBRARIES TOOLKIT

The ability to read and write underpins everything we do, every day. A literate community is strong and inclusive,where individuals and families are resilient, aspirational, socially engaged, informed, healthy and connected.

Research from the Australian Productivity Commission outlines the links between literacy skills and education, employment, health, social and community participation, and states that higher levels of literacy are associated with higher educational attainment, greater earning potential, better health outcomes, and increased community participationand personal wellbeing.

In 2017, the State Library of Western Australia launched the Literacy Matters Literacy Strategy 2017–2027 with the goalthat all Western Australians:

– Are **aware** of the value of literacy in opening up lifelong potential and learning
– Have the **opportunity** to improve their literacy skills
– Have **access** to literacy learning programs

Libraries have consistently been providers of informal and non-formal learning opportunities for the communities theyserve.

This toolkit seeks to assist libraries in the development and delivery of literacy programming for primary school aged children.

Unless someone like you cares an awful lot

nothing is going to get better. It's not.''

– Dr Seuss, The Lorax

PROGRAMMING FRAMEWORK

The following framework is intended to guide library thinking in relation to the development and delivery of library-based literacy programming for primary aged children. It is not envisioned that every program will address all elements of the framework, rather it provides some key considerations that will help ensure that your programming meets both your library's and your community's needs.

Program Considerations	Questions to Ask	Strategies for Addressing	Examples
Library Outcomes	Is there a clear link between your program and the core business/ key strategic directions of your library?	Ensure that you can articulate how your program supports the strategic planning of your library service.	Our *Coderdojo* program supports our library's key direction of building digital literacy in our community by engaging children in early coding activities.
Literacy Development Outcomes	What literacy outcomes have you built into your program? Are the literacy outcomes explicitly stated? Have you provided links to library collections for those attending?	Make explicit the literacy elements and outcomes of the program. Look for opportunities to introduce participants to elements of your collection that you think will be of interest.	Our *graphic novels* reading program helps to develop children's ability to decode visual information including pictures, symbols, and characters' expressions to create understanding that is multilayered and complex. To create links to our collection and build interest in our junior graphic novel collection, we used this collection as inspiration for our Create Your Own Super Hero drawing workshop.
Australian Curriculum General Capabilities (these skills have been identified as essential in equipping young Australians to live and work successfully in the 21st century)	Does your program support the development of any of the Australian Curriculum General Capabilities?	Consider the links between your program and the General Capabilities – Literacy – Numeracy – Information and Communication Technology Capability – Critical and Creative Thinking – Personal and Social Capability – Ethical Understanding – Intercultural Understanding	Critical and Creative Thinking - Our *LEGO Club* challenges participants to work together to solve a problem each week. This builds their critical and creative thinking skills.

Program Considerations	Questions to Ask	Strategies for Addressing	Examples
Accessibility	Is your program accessible for people with additional needs? Does your program meet the requirements of your Local Government, or in-house, Disability and Inclusion (DAIP) Plan?	Ensure that your program meets DAIP requirements. Alternatively, you might decide to modify and run a similar but separate program to support participation by a specific group in your community.	Our *Sensory Storytime* program aims to support participation in library programming by families with children who are on the Autism Spectrum who may not be able to successfully join in with our regular Storytime program.
Cultural Inclusivity 	Is your program sensitive to the needs of the various cultural groups in your community, and does it celebrate cultural differences?	Use data from sources such as the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to gain an understanding of the cultural diversity of your community.	In celebration of Harmony Week, our *Junior Book Club* is this month reading either a book by an international author or one featuring a character from another culture or country.
Gender Inclusivity	Does your program use gender neutral language to encourage participation by all?	Review program marketing and materials to ensure that this information does not suggest that the program is targeting one specific gender group.	*Come along to your local library to join our Afterschool STEM Club. Activities that everyone can get excited about!*
Community	Are any similar programs happening in your community? Who is your target audience for this program, and what other services might they be engaging in?	Talk to stakeholders in your community. Research your community.	The local school is running a *homework club* on Tuesdays and Thursdays and feels a library option would be of benefit. The library will run the program on a Wednesday and promote at the school.
Limitations	What space, budget and resource constraints do you have?	Consider the program within the delivery of the library service.	The program will allow for a maximum of 20 children and be delivered in the children's area near the children's collection. Resources will be purchased from the children's program budget and staff time will come from within the staffing budget.

"What is the point of being alive if you don't at least
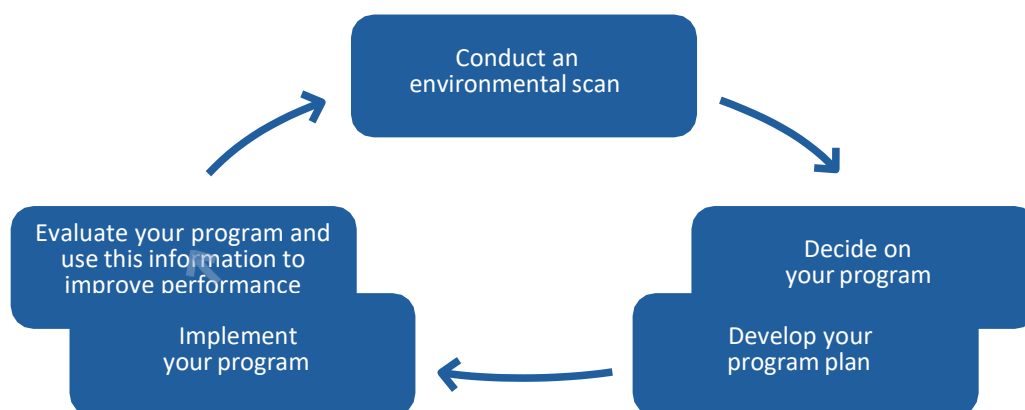
try to do something remarkable?"

– John Green, An Abundance of Katherines

HOW TO GET STARTED?

Tips for planning a program

– Community Mapping. Map out stakeholders in your community. For primary school aged children consider schools, home educators, shopping centres, community events, outside school hours care etc. ABS Community Profiles can help provide an overview of the community.

– Consider who you can partner with to deliver the program – for example Story Dogs, Children's University, ConstableCare.

– Reach out to stakeholders to help prepare for the project, gauge interest and find out if there are similar programs running in the community.

– Use AEDC, NAPLAN and/or other relevant data to support targeting specific areas or skills in your community.

– Reach out to other services running similar projects to find out what has and hasn't worked for them and how they have delivered similar projects. You can do this via the Libraries, Learning and Literacy Group (LLLG) or Public Libraries Online (PLO).

– Consider this information within the limitations of your library service. Consider how these ideas can be adapted to suit the limitations of space, budget, time etc. Do staff need training in delivering or supporting literacy programs for school age children?

– Consult with appropriate people to discuss plans for access and inclusion (Indigenous Project Officer, Access and Inclusion Project Officer, local networking groups, local service providers, local community members such as elders etc.).

– Consult the library team on their thoughts and support for the project. Engaging colleagues is more likely to result in a program that they feel confident promoting and supporting.

– Use this information to develop a program plan and seek feedback on the plan from appropriate stakeholders.

Your planning should include the following stages:

Conduct an environmental scan

Decide on your program

Develop your program plan

Implement your program

Evaluate your program and use this information to improve performance

"The greatest secrets are always hidden

in the most unlikely places."

– Roald Dahl, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

PROGRAM PLAN TEMPLATE

Program Title:	*Enter the planned name for the program.*
Target Audience:	*Enter the target audience for the program.*
Background:	*Enter the relevant background information for the project. For example, where the idea came from and reasoning for delivering the program with support from research if applicable.*
Objectives:	Library Outcomes – *Links to library strategic plans or other sources relevant to library service* Literacy Outcomes – *Reflects the literacy learning outcomes for participants of the program* General Capabilities – *Consider how the program links to and develops the Australian Curriculum General Capabilities.*
Scope:	*Enter summary information about when, where, and how often the program will be delivered as well as what will be delivered.*
Accessibility Adaptations or Considerations:	*Enter any ideas for how to support accessibility.* The *Accessible Events guide* for organisers, developed by the Meetings and Events Industry of Australia and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, is designed to help organisers to ensure that events are accessible for people with disabilities. Also consider the accessibility of any online promotional material – try to conform with *W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines*.
Cultural Considerations:	*Enter any ideas for how to demonstrate cultural respect.*
Required Resources:	*Enter all resources required to deliver the program.*
Budget:	*Enter approximate costs required to deliver the program.*
Stakeholders:	*Enter all people involved in the project, including internal and external stakeholders such as potential partners and participants. If known, outline their involvement in the project.*
Promotion:	*Enter the methods used to promote the program.*
Evaluation:	*Enter the methods used to evaluate the program.* *Consider using short-term evaluation – for attendance figures, feedback from participants etc; and long-term evaluation – for the impact of the program, including changes in behaviour or progress made as a result of participation.* *Tips for evaluation are included on page 16 of this toolkit.* *The Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) has a useful step-by step guide.*

EXAMPLE PROGRAM PLAN 1

Program Title:	**STEM: Exploring Matter**
Target Audience:	6–10 year olds and their parents or guardians
Background:	In a recent survey, parents expressed an interest in a school holiday program that supports the development of children's STEM skills.
Objectives:	Library Outcomes – The program supports our library objective of stimulating learning, creativity and discovery. Literacy Outcomes – At each of the sessions we showcase a range of titles from our library collections that relate to the challenge of the day. – We encourage children to borrow one of the titles that they have used as inspiration in the session and further explore our collections on this topic. – We build communication skills by having the children work in teams and having them present their work and ideas to the group. General Capabilities – Critical and Creative Thinking – The Exploring Matter program challenges children to work together to solve a problem together each week, building critical and creative thinking skills. – Personal and Social Capability – children work together in teams and deliver a short presentation to the group, both mechanisms for building interpersonal and communication skills.
Scope:	The *Exploring Matter* program runs for three weeks during school holidays on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10.00am–2.00pm. Over the three weeks, children explore the properties of solids, liquids, and gases by undertaking a range of experiments and challenges.
Accessibility Adaptations or Considerations:	– A space will be provided where children can work at a table or on the floor – Individual challenges can be adapted to suit abilities – Images of the challenge will be provided to support children with different abilities and those with English as an additional language
Cultural Considerations:	
Required Resources:	Outlined in the plan for each session.
Budget:	Overall budget for the holiday program is $1,500
Stakeholders:	Local Primary Schools, Homeschool groups, Marketing team, Library staff
Promotion:	Website, Social media, Print material Information sent to local high schools. School contact information.
Evaluation:	A survey will be offered to families at the end of the program addressing its objectives. Staff will have an informal discussion and review the program considering survey feedback and anecdotal feedback from families. This information will inform future planning.

EXAMPLE PROGRAM PLAN 2

Program Title:	**Lego Club**
Target Audience:	6-10 year olds and their parents or guardians
Background:	Local children have expressed an interest in joining a LEGO Club. Lego is an accessible and durable resource that can help meet the learning objectives of library programming. There are no other LEGO Clubs being run in the community. Providing this service free to families can enable a learning opportunity for families who might not otherwise have access to LEGO and similar learning opportunities.
Objectives:	Library Outcomes – The program supports our library objective of stimulating learning, creativity and discovery Literacy Outcomes – At each of the sessions we showcase a range of titles from our library collections that relate to the challenge of the day. – We encourage children to borrow one of the titles that they have used as inspiration in the session and further explore our collections on this topic. – We build communication skills by having the children work in teams and having them present their design to the group General Capabilities – Critical and Creative Thinking – The LEGO Club challenges participants to work together to solve a problem together each week building critical and creative thinking skills. – Personal and Social Capability – Participants work together in teams and deliver a short presentation to the group, both mechanisms for building interpersonal and communication skills
Scope:	LEGO Club will run every Tuesday during school terms between 4.00–5.00pm Each week participants are posed a LEGO challenge that requires them to work individually or in teams to solve. Challenges include – Build a LEGO robot that could do a job for you at home or school that you hate to do; A hurricane is coming, build the strongest structure you can; Build yourself a wacky pet etc. At the end of the session each group presents their design or solution to the group.
Accessibility Adaptations or Considerations:	– Supply Duplo and LEGO to suit varying needs of abilities – Provide a space where LEGO can be accessed at a table or on the floor – Consider how each individual challenge can be adapted to suit abilities – Provide multiple examples of the challenge (built or images) to encourage a variety of abilities and support English Language Learners.
Cultural Considerations:	Consider themes that celebrate and recognise a variety of cultures.

Required Resources:	LEGO, Duplo, Wash bag, Challenge Resources, 1 staff member
Budget:	Large Lego Classic Bricks - $80 (one off) Large Duplo Box - $70 (one off) Wash Bags - $10 (one off)
Stakeholders:	Local Primary Schools, Homeschool groups, Local service provider network group, Local Shopping Centre, Marketing team, Library staff.
Promotion:	Website, Social media, Print material Information sent to local high schools. School contact information.
Evaluation:	A survey will be offered to families at the end of each term addressing the objectives of the program. Staff will have an informal discussion and review of the program considering survey feedback and anecdotal feedback from families. This information will inform future planning.

PLANNING A SESSION

Session Plan Template

Program: *Enter title of program*		Date: *Enter Date*	Staff Member: *Enter staff member planning session*
Topic:		*Provide a summary of the focus of the session*	
Relevant links if applicable:		*Enter any links which might be useful to support delivery of the session*	
Learning Outcome:		*Outline the learning outcome planned for adults participating in the session*	
Access and Inclusion considerations:		*Make a note of any considerations to ensure the session is accessible*	
Resources:		*List all resources required to deliver the session*	
Set up:		*Make any notes for how the session should be set up*	
Introduction:		*Describe how the session will be introduced*	
Steps:		*Outline the steps for the session*	
Conclusion:		*Describe how the session will be concluded*	

"We all can dance," he said, "when we find

musicthat we love."

– Giles Andreae, Giraffes Can't Dance

Example Session Plan 1

Session: STEM – *Exploring Gases* (partof the *Exploring Matter* program)	Date:	Staff Member:
Challenge:	In small groups, make a balloon rocket.	
Relevant links if applicable:		
Learning Outcome:	Children will develop their understanding of gases as part of the STEM program on different states of matter. This is an important building block for more complex physical science lessons that they will explore at school. The focus questions with the activity willguide students' problem solving, critical thinking and communication skills.	
Access and Inclusion considerations:	– The activity will be held on the floor of the room in an open area, so it is accessibleto wheelchairs. – Students who may find it difficult to tie the string, or to thread it through a straw, can blow up the balloon or hold it and let it go	
Resources:	– Balloons – String – Straws – Sticky tape – Chairs – Cards with focus questions for the children as they undertake the activity	
Set up:	– For each group, provide a balloon, straw, two chairs, some string, sticky tape, and the focus questions. – Display books related to the activity in the library.	
Introduction:	Talk about gases – Gases are one of the three basic states of matter – do the children know what the others are? (solids and liquids). – Do the children know what are the properties of a gas? (It has no definite shape, butcan take the shape of the container it is in, and it is usually transparent). – Can they think of any gases? (air, steam, smoke …) Discuss the activity – Can the children suggest how we could create a rocket using the items we have? – What gas do they think we will be using to make the rocket move? – Ask them to observe what happens during the activity so they can answer the questions they have been given	

Steps:	Ask children to get into small groups. Encourage them to talk to each other about what they think will happen.
	To undertake the activity:
	– Tie one end of the string to a chair.
	– Thread the other end of the string through a straw.
	– Pull the string tight and tie it to another chair?
	– Blow up the balloon, but don't tie it. Pinch the end of the balloon and tape the balloon to the straw.
	– Let go and watch the rocket fly
Conclusion:	– Encourage the groups to share the process they went through to create their rocket.
	Ask the following questions:
	– What happened to the shape of the balloon when they added air (a gas) to it?
	– What happened to the balloon's shape when they let it go?
	– Did the balloon move? Why was this? Could they feel the air coming out as the balloon raced along the string? (As the air rushes out of the balloon, it creates a forward motion called THRUST. Thrust is a pushing force created by energy. In the balloon experiment, our thrust comes from the energy of the balloon forcing the air out).
	– Ask the children what they thought of the activity and if they have any suggestions for future activities

"The moment you doubt whether you can fly,

you cease forever to be able to do it."

– J .M. Barrie, Peter Pan

Example Session Plan 2

Program: Lego Club	Date:	Staff Member:

Challenge:	In small groups build a boat out of Lego that floats. Test: • How many buttons or counters can it hold and still float? • How long can it float? • How can it be adapted to move? (perhaps by adding a sail and wind) • How many Lego people can it hold and still float? etc.
Relevant links if applicable:	https://lemonlimeadventures.com/simple-lego-stem-project-design-boat/ https://frugalfun4boys.com/lego-fun-friday-build-a-boat-challenge-2/ https://www.craftionary.net/floating-boat-kids-science-experiment/
Learning Outcome:	Children will develop problem solving, critical thinking and communication skills through working together to solve the problem.
Access and Inclusion considerations:	– Lego boats can be as complicated or difficult as the child is capable. Different Legopieces will be made available to suit different abilities. – Staff will encourage students to adapt their boat to continue challenging children. For example, once a child has created a boat that can float they will be asked how many buttons can it hold and still float, they could then be encouraged to adapt their boat tobe able to hold more buttons and test if that is possible. – If students are struggling with the task, they can be prompted to support their learning. For example, they could be asked to think about what a real boat looks like, what is it about the boat that helps it to float, how could they make a stronger base, etc
Resources:	– Lego – Duplo – buttons or counters – timer – tubs or trays – material for adaptions such as sails (e.g. paper, fabric, pop sticks, tape, playdough etc.) – water – paper towel to wipe up potential spills or a towel to sit on the table under the tubor trays – books on boats and floating
Set up:	– Place trays filled with a small amount of water on the two of the tables. – Have Lego and Duplo available on another table and on the floor. – Keep remaining resources on a trolley until needed. – Display books related to the activity in the library

Introduction:	Discuss boats and floating.
	Ask the group questions such as:
	– What do you know about boats?
	– Can you think of other things that float?
	– What do these things have in common?
	– What causes a boat to sink?
	Refer to library books chosen to support the session as relevant
Steps:	– Ask children to get into groups of two or three and create a boat out of Lego. Encourage them to talk to each other and plan their build.
	– As groups finish they can go to the tubs and test their creation. If it doesn't float prompt the children to think about why it isn't floating and how it can be improved.If the boat does float, challenge children to think about how they could improve their boat – for example by testing how many buttons it can hold and still float and challenging them to create a boat that can float and hold more.
	– Further challenge students to adapt their boats by using other materials available.
	Consider initially giving students a time limit for creating their boat
Conclusion:	– Encourage the groups to share the process they went through to get to their finalboat creation.
	– Ask the children what they thought of the activity and if they have any suggestions for future activities.
	– Everyone packs up the Lego and other materials if used together

TIPS FOR PROMOTING PROGRAMS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

– Utilise outreach opportunities – schools, community events, shopping centres etc. Consider running small samples of programs and talking to families about what is on offer in the library. Be flexible and adapt depending on the outreach location. For example, connect with schools at an afterschool festival, address the school at an assembly, or run workshops with classes.
– Set up interactive displays in the library – encouraging children to participate in a craft activity that can be displayed, a scavenger hunt or other activity while in the library can provide an opportunity to promote a program.
– Upselling – where the opportunity arises tell people about the program. For example, at existing programs and events, when they are browsing items on a related topic, or if they are asking about other types of programs etc.
– Send promotional material directly to stakeholders that can be shared via email, newsletters and social media.

FINDING STAKEHOLDERS

– School contact information
– Find a local homeschool group
– If you have a Community Development Officer in your organisation, they may be able to help with networks or groups in the area.
– Find contact information for local shopping centres and businesses on their websites or visit the location in person.
– As contacts build ask them about local events, or when events are being promoted attempt to contact organisers. Even if there is not capacity to attend that event, it is an opportunity to develop connections for future events.

CELEBRATIONS AND SPECIAL DATES

Every day, week, or month of the year is dedicated to celebrating or recognise something. These can be opportunities to support program and events planning. You may also want to consider local events or dates or significance.

Here are some celebrations you may want to consider when planning for adults:

February 14	Library Lovers' Day
March	Harmony Week
May	Library and Information Week
	National Simultaneous Storytime
July	NAIDOC Week
August	Book Week
	National Science Week
August/September	National Literacy and Numeracy Week
September	Indigenous Literacy Day
October	Children's Week WA
November	Australia Reads including the Australian Reading Hour
	International Games Week
Summer Holidays	Summer Reading

For more events visit the Our Community Calendar of nationally significant events

"Only the children know what they are looking for"

– Antoine de Saint-Exupery, The Little Prince

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING

There are a variety of grants and sources of funding that can support the delivery of programs and events.Here are some examples:

– Australian Government make available grants including for National Science Week engagement activities
– Children's Book Council of Australia Book Week Grants Funding
– Scitech sometimes have grants available for the delivery of STEM programs
– Government of Western Australia Grants (Youth Week and Youth Engagement grants)

OTHER SOURCES OF SUPPORT

– The State Library of Western Australia has resources available to be loaned by public libraries to support the delivery of programs and events.
– Scitech have kits available to be borrowed.
– Australian Museum have Museum in a Box kits that can be hired.
– Find organisations that could visit your library to deliver programs using the Australian School Activities Directory
– STAR Net is a resource developed to support libraries to deliver STEM programs
– Find Australian author and illustrator websites on the Literature Centre website, through Fremantle Press or Paper Bird Speakers Agency

TIPS FOR MANAGING GROUPS OF CHILDREN

Check your library policy for guidelines on children's attendance at programs. You can refer to this policy if needing support. For example, if you have a policy that children under a certain age need to be accompanied by a parent or guardian you can refer to the policy if a parent is attempting to drop off their child and leave.

Unless the library service has a policy that allows for leaving children unattended at programs, the parent is usually responsible for their child's behaviour while attending a library program. However, there are strategies the facilitator canuse to help manage and direct a group of children.

– Don't give the children the resources until after you have given them instructions - this reduces the opportunity tofiddle or start using the resources prior to instruction. Ensure other distracting resources are put away or out of eyesight where possible.
– After providing instruction allow children to ask questions – this reduces the likelihood of them all asking thesame questions.
– Where applicable, if you can encourage information from the children, they will be more likely to engage. For example,what do you think we will do first? What do you think we will do next? Why? Etc.
– Ask the children to choose one person from their table to collect resources for their whole table as needed – this helpsto manage the distribution of resources. This strategy can also be used for returning or packing away resources.
– If children are asking the same questions you can ask the group to stop what they are doing and listen to further instruction.

PASSIVE PROGRAMMING

Passive programming can provide opportunities to engage with communities and develop literacy skills when there are limitations on staff time available. Here are some ideas for delivering passive programming to primary school agedchildren:

– Interactive displays in the library – providing something to do such as adding to a collective artwork.
– Scavenger hunts – providing children with clues or a checklist of things that can be found around the library, could beactual items in the library or pictures that have been placed around the library.
– Activities with instructions available – easy craft activities with simple steps.
– Take home story and craft kits
– Summer reading club
– The golden feather hunt – Scribblers Festival
– Competitions (external or local library led)

COMPETITIONS

– The Golden Pen – Scribblers Festival
– Tim Winton Award for Young Writers
– KSP Writers Centre Competitions
– CBCA WA Competitions – Make your own story book

TIPS FOR EVALUATION

– Listen to feedback from children and participants to support the development and shaping of a program.
– Ask schools, parents and caregivers if they are willing to support children to provide feedback on surveys.
– Keep surveys aimed at students short and simple – only ask for information that is useful.
– Ask families to be case studies and collect their stories on what they have gained from the program

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF LINKS

ABS Census Community Profiles

ALIA: Ideas for campaigns and events in your library (Library Lovers' Day, Harmony Week, Library and Information Week, National Simultaneous Storytime, International Games Week)

ALIA: Policies, standards and guidelines

ATSILIRN Protocols for Libraries, Archives and Information ServicesAustralian

Curriculum General Capabilities

Australian Directory of Schools Activities, Excursions and Accommodation

Australian Early Development Census Data

Australian Museum

Australia Reads

Better Beginnings Resources for Public LibrariesBusiness.gov.au:

Grants and Programs

Children's Book Council of Australia: Western Australian Branch

Connections – Toolkit for Western Australian Public Libraries working with culturally diverse communities

Fremantle Press Authors and Artists Directory

Government of Western Australia Community Grants ProgramHome

Education WA: Official Group Directory

Indigenous Literacy Day

KSP Writers Centre Competitions Libraries,

Literacy and Learning Group

Literacy Matters: State Library of Western Australia Literacy Strategy 2017–2027The

Literature Centre Authors and Illustrators

My School (WA School Profiles including NAPLAN data)NAIDOC

Week

NaNoWriMo

National Science Week

Our Community Calendar of nationally significant eventsPaper

Bird Speakers Agency

Public Libraries Online

Schools Online Scitech

Scribblers Festival

STAR Net: Science-Technology Activities & Resources for LibrariesTim

Winton Award for young writers

Western Australian Literacy Alliance