

USING PRE-TESTS TO CATER FOR DIVERSITY IN THE PRIMARY CLASSROOM: ONE SCHOOL'S JOURNEY.

Walker, J. *Abbotsleigh Junior School, Wahroonga, NSW*

Futcher, H. *Abbotsleigh Junior School, Wahroonga, NSW*

The concept of pre-testing students is not new, and current Australian research highlights the value of this information. Teachers know that they need to present their students with challenges that **celebrate their ability** and are in advance of their current level of development. They must also take into account specific learning difficulties gifted students may have. Teachers know that they can use pre-tests to discover what students already know in order to accomplish this. How and when teachers can apply this information to teach students appropriately and **differentiate the curriculum** in mixed ability and gifted classrooms, may be a practice that can be improved in your school. Evidence of the range of fundamental spelling abilities in the classrooms of one primary school will be provided in this oral presentation. Actual work samples and practical examples of classroom differentiation strategies based on pre-test information will be discussed. Participants will be encouraged to explore a variety of ways of applying pre-test information within normal constraints and realities of the classroom. They will be shown some spelling techniques and activities that require the students to use their research and investigative skills to discover rules and reasons behind their spelling choices.