

## GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS

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### Central Administration

*Special Forever* is administered by e:lit – the Primary English Teaching Association in partnership with the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA). The *Special Forever* Project Manager, Val Noake has overall responsibility for the operation of the project. She can be contacted on 02 9565 1277 or email [val.noake@elit.edu.au](mailto:val.noake@elit.edu.au).

### Regional Coordinators

To ensure local support is available and to facilitate the sharing of ideas the Murray-Darling Basin has been divided into 21 regions with a Regional Coordinator appointed for each one. The Regional Coordinator is a local, experienced teacher or curriculum consultant with an interest and expertise in literacy or environmental education. All have volunteered their time and energy over and above their normal teaching commitments, so please take this into account if you need to contact them.

Regional Coordinators promote the project and encourage schools to participate. They appoint a panel of experts to select works from the region that are suitable for publication and send them to the central selection panel which meets in Sydney. They also organise a display of work submitted from the across the region.

A list of Regional Coordinators can be found in the Forms and Guidelines section on the website.

### Timeline

- February – information and the 2008 anthology sent to all primary schools in Murray-Darling Basin
- March – schools register by end of term 1
- April/May – schools implement *Special Forever* projects
- June – schools send writing & artwork to regional coordinator by 19<sup>th</sup> June
- July – central selection panel meets in Sydney
- July-August – regional displays of *Special Forever* work
- September 18<sup>th</sup> – multimodal texts submitted for website
- November –anthology and multimedia texts published.

A more detailed calendar can be found on the website.

### Website

The *Special Forever* website [www.specialforever.org.au](http://www.specialforever.org.au) is integral to the project. Teachers can register and request certificates online; download the necessary forms; find resources; read the latest news about the project and get information about grants and environmental education projects. Schools are invited to email news about their project, requests for assistance e.g. to find pen pals or partners elsewhere in the Basin to [val.noake@elit.edu.au](mailto:val.noake@elit.edu.au). Visit the website regularly for the latest information.



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### The Project and Your Classroom

*Special Forever* is an environmental communications project, specifically designed to be incorporated into classroom programs for various Key Learning Areas. It brings together outcomes in:

- English
- Science
- Technology
- Studies of Society and Environment (HSIE in NSW)
- The Arts

It also allows for the integration of environmental, Aboriginal, multicultural, and community perspectives with the classroom literacy and visual arts programs.

*Special Forever* provides students with a genuine purpose for creating written and visual texts by giving them a range of audiences with whom they can share their learning.

Your *Special Forever* project can be as simple or as complex as you like. It can involve the whole school or just your class. It can be a small part of your program or the focus of your program for the term.

### Project Themes

There are three broad themes Time and Change, Living Together and Managing Resources which connect closely to strands within national and state curriculum documents.

Thirty units of work based on these themes have been developed and can be downloaded from the *Special Forever* website. Teachers can use these units, adapt them or create their own based around these themes. Planning sheets can be found in the Forms and Guidelines section of the website.

### Joint School/Community Projects

Teachers are encouraged to involve members of the community in their project. Through the local council, catchment management authority or community group such as Landcare, schools can tap into environmental expertise and give students the opportunity to engage in a long term project rather than a one-off experience. Schools can bring an expert in to help with an on-site project such as setting up a bush tucker garden in the school grounds or take part in a project outside the school eg a weeding project with a park ranger. *Literacies in Place: teaching environmental communications* published by PETA 2007 documents eight rich learning experiences that teachers have undertaken involving joint school/community projects. Schools registering for *Special Forever* will receive a free copy of this book.

In some cases grants are available to assist schools and other groups to undertake community projects. Check The Dept of the Environment and Heritage <http://www.environment.gov.au/about/programs/gveho/index.html> and websites of community organisations like Landcare <http://www.landcareonline.com/page.asp?pID=86>.

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### **Register Your Project by the end of Term 1**

Teachers are asked to register their participation in *Special Forever* on the website or by faxing through a Registration Form.

Before registering, check if other teachers at your school are participating. If so please nominate a *Special Forever* School Coordinator who can act as contact point for your school.

Further resources will be sent to schools that register.

### **Resources**

Your first resource is your own community—its people, places, land and water. The Murray-Darling Basin Authority and e:lit have also developed material that will assist you to implement *Special Forever* in your classroom. Check out the Resources section on the website.

These and other useful resources are listed on the website.

The Murray-Darling Basin Authority website [www.mdba.gov.au](http://www.mdba.gov.au) is a must visit for school

### **Submitting Writing and Artwork by 19 June**

As the culmination of each year's *Special Forever* projects a high quality anthology of selected writing and artwork arising from the project is produced. In 2009 the anthology will be published in full-colour. Multimodal texts e.g. PowerPoint presentations and movies can be submitted for publication on the project website - see Guidelines for Multimedia in the Forms and Guidelines section of the website.

Teachers should send suitable writing and artwork to their regional coordinator by 19 June for consideration for publication. Multimodal texts can be sent at the same time or can follow by 18 September.

- Maximum of 20 pieces of writing & 20 pieces of artwork per school
- all text types and genres are eligible
- individual, group and class efforts are eligible

As well as the work of individual students, schools are encouraged to submit class and whole school efforts.

If no illustrations are involved writing can be submitted on white paper, double spaced and using a clear font. Printing the polished piece of writing on the back of the Consideration for Publication form saves having to attach the form separately.

For large artworks eg murals or large works that would not travel well, good quality digital images may be submitted instead of the original artwork. Images that have been burned onto a CD should also be accompanied by a printed copy of the image which could be used for display purposes.

A full list of conditions for submission of work for the 2009 anthology can be found in the Forms and Guidelines section of the website.

Multimodal texts can be submitted to Regional Coordinators at this time or to the project manager at e:lit by 18 September (see following information).



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### Submitting Multimodal Texts by 19 September

Multimodal texts e.g. PowerPoint presentations and movies can be submitted for publication on the Special Forever website. Files need to be under 2MB so any images used should be saved as a low resolution suitable for websites. Full details of suitable files are listed on the Guidelines for submitting multimedia texts in the Forms and Guidelines section of the website.

Multimodal texts can be submitted at the same time as writing and artwork or they can be sent directly to Sydney by 19 September. These texts may be based on the writing and artwork submitted or they may be completely different work.

### Regional and Central Selection Panels

To guarantee that the work in the *Special Forever* anthology represents the geographic and cultural diversity within the Basin, regional selection panels are convened across the Basin. Each panel will be chaired by the Regional Coordinator who will be responsible for recruiting other panel members. Each panel will include teachers and community representatives with expertise in literacy, environmental education and the arts.

All regional selection panels will apply the same set of criteria in making their decisions as to which pieces of writing and artwork could be included in the book. Care will be taken to ensure that the final selection for each region is balanced in terms of:

- different project themes
- age of writers
- gender
- inclusion of indigenous and multicultural perspectives
- 'factual' and 'literary' genres
- range of factual genres
- variety of literary forms: poetry, prose, plays, songs
- range and quality of accompanying or separate artwork.

Regional selection will take place in June with 30 pieces of writing and 30 pieces of artwork being selected to go to Sydney for consideration by the central selection panel for inclusion in the anthology.

The central selection panel is convened by e:lit and is made up of authors, scientists, teachers, graphic designers and illustrators. They have the task of checking all the material sent in by Regional Coordinators and making the final decision about the items to be included in the anthology. On average 300 students have their work published each year.

### Regional Displays

The writing and artwork produced for *Special Forever* is always of a high standard. Regional coordinators identify opportunities for participating schools to share their efforts with each other and with the wider community. Therefore, at some time between July and October, each Regional Coordinator will seek assistance from local schools in organising a central display of all local publications arising out of the project for that year. This central display may be timed to coincide with a particular



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event (for example NAIDOC Week, or Education Week, Heritage Week, the local district show). The display will be mounted in a central venue such as an education resource centre, a civic centre, shopping mall or public library. This gives all schools that have participated in the project the opportunity to celebrate each other's initiatives and their special community.

### Local Publishing and Display

Many participating schools mount their own display or undertake their own publishing to share and celebrate the work of their students. One aim of *Special Forever* is for primary school students to communicate their pride in, and concern for, their part of the Basin, through publishing locally what they have written. While regional displays and the publication of the *Special Forever* anthology are important aspects of the project, the emphasis on local publishing and distribution of students' ideas is at the heart of *Special Forever's* continued success. Ideas for publishing are listed under Resources on the website.

### Certificates

All students who participate in *Special Forever* should receive a Certificate of Participation. Teachers can request certificates online or by downloading a Certificate Request Form to fax. Schools can also request certificates for community members who have assisted them in their *Special Forever* project. All requests should be submitted by 30<sup>th</sup> July.

A Certificate of Merit is awarded to all students whose work is sent to Sydney to the central selection panel.

### Annual Anthology

Every year an attractive, high quality anthology of student writing and artwork is published. A copy of the previous year's anthology is sent to every primary school in the Murray-Darling Basin at the beginning of first term. Extra copies and copies of previous anthologies can be purchased from e:lit.

Students whose work is published receive a free copy of the anthology.

### Project Report and Evaluation

On completion of your *Special Forever* Project we would appreciate it if you would provide us with some information about that project and feedback on the operation and value of *Special Forever*. An online survey will be posted on the website July - August.