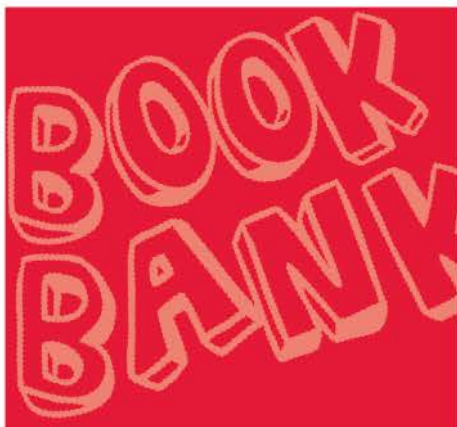
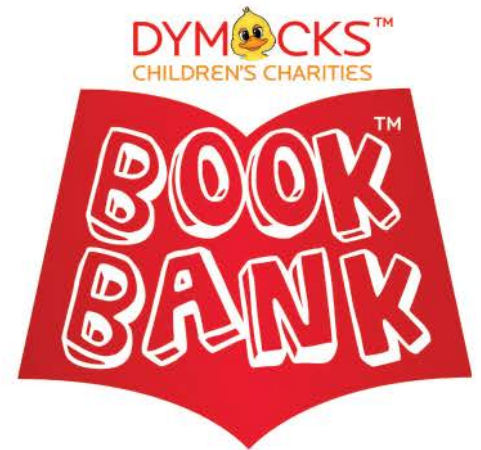




Education &
Communities

Final report of the Program Evaluation of Dymocks Children's Charities Book Bank

Policy, Planning and Reporting unit



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- Bill Tomlin, A/Senior Manager, Student Engagement and Program Evaluation Bureau, NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) - Chair
- Allan Booth, Group Leader, Learning Initiatives, Curriculum and Learning Innovation Centre (NSW CLIC), DEC
- Desley Morgan, Primary Principals Association
- Michael Murray, Group Leader, English and Literacy, NSW CLIC, DEC
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Evaluation team

Diana Amos	Program Evaluation and Planning Officer
Dr Susan Harriman	Leader, Quality Assurance
Barry Laing	Evaluation Consultant
Dr John Hughes	Evaluation Consultant

Program Evaluation team
Policy, Planning and Reporting unit
Level 1, 1 Oxford St
Darlinghurst NSW 2010

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Summary of key findings and recommendations

Book Bank is an initiative of Dymocks Children's Charities (DCC), working with the NSW Department of Education and Communities (the Department), designed to enhance student engagement with, and achievement in reading. The model was founded on the understanding, based on current research (refer to section 2.1), that book choice and ownership encourage students to read, and that increased engagement with reading enhances reading achievement. The program sought to target schools where book ownership and reading for pleasure may not be common.

A pilot was conducted in five NSW government schools during 2010-2012. DCC funded the purchase and distribution of four books each year, for every student in Years 3 to 6 in participating schools. In one very small pilot school all classes from Kindergarten Year 6 took part in the pilot. It was intended that the books would be kept at school for two terms, for students to read and use in class literacy activities. They would then be taken home by students, to keep.

The following key elements are included in the model:

- Books were chosen by students from a set of age-based catalogues of 'new release' books.
- Books were provided at no charge to the school or to students.
- Books were kept at school for the term or semester to be swapped or borrowed from the class book bank.
- Students were encouraged to write their opinions of the book on stickers inside the cover.
- Students took the books home at the end of the semester or year, to keep.

The model required *Book Bank* to be established in each class in Years 3 to 6, and integrated into the daily routine of the class. An additional five books were provided by DCC to each class, each term, to augment the class book bank and facilitate swapping between students.

The pilot schools were located in low socio-economic areas and were selected on the basis of low participation in the *NSW Premier's Reading Challenge*. The selected schools were not participating in targeted literacy programs through the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy (2009-2011).

The evaluation

The evaluation of the Dymocks Children's Charities program was undertaken in two phases during 2011 and 2012, to address each of the following Terms of Reference:

1. Impact of the *Book Bank* program on student reading engagement (how long, how often) including:
 - book choice
 - book ownership
 - book swapping and sharing.
2. Impact of the *Book Bank* program on reading achievement.
3. Operation and management of the *Book Bank* program at school and in class including:
 - book selection and ordering
 - book distribution and management, including when and how books go home
 - links to class and school programs
 - promotion to wider school community.
4. Impact on the *Book Bank* program of key participants including:
 - the *Book Bank* team
 - students participating in the program
 - school staff and community members
 - *Book Bank* ambassadors.

5. Scalability and sustainability of the *Book Bank* program.
6. Effectiveness of the partnership model of Dymocks Children’s Charities and the NSW Department of Education and Communities.

Evaluation data was collected through:

- surveys completed in each phase by students and teachers, and by parents in phase 2
- a total of 62 interviews undertaken with students, teachers, schools principals, parents and school *Book Bank* teams, across both phases of the evaluation.

Surveys were completed by approximately 25% teachers in participating schools. Over 500 survey responses were received from students in each phase of the evaluation (519 in phase 1; 526 in phase 2).

Key findings

The summary of findings draws together qualitative and quantitative findings, and are presented to address each of the terms of reference.

Impact of the *Book Bank* program on student reading engagement

Across all sources of data, the evaluation findings suggest that increased student engagement with books and reading was the most significant benefit of the *Book Bank* program.

Between 72% and 80% of student survey respondents in both phases of the evaluation, and across all age groups, reported increased interest in reading. All teacher respondents agreed that student attitudes to reading improved as a result of the program. All but two of teacher survey respondents reported that students increased the frequency of reading for pleasure, selecting *Book Bank* or other books. In both phases, increased self-initiated reading was reported most frequently by teachers in the list of impacts of *Book Bank* (23 of 30 and 16 of 19 respondents). In the same lists, ‘students selecting more complex and varied reading materials’ was next in frequency in both phases (by 19 of 30 and 12 of 19 respondents). No significant change in frequency of reading for pleasure was reported by students.

Increased enthusiasm for reading, engagement with an expanded range of books, and greater time spent reading by choice were reported by parents as well as teachers.

Each of the key features of the *Book Bank* model were found to contribute to fostering student engagement with reading, as discussed in the following sections. Detailed findings are discussed in section 3.1 of the report.

Book choice

There was strong support from all stakeholders for the value of students selecting their own books from the *Book Bank* catalogues. Interviewed teachers reported that the catalogues allowed students to engage with a wide range of current, high quality books they may not have had access to without the program. In some cases teachers were able to extend Stage 3 students by encouraging them to choose from books aimed at Stage 4.

A few teachers also reported being pleased that the *Book Bank* catalogues expanded their own awareness of the range of quality literature available.

Students frequently spoke of the enjoyment they derived from reading and re-reading their own books, and those chosen by friends and classmates. The impact of book choice on engagement in the pilot program resonates with Turner and Paris’s (1995) discussion of choice as a powerful motivator for students.

Book ownership

Students who participated in *Book Bank* for the two years of the pilot received a total of eight books to take home and keep, enabling them to establish a home library.

Book ownership was seen as a significant aspect of *Book Bank* for several reasons:

- Some students had not owned a new book prior to *Book Bank*. Often they were described as “*excited and proud*” when they received each new book.
- Taking books home to keep promoted sharing amongst the whole family, particularly with siblings.
- Students were seen to take great care of the books, especially those that belonged to their friends.
- Students were able to read and re-read their books whenever they chose.
- The promotion of reading for pleasure extended to students’ families.
- Book ownership was regarded as having great value in motivating students to read, and with overall engagement with reading.

Book swapping and sharing

Students were able to read other students’ *Book Bank* books by ‘swapping’. This term was used instead of ‘borrowing’ to reflect a sense of obligation to the owner of the book. The social aspects of the *Book Bank* model provide a point of difference from other class-based reading programs. Book swapping and recording feedback about the books, were attributed with enhancing students’ engagement with the *Book Bank* books and with reading in general.

Sharing occurred as students talked of their reading experiences with others in their class. One teacher referred to sharing as happening “*naturally*” while others set up more formal opportunities, including learning how to review a book.

Swapping and sharing information about their books was reported as establishing a social setting where reading became a shared interest; promoting students’ interest in reading by:

- valuing students’ choices of books
- building their awareness of the diversity of books available to read
- promoting discussion of shared interests
- assisting them to choose a book to read or to select from the catalogue.

Book Bank stickers

Books arrived with comment stickers attached to the inside front cover. The stickers provided one way of students sharing their opinions of the books they read. The quality of comments improved when teachers included explicit lessons on making useful comments and taught students how to write book reviews.

Not all students chose to write comments. Across Years 3 to 6 approximately 80% of students in both Phases 1 and 2 used the stickers to write their thoughts and opinions about the books. Many students enjoyed this process, taking an interest in the opinions of their peers when selecting books to read, or books to order in the future. Others reported that they were glad that they “*didn’t have to*” write comments.

Class poster

A poster was provided to record the books students had borrowed from *Book Bank*. Half the teachers surveyed found the poster useful. Students and teachers liked to keep track of the *Book Bank* books, to see which titles were popular. Some teachers reported that they did not receive a poster.

Impact of the *Book Bank* program on reading achievement

The evaluation provided qualitative findings suggesting improved student performance in reading based on the professional judgement of teachers and, to a lesser extent, the observations of parents.

Such positive effects were described most frequently in classes where teachers used the *Book Bank* as a resource for structured literacy activities. Not all teachers, however, incorporated *Book Bank* activities into the class literacy program. In a few cases, books were distributed to students with little follow-up and, sometimes, sent home straight away.

In both interviews and surveys, stakeholders identified how *Book Bank* contributed to student achievement in terms of:

- participation and confidence in reading activities
- reading skill development
- other aspects of literacy.

Book Bank operates alongside the class reading program and other school initiatives, so student reading achievement reflects the effect of multiple variables. It is not possible to attribute results in standardised testing, including NAPLAN scores, to *Book Bank*.

Participation and confidence

In addition to the increases in '*student self-initiated reading for pleasure*' suggested earlier, increased participation and self-confidence in reading activities was reported by at least 50% of teacher survey respondents across both phases of the evaluation. Student, parent and teacher interview comments attested to increases in both motivation and confidence, in line with Guthrie's (2001) suggestions about the intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy of engaged readers.

Reading skills development

In each phase of the evaluation only one of the teacher survey respondents disagreed with the suggestion that participation in the *Book Bank* contributed to improvements in students' reading skills, with 12 of the 30 strongly agreeing and 17 agreeing in phase 1. Initial enthusiasm for this effect was somewhat tempered by phase 2, when three of 19 respondents strongly agreed and 15 agreed. Improvements were noted in comprehension, reading fluency, vocabulary knowledge, word attack skills and oral reading. These results were not consistent for all students in all participating classrooms.

Improvement in other aspects of literacy

Both students and teachers also noted improvements in other aspects of literacy including speaking and listening, spelling and vocabulary, writing, and general interest in books across a wide range of genres and topics. Students frequently related their perceived improvements in literacy skills to participation in *Book Bank*.

School-based operation and management of the *Book Bank*

Commitment by the school community to the implementation model, and the establishment of a team to manage the program, were prerequisites of involvement in the *Book Bank* pilot.

In all five pilot schools, the key features of the model were in place by the second semester of the program. Each school varied the team model to suit its context, and found ways to ensure the program ran smoothly.

Focus on Years 3 to 6

The *Book Bank* model was designed to suit students in Years 3 to 6 (Stages 2 and 3). Difficulties arose in the one school that implemented the pilot in all classes from Kindergarten to Year 6. For Stage 1 classes (Years 1 and 2), and composite Year 2/3 classes, teachers had to find different ways to make the

program work for the whole class. While implementation in Kindergarten to Year 2 was deemed successful by participating teachers, issues were identified with the ordering process and in the use of *Book Bank* features such as the comment sticker and class poster.

In Year 2/3 composite classes across a number of pilot schools, teachers devised ways to include the Year 2 students in the swapping and sharing processes, by obtaining additional books from the program or supplementing the class book bank with books from other sources such as the school library.

The appeal of the program was evident as many Year 2 students (and their teachers) were keen to take part. Other teachers preferred to limit the program to Stages 2 and 3, with students joining the program in Year 3 seen as a valuable 'rite of passage' from Stage 1 to Stage 2.

Book selection and ordering

Student book choice was a highlight of the program for many participants. Almost all teachers reported that the book selection process efficient. In the Phase 1 student survey 88% of respondents reported having chosen their own books. This decreased in Phase 2 (70% choosing all or nearly all) as teachers refined the methods of matching books to suit student needs. Some teachers were concerned about the amount of class time taken up in choosing books to order.

Few students had difficulty in using the catalogue, although for younger children the number of titles to select from was often daunting. Book selection was more time-consuming with younger students.

Book distribution and management

Class teachers were responsible for the operation of *Book Bank* at class level. School *Book Bank* managers and team members coordinated the ordering and distribution of books and any emergent issues such as providing books for new students.

Twice a year the school *Book Bank* manager spent a significant amount of time coordinating book ordering and distribution. Unfortunately, this took place at times when teachers were already extremely busy and the process was often rushed. One school *Book Bank* manager estimated that 12 to 15 hours per semester were required in coordinating book selection and ordering. Principals acknowledged that the managers often gave up their own time to run the program.

Ordering

The school *Book Bank* managers collated the orders submitted by class teachers. Some teachers commented on the difficulty of the tight timeframe for students to make their selections and submit the class book order.

Mostly, school *Book Bank* managers were satisfied with the system when the orders were organised by class and term, rather than by individual student, and when sufficient notice was provided to allow some flexibility in completing class orders by the suggested deadline.

Delivery and distribution of books

In the first semester of the program books were packaged and distributed individually to each student, often at presentation assemblies as part of the launch of the program. This was quickly revised, with books being delivered to schools in boxes labelled by class and term, to make the process more manageable at the school level. Some schools continued to distribute books at a special assembly. Others chose to have books distributed either by each class teacher, or directly to classes by the school *Book Bank* manager.

The extra books provided (five per class, per term) were sometimes used by teachers and school *Book Bank* managers to cater for students who wanted to change their chosen book, to provide books for students new to the school or to replace lost books. The Dymocks Children's Charities manager was keen to remind teachers of the DCC commitment to replacing lost books or providing additional books

for new students, so the extra books could be kept within the class book bank and increase the range of books available for swapping.

Links to class and school programs

The DCC program manager explained that *Book Bank* was intended “to work alongside” other class literacy programs. *Book Bank* was visible in each of the classes visited during the evaluation. Books were clearly located on shelves, in folders or trays so they were available for use in class activities or during silent reading time. In a few cases the books were regarded as the students’ own resources and were predominantly used as home readers.

Greatest benefits were reported in classes where the *Book Bank* books were used as part of the class literacy program. Those teachers who did use the class book bank as part of literacy activities, planned sharing sessions, contract work around students’ books, writing book reviews, and included student books as shared texts in formal whole-school reading programs.

Teachers reported being able to easily make links between the *Book Bank* program and syllabus requirements. In both phases of the evaluation teachers strongly supported the idea that *Book Bank* assisted the literacy program (phase 1: 28 of 30, and phase 2: 18 of 19 respondents agreed or strongly agreed).

Initially, several teachers were reluctant to allow students to take *Book Bank* books home to read, fearing they would not be returned, or would get lost. Gradually this changed over the life of the program, although it still varied from class to class.

Promotion to wider school community

Schools commonly had difficulty with promoting the program to the wider school community. While the parent survey revealed that around 75% of parent respondents were aware that their children were given books by the program and nearly 60% reported improved interest in reading for their children, fewer than 50% had a good knowledge of other aspects of the pilot, including special events and requests for community assistance. Only 41% of respondents were able to identify who provided the books. One principal remarked that promotion of the program to parents was definitely “an area for improvement”. School newsletters were the primary means of informing the school community about the *Book Bank* program.

The *Book Bank* launch was seen as an effective way to introduce the program to the community, especially in the three schools where the *Book Bank* ambassadors attended the launch event in person. Three schools organised additional special events to increase awareness of *Book Bank*. These included an evening quiz show, a Book Week parade and special assemblies to hand out new books as they arrived.

Around 75% of teachers reported that parents were generally aware of *Book Bank*. Most parents who participated in interviews were aware of the key features of *Book Bank*.

Impact of key participants

The *Book Bank* model identifies key figures to support the management of the program in school:

- the *Book Bank* team
- students
- *Book Bank* ambassadors.

Often roles changed during the first year of operation. The workload for both school personnel and the DCC and Department’s support personnel reduced during the first year of implementation, as the processes became familiar or were streamlined.

The *Book Bank* team

The *Book Bank* model was based on the premise that a team would be formed to manage the program in each school. The team would comprise:

- Stage 3 students acting as *Book Bank* managers
- a contact teacher
- a community member.

Early on, the *Book Bank* team model was modified in all pilot schools. In each case, a teacher took over the role of *Book Bank* manager, as the demands of the ordering process could not be met by either students or by the community member, alone. In some cases students assisted in carrying out the various ordering and distribution processes. More often, Stage 3 students took on a role at the class level, assisting with distributing the *Book Bank* books and helping other students with book selection and ordering.

Pilot schools were unable to find an appropriate community person to regularly manage and promote the program. However, the *Book Bank* manager was supported by other teachers or support staff.

Students participating in the program

Involving Stage 3 students was intended to provide opportunities to develop leadership skills through the organisation of book ordering and distribution. The program was found to be ill-suited to this intention. Too much support was required from teachers in the book ordering and distribution processes to allow students to independently undertake these roles.

Alternative leadership opportunities for interested Stage 3 students may include:

- speaking to the school community about *Book Bank* events
- writing reports about *Book Bank* for the school newsletter or website
- visiting classrooms to gain feedback on the program for the school *Book Bank* manager
- assisting younger students to select their books.

***Book Bank* ambassadors**

Prominent personalities such as Ahn Do, Rob Carlton and Adam Spencer promoted reading for pleasure as ambassadors for the program. They visited the three metropolitan schools to launch the program and encourage parent and community involvement. Two schools outside the Sydney region viewed the presentations via a video link. There was great disappointment expressed by the two schools that did not receive a visit from an ambassador.

In both Phase 1 and Phase 2 student surveys, approximately 25% of students recalled a '*special Book Bank activity*' at school. However, parents and teachers, favourably recalled the impact of the ambassadors where they visited the school in person.

Sustainability and scalability of the *Book Bank* program

Early on, the pilot revealed aspects of the model that needed modification. Improvements made to the book selection and ordering processes made implementation easier, so that by the beginning of the second year, *Book Bank* was seen to be operating efficiently in all pilot schools. Teachers implemented the program in a variety of ways with their students, and students showed enthusiasm about their books and enjoyed talking about books to classmates.

Each pilot school is situated within a low socio-economic status (SES) community. The funding of *Book Bank* by DCC was a key factor in establishing and maintaining the program in these schools. Other inputs, such as time and personnel required for school level management and operation, were resourced by each school.

The pilot was planned to run for two years, to June 2012, with a view to then expanding the number of schools involved. It was acknowledged that extension of the program in the pilot schools or expansion to include new schools, would require commitment of resources by participating schools, as well as additional funding from DCC for the provision of books.

The logistics and costs involved in supplying an increased number of schools is problematic for DCC. The DCC program manager suggested that additional sources of funding for the program may need to be sought if the program is to be continued or expanded, both to facilitate the organisation and distribution of the two orders per year, and for the purchase of the books themselves.

If the program were to continue in the form of the pilot, the roles of both partner organisations would need clarification or redefinition.

Teachers were highly supportive of the program and pilot school communities appreciated the gift of books for their students. However, all principals agreed that it was not possible to fund the program from current school budgets. They would be prepared, however, to contribute whatever other resources were necessary, including personnel time, to maintain the program.

If the program were to be offered to additional schools, alternative sources or models of funding would need to be identified. DCC has estimated the cost of providing four books per year as approximately \$25 per student.

Effectiveness of the partnership model

The pilot program was coordinated by a representative of each of the Department and Dymocks Children's Charities, described as the two program managers. Successive officers from the Department's curriculum team took on the coordination role as part of their wider work responsibilities. Early in the project, the two managers worked closely on the design and implementation of the pilot and visited schools during the first year of operation.

The workload for the DCC program manager involves the periodic development and release of the catalogue, and the ordering and despatch of books to schools, twice per year. The role of the Department officer diminished following the initial identification of schools and program implementation.

The roles of the two program managers were seen by principals and school *Book Bank* managers as critical to the efficient and effective functioning of the program. One program manager acknowledged that communication with the schools was a problem because, while it was a joint initiative, the areas of responsibility were unclear. The Departmental program manager described the roles as "*loosely organised*" and recounted that responsibilities needed to be negotiated as the program progressed. If the program were to continue the development of a formal agreement outlining activities and ongoing obligations of each partner would be required.

Recommendations

The *Book Bank* pilot program was deemed to be successful by the majority of participants in the evaluation. The program provided students with the opportunity to select current, high quality books to read and keep, with ownership of books being a new experience for a number of students. The impact on student motivation, interest and pleasure in reading contributed to improved engagement for many students.

The following recommendations, derived from the evaluation findings, are provided in the event of continuing implementation of the program. The recommendations are grouped into three areas related to the future implementation of the *Book Bank* at a system level, operational features and implementation at a school level.

1. Recommendations for the *Book Bank* program partners

It is recognised that *Book Bank* is the initiative of Dymocks Children's Charities. Consultation with the Department enabled identification of schools that may benefit from participation, and ideas to assist teachers to incorporate the class book bank into class-based or whole-school literacy programs.

Establishing governance arrangements

If ongoing operation of the *Book Bank* were to involve participation of the Department, clear outline of roles and obligations of both parties would be required.

Recommendation 1.1: Governance structures and formal agreement outlining activities, ongoing obligations of each party, and decision-making processes, need to be established.

Developing protocols for funding and support of the *Book Bank* program

It is acknowledged that the model of funding used in the pilot program is not sustainable for pilot schools, nor if the program is to be expanded to additional schools. Funding models need to be developed by Dymocks Children's Charities, to assist schools wishing to join the program.

Recommendation 1.2: A number of funding models need to be developed, utilising DCC funds or expertise to establish relationships with additional potential sponsors.

Recommendation 1.3: Funding models need to be developed that allow principals to make decisions about the use of school funds, or combinations of school funds and other resources.

If schools are to be selected to participate, then clear, agreed criteria need to be developed to guide selection. If priority is to be given to schools in low-SES communities, transparent processes for selection are required.

Recommendation 1.4: DCC, in consultation with the Department may develop a set of protocols for identification of schools to participate in the program.

Clarifying and enhancing methods of support for participating schools

Teachers require clear advice about the aims of the program and ideas for implementation, including:

- promotion of the sharing aspects of the program, to increase student interest in reading
- information indicating how teachers have successfully used the program to support literacy activities within their classrooms
- links to syllabus outcomes for *Book Bank* program activities
- suggestions for helping students select books
- strategies for supporting students to share ideas about the books they have read.

Recommendation 1.5: *Book Bank* support materials should be revised to provide information to teachers about the program operation, including suggested strategies for integrating the program into literacy teaching and learning.

Recommendation 1.6: Schools should be supported to communicate with their local community about the program, with suggested materials provided for inclusion in school newsletters and websites.

2. Recommendations regarding operational features of the *Book Bank* program

The purpose of the evaluation was to identify the impacts of the program on student reading behaviours and the features or key elements that supported its objectives. The following recommendations confirm those elements that promoted positive outcomes and make suggestions to strengthen future program operation.

Review the target age groups for the *Book Bank* program

Operation of the *Book Bank* program was most successful in Years 3 to 6, as originally planned. Inclusion of Stage 1 students is possible with some adaptation at a school level.

Recommendation 2.1: If students in Years Kindergarten to Year 2 participate in the program, schools are encouraged to modify the model to support their inclusion.

Support is required for teachers of Year 2/3 composite classes. Some schools may choose to include Year 2 composite class students in the program. Others may prefer to restrict book allocation to Year 3 students only.

Recommendation 2.2: On request, DCC may include Year 2 students (in composite classes) in future *Book Bank* allocations.

Recommendation 2.3: Teacher support materials may suggest strategies to ensure that all students in multi-age or multi-stage classes are able to participate.

Book choice and ownership

These are both identified as key features in promoting student engagement with reading. The use of age-based catalogues of recently released titles was appreciated by all participants, although on some occasions the number of titles in individual catalogues was seen to be excessive.

Recommendation 2.4: Age-based catalogues, based on the *NSW Premier's Reading Challenge* new releases list should be maintained. The appropriate number of titles to be included in each catalogue should be reviewed to ensure students are not overwhelmed by the range of choices.

Teachers need to be reassured that they do not need to use the extra class books to make up losses, or to provide books to new students. DCC will continue to provide replacement or additional books in these cases.

Recommendation 2.5: Schools should be provided with regular reminders of the DCC's commitment to replacing lost books and providing additional books for new students.

Swapping and sharing

While swapping and sharing were popular with most students, the voluntary nature of these activities was appreciated by others. Writing on the *Book Bank* stickers was limited in Stage 1 classes.

Recommendation 2.6: Maintain the *Book Bank* comment stickers as a valuable, but voluntary, method of sharing ideas about *Book Bank* reading.

Several students suggested additional ways they would like to share their experiences with *Book Bank*.

Recommendation 2.7: A forum for feedback and sharing between *Book Bank* schools should be established, perhaps on the *Book Bank* website.

Recommendation 2.8: Include 'hot picks' (popular choices) on the *Book Bank* website, at a point after delivery of each semester's books.

***Book Bank* ambassadors to promote the program at local community level**

The value of ambassadors in promoting reading and the *Book Bank* program to parents and the community is acknowledged as a useful contribution of Dymocks Children's Charities. Providing access to a *Book Bank* ambassador for every participating school is desirable, especially for schools in non-metropolitan areas.

Recommendation 2.9: Encourage and assist rural and remote schools to identify a local personality to be an ambassador. Ideally, this might be someone who is familiar with the context of the school and demonstrates a commitment to reading.

Recommendation 2.10: Where this is not possible, the school's Connected Classroom facilities may be used to provide a personalised launch for each school.

Recommendation 2.11: The connection between the school and the ambassador would ideally be refreshed each year, to maintain the momentum of the program and as new students join *Book Bank*.

3. Recommendations for schools implementing the *Book Bank* program

The *Book Bank* program allows for considerable flexibility in implementation. The evaluation revealed several ways to make best use of the program at the local school level, to suit particular needs.

Maintaining the benefits of *Book Bank* beyond the implementation of the program

Flexibility and a sense of ownership by school communities are vital to the success of the program. The substantial resource provided through the *Book Bank* program should be used to enhance student learning outcomes and encourage reading for pleasure.

Recommendation 3.1: Schools should be encouraged to adapt the program design and implementation to best meet local needs and incorporate *Book Bank* resources into class literacy programs.

Recommendation 3.2: Teachers should be encouraged to continue with learning activities stimulated by the provision of quality literature to students, beyond participation in the *Book Bank* program.

Recommendation 3.3: School communities should encourage use of the *Book Bank* catalogues to identify books to be purchased for the school library.

Review the roles of *Book Bank* school team members

The management of the program at school level requires the ability to communicate with all levels of the school community.

Recommendation 3.4: The role of *Book Bank* manager is best held by a member of the teaching staff. It is appropriate that the manager is supported by at least one other staff member, especially in larger schools.

Recommendation 3.5: Stage 3 students may be encouraged to participate in the promotion and operation of the *Book Bank* program, especially in assisting younger students to choose their books, and in distribution of orders on arrival.

Improving communication with parents and the community

Parent awareness of the program aims and operation is valuable in encouraging students to read at home and to take care of *Book Bank* books.

Recommendation 3.6: Schools should be encouraged to engage several members of the school community to promote the aims of the program at parent meetings and *Book Bank* events, and support the school manager as required.

Recommendation 3.7: Provide parents with information about the aims and operation of the program at the beginning of each school year and at times when students are choosing their books, when the books are distributed and when they are taken home to keep.

Part 1 Introduction

This evaluation report is presented in two parts:

- Part 1 provides background to the Dymocks Children’s Charities *Book Bank* program and the evaluation undertaken by the Student Engagement and Program Evaluation Bureau.
- Part 2 details the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation.

1. Evaluating Dymocks Children’s Charities *Book Bank*

1.1 Background

Book Bank is an initiative of Dymocks Children’s Charities (DCC) developed with the NSW Department of Education and Communities (the Department). The Department’s Student Engagement and Program Evaluation Bureau (SEPEB) was commissioned to evaluate the pilot program, which involved its implementation in five public primary schools.

A Program Evaluation Reference Group (PERG) was formed to provide advice to the evaluation team. The PERG comprised representatives of the Department, DCC and the NSW Primary Principals’ Association.

The evaluation was conducted in two phases. Phase 1 examined the period of the development and initial implementation of the program during 2010-2011, and the variations in implementation across the pilot schools. The findings from Phase 1 generated themes which were further explored in Phase 2 (2012).

Phase 2 data provided information about how the program progressed as it became more familiar to participants, and how it became embedded in school practices. Phase 2 also examined the sustainability of both the program itself, and the impacts observed in the first year.

1.2 Purpose of the evaluation

The evaluation was commissioned to identify changes in student reading engagement and achievement that may result from involvement in the DCC *Book Bank* program. The evaluation involved a review of the program implementation, and an investigation of the impact of key elements of the program model.

The recommendations will inform decision-making around the possible expansion of the program to a larger number of schools and the resource requirements for the continuation of the *Book Bank* program in the current pilot schools.

1.3 Terms of Reference of the evaluation

The Terms of Reference required that the evaluation:

7. assess the impact of the *Book Bank* program on student reading engagement (how long, how often) including:
 - book choice
 - book ownership
 - book swapping and sharing.
8. assess the impact of the *Book Bank* program on reading achievement.
9. review the operation and management of the *Book Bank* program at school and in class including:
 - book selection and ordering
 - book distribution and management, including when and how books go home
 - links to class and school programs
 - promotion to wider school community.

10. assess the impact on the *Book Bank* program of key participants including:
 - the *Book Bank* team
 - students participating in the program
 - school staff and community members
 - *Book Bank* ambassadors.
11. assess the scalability and sustainability of the *Book Bank* program.
12. assess the effectiveness of the partnership model of DCC and the Department.

1.4 Audience for the evaluation

Audiences for this evaluation include:

- Chief Executive Officer, Dymocks Children’s Charities
- Managing Director, Dymocks Children’s Charities
- Director-General, NSW Department of Education and Communities
- Deputy Director-General, Schools, NSW Department of Education and Communities
- program pilot schools and their communities
- school communities interested in participating in *Book Bank* or similar programs.

1.5 Dymocks Children’s Charities *Book Bank* program

The *Book Bank* program aimed to encourage reading for pleasure, and to contribute to improved student reading outcomes. DCC funded the purchase and distribution of four books each year, per student in Years 3 to 6.

DCC created a *Book Bank* catalogue of books which were available in sufficient numbers to meet potential orders. Each year the Department develops a list of books to be included in the *NSW Premier’s Reading Challenge* (PRC). Books are reviewed by a panel of experts and allocated to one of four reading levels aligned to school grade: challenge levels K-2, 3-4, 5-6, and 7-9. The lists of new release titles from the PRC are used as the basis of the *Book Bank* catalogues.

Other resources to facilitate the operation of *Book Bank* at class level included *Book Bank* wall posters, shelf labels, bookmarks and stickers for the inside cover of each book.

Five primary schools were invited to trial the *Book Bank* model. The Department’s program manager selected the pilot schools. Program managers from both the Department and DCC provided support to the school *Book Bank* teams during early implementation, including coordinating a launch of the program at each school. Initially, both program managers visited the pilot schools to view progress and, where necessary, help students select books.

A detailed description of the *Book Bank* program is provided in Section 2.

Pilot schools

The five pilot schools, from five regions, were selected from schools in the *Priority Schools Program* (PSP)¹. As shown in Table 1.1, the selection represented a range of school sizes and locations including metropolitan, regional and rural. All schools had low levels of participation in the PRC.

¹ Priority Schools Program (PSP) schools serve communities with high concentrations of low socio-economic status families

Table 1.1: Pilot schools and student participants

School	DEC region	Students 3-6	K-2	School enrolment
School A	Hunter/Central Coast	294		541
School B	North Coast	184		297
School C	South Western Sydney	300		556
School D	Sydney	36	63	99
School E	Western NSW	77		143

Book Bank was designed for students in Years 3 to 6. In the smallest school, *Book Bank* was implemented in all classes. This variation was requested by the principal due to the small number of classes from Kindergarten to Year 6.

1.6 Methodology

The evaluation employed a mixed-method approach, drawing on both qualitative and quantitative data, as described in the following sections. Evidence was gathered using:

- surveys of students, parents and school staff (teachers, support staff and principals)
- interviews and class observations in each school
- interviews with program managers from both DCC and the Department
- document reviews, e.g. Annual School Reports, *Book Bank* borrowing records and use of book stickers.

All pilot schools took part in each of the evaluation activities in both phases of the evaluation.

The methodology was approved by the *Book Bank* PERG. Each survey, interview and observation schedule was developed in consultation with expert members of the PERG.

1.6.1 Qualitative component

Qualitative data was collected through visits to schools, interviews with the DCC and Department program managers, and open-ended questions in surveys.

School visits

Each school visit was conducted by an evaluation officer from the Program Evaluation Unit and included:

- class observations
- interviews with the principal, students, the school *Book Bank* manager and team, class teachers and parents
- background document review, including the annual school report.

Class observations

Class teachers volunteered to allow class observations of class *Book Bank* activities. The observations provided evidence of the operation of *Book Bank*, including use of *Book Bank* resources such as book stickers, bookmarks, shelf labels and wall posters. In some classes there were opportunities for informal sharing with teachers and students. Many teachers discussed their implementation of *Book Bank* and the benefits for their students during the class visits.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders during school visits, as shown in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Summary of fieldwork

Methods	Phase 1		Phase 2		Total	
	No. of interviews	No. of participants	No. of interviews	No. of participants	No. of interviews	No. of participants
Principal/school leaders interviews	5	5	5	5	10	10
School <i>Book Bank</i> manager/team interviews	6	11	4	8	10	19
Student semi-structured interviews	7	47	7	49	14	96
Teacher interviews	6	17	7	19	13	36
Parent and community interviews	5	18	5	24	10	42
Program manager interviews	3	2	2	2	4	4
TOTAL	32	100	30	107	62	207

Principals were invited to select participants for all groups. The interview questions may be found in Appendix 2.

Permission was given by all participants for the interviews to be audio recorded. Audio recordings will be retained by the evaluators for the purpose of accuracy until the evaluation is completed. All interview data is confidential and no individuals have been identified by name.

Principals

The interview questions were provided to principals in advance of the visit. One principal was interviewed by phone in Phase 1, as the principal was absent from school on the day of the visit.

Students

Principals were requested to select six to eight students across Years 3 to 6 to participate in the focus group. In one school, where the program was implemented in all classes from K to 6, Year 2 students were also involved. At another school, all students who returned permissions forms were keen to participate so two focus groups were conducted.

Consent forms were obtained from students participating in focus groups.

School Book Bank manager

In all schools, the *Book Bank* manager was a member of staff. Managers included two classroom teachers, a teacher-librarian, and both non-teaching and teaching assistant principals. At two schools, students were members of the *Book Bank* team during Phase 1, so were included in the interviews.

Parents

Schools were requested to invite four to eight parents to attend a group interview. Consent to participate was assumed by parents' presence at the interview.

Document review

The evaluation team reviewed the following documents during each school visit:

- information provided as part of the Dymocks Children's Charities *Book Bank* program, including the booklet outlining the model, spreadsheets used for ordering books and the book catalogues
- the Annual School Report containing literacy targets and student achievement data in Phase 1 only
- newsletters or other communications that included information about involvement in the *Book Bank* pilot
- comments made on stickers inside the *Book Bank* books.

DCC provides information about *Book Bank* on its website. This includes information about the pilot program and the background to its development.

Interviews with *Book Bank* program managers

The program manager for DCC and the Department program manager were interviewed separately.

The DCC project manager was interviewed in both phases of the evaluation. Due to changes to staffing over the period of the evaluation, the Department's project manager role was filled by two different officers. Each officer was interviewed in the respective phase of the evaluation.

Surveys

The student survey included two open-ended questions, providing opportunities for students to use their own words to comment on the *Book Bank* sticker and *Book Bank* activities at school.

The teacher survey included two open-ended questions: one regarding students' enthusiasm for reading books from *Book Bank*, and one seeking additional comments not addressed by the survey questions. Responses were consolidated with the interview data. Four school *Book Bank* managers completed the teacher survey and their responses have been combined with those of other class teachers.

The parent survey also included an open-ended question, which provided parents with the option to make comments or suggestions about the program.

1.6.2 Quantitative component

The quantitative component of the evaluation comprised surveys for teachers and students. In Phase 2 an additional survey was completed by parents. Before release, each survey was piloted in one of the *Book Bank* pilot schools.

In Phase 1, online surveys were provided by the Department's Educational Measurement and School Accountability Directorate (EMSAD). In Phase 2 all surveys were administered using *Qualtrics*, a web-based tool for building surveys.

Teacher online survey

All teachers and principals in the pilot schools were invited to complete the teacher survey. A link to the survey was sent by email to all principals and school *Book Bank* managers for dissemination. As shown in Figure 1.1, 30 surveys were completed for Phase 1 and 21 surveys were commenced in Phase 2, with 19 completed. Teachers from all stage groups were represented. One respondent in a non-teaching executive position did not use *Book Bank* in the classroom.

The breakdown of respondents for both phases by the stage of students taught is shown in Figure 1.2. The largest proportion of respondents comes from Stages 2 and 3 (Years 3 to 6). Most K-2 teachers had little contact with *Book Bank* program because it was generally implemented in Years 3 to 6.

Figure 1.1: Teacher survey: Respondents by school

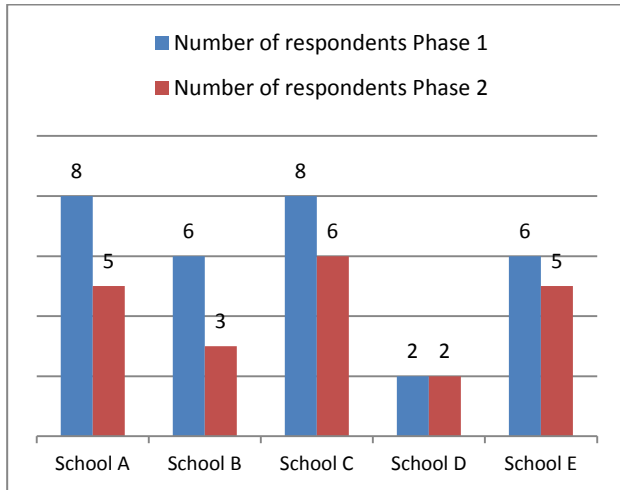
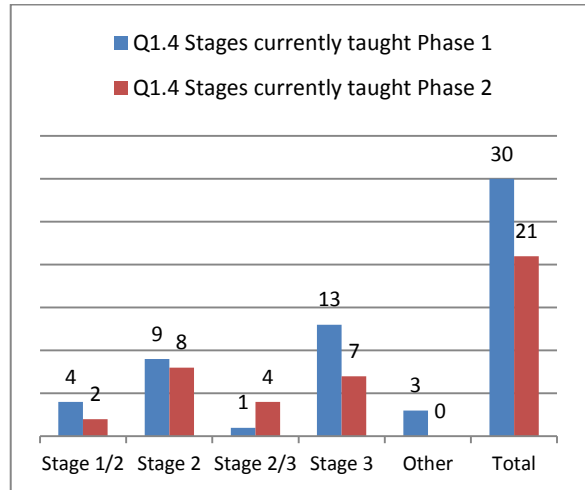


Figure 1.2: Teacher survey: Respondents by stages



Student online survey

All students in participating classes were invited to complete the survey. A link to the survey was sent by email to principals.

A total of 517 survey responses in Phase 1 and 526 in Phase 2 were received from students. Figure 1.3 shows the distribution of responses across the five schools. There were almost even numbers of boy and girl respondents for both phases. Figure 1.4 indicates the percentage of respondents by school year.

Figure 1.3: Student survey: Respondents by school

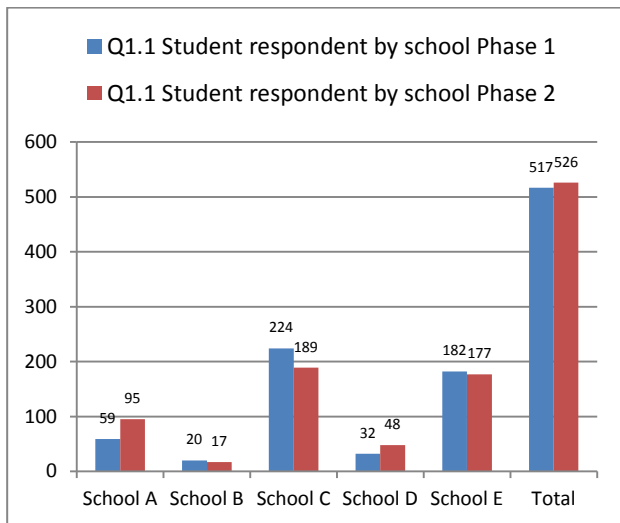
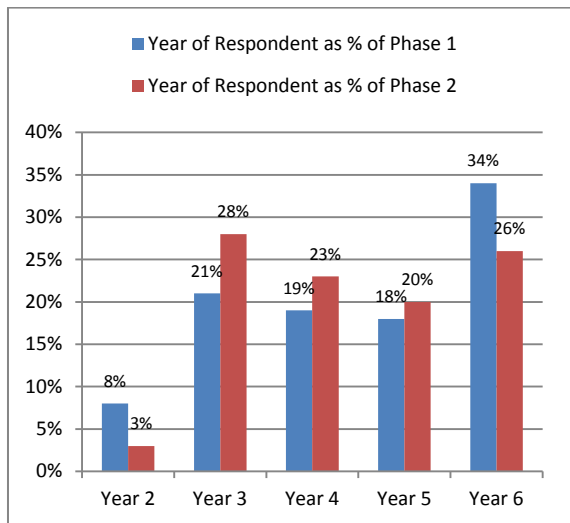


Figure 1.4: Student survey: Year of schooling



NAPLAN reading assessment data

The *Book Bank* program commenced in schools in Semester 2, 2010. It is premature to attempt to draw any conclusions about reading achievement based on NAPLAN data from the schools involved. It is difficult to attribute any gains in reading achievement scores to the *Book Bank* program alone, due to the many factors that may influence student performance.

1.6.3 Data recording and analysis

A total of 32 interviews and focus group sessions in Phase 1 and 30 in Phase 2 were recorded using audio recording and note taking. Field notes and recordings were consolidated into a single record for each interview, which was quality reviewed before analysis commenced.

Systematic coding commenced with an initial set of categories generated from the Terms of Reference and the background document review. Original categories were expanded and refined based on common issues and themes emerging from participants' responses. Counter-examples were sought, with recognition given to dissenting opinions.

The text responses to the teacher survey were included in the consolidated data set for teach phase. The consolidated data amounted to 1691 individual thematic records for Phase 1 and 2207 for Phase 2. This material was used to provide the qualitative evidence used in the evaluation.

1.6.4 Limitations of the methodology

The design of the evaluation was limited by a number of issues that had the potential to affect the data obtained, including:

- the young age of student respondents
- school principal selection of both teacher and student interview participants
- measurement of changes in student performance and behaviours which relied on stakeholder perceptions, as no baseline data was collected prior to the start of the program
- the strong sense of *owing* the program that may lead to favourable comments due the substantial resource provided to the school communities
- measures of reading achievement primarily based on teacher judgement
- multiple variables in operation in each school, including variation in implementation of the program at class and school level.

While the surveys were conducted online at school, supervised by teachers or evaluation officers, younger students may not always have given an accurate response. Students' reading skills were developing and the survey format was unfamiliar to most. However, the surveys did provide an opportunity to collect data from a larger sample of students, providing valuable information about the project. Survey data is presented together with data from interviews.

It is also acknowledged that the data for this evaluation has been drawn from a small number of schools. This limits the ability to generalise of any conclusions to other settings. However, the use of both qualitative and quantitative data provides a rich picture of the pilot program in the participating schools. Findings may resonate with others in similar school settings.

1.6.5 Attribution

A challenge exists in attributing changes in student learning outcomes to *Book Bank* alone, and in isolating any effect of the program from other influences in classrooms and schools.

The evaluation of *Book Bank* was implemented in five schools in five Department regions. Each pilot school was distinctly different, with variations in teacher pedagogy, availability of extra support for reading, and provision of specific literacy programs. Each student's attitude to, and experience of, reading is also unique.

It is a stated feature of *Book Bank* that no formal assessment of student reading is expected as part of the program (refer to Section 2.2, *Features of Book Bank*).

1.7 Presentation of the evaluation findings

Section 2 in Part 1 provides an overview of *Book Bank*, including its goals, major features and details of the program pilot.

Part 2 of the report presents evaluation findings in the following sections:

Section 3: Student outcomes

Section 4: Implementation and management of *Book Bank* in schools

Section 5: Sustainability and scalability of the *Book Bank* program

Section 6: Effectiveness of the partnership

The student and teacher survey results, and interview and observation schedules, are included in two appendices. In Appendix 1, the summary of student responses to questions has used percentages of total respondents to facilitate comparisons and conclusions. The sample (517 students in Phase 1, 526 in Phase 2) was large enough to be representative of all students in DCC *Book Bank* schools.

However, there were only 30 and 19 respondents across the two phases of the evaluation to the teacher surveys, which limits the capacity to support generalisations and conclusions about the teachers in *Book Bank* schools, as a group. Appendix 2 presents the qualitative evaluation schedules used in school visits. The teacher survey responses are presented as numbers of respondents rather than percentages of total respondents, in order to reduce the risk of invalid generalisations being made from the sample.

Unless otherwise indicated, the findings presented in this report represent data gathered from both Phases 1 and 2 of the *Book Bank* evaluation. Where data was consistent from Phase 1 to Phase 2, only the Phase 2 data is shown, representing responses from the entire pilot period.



2. Dymocks Children's Charities *Book Bank* program

Book Bank aimed to '... encourage reading for pleasure, contribute to improved student reading outcomes and complement the Premier's Reading Challenge' (DCC, 2009b).

Book Bank was designed for students in Years 3 to 6. In these years of schooling, students are becoming more independent in their reading and may choose to read more challenging texts.

2.1 Background

Dymocks Children's Charities (DCC) is an Australia wide, tax deductible charity. It raises funds to improve the potential of Australian children through the provision of reading resources and programs which support literacy. DCC is also the principal and founding partner in the *NSW Premier's Reading Challenge* and remains its largest contributor.

In 2009, DCC sought to broaden the scope of its work in NSW to include a literacy program for disadvantaged schools and met with senior officers of DCC and the Department. A program was developed by the managing director of DCC with the specific aims of encouraging reading for pleasure, encouraging participation in the *NSW Premier's Reading Challenge* (PRC) and contributing to improved reading outcomes for students.

The *Book Bank* name was chosen to suggest the building of collections of books both in classrooms for students to swap and share and in students' homes as each book is taken home to keep. Delivery of the program to schools was free, however, schools were required to appoint a manager to support book selection, ordering and distribution.

The Department assisted DCC to pilot the program in five schools in NSW, with implementation beginning in Term 3, 2010. To be included in the pilot, schools had to be part of the Priority Schools Program, show low or no participation in the *NSW Premier's Reading Challenge*, and not be engaged in literacy projects as part of the National Partnerships funding.

2.1.1 Similar programs promoting reading for pleasure

There are several 'reading for pleasure' programs available to NSW government schools. Some are based on a user-pays system, some are embedded in the practices of the school, and some operate outside the school, targeting specific communities to address perceived reading deficits.

Mingara Recreation Club and DCC have been working together since 2006 to resource reading projects in five schools on the NSW Central Coast. In 2010, this program provided a book (to keep) for every student in Kindergarten and Year 1 at the partner schools. Titles were selected from the PRC's new releases list.

Holiday Reading is Rad (DEC, 2010; 2012) is a state level Departmental initiative of the Priority Schools Program (PSP), designed for students from low-SES communities. The aim of the program is to encourage adults to read with children each day of the school holidays, to prevent 'summer fall-off in reading skills'. It provides children's magazines and a reading diary, as well as other promotional material. Teachers assess students' reading using a special-purpose inventory. There is no cost to students or schools.

Books in Homes (2012) is an Australian registered charity. In schools that register for the primary program, students receive nine new books per year, for a fee. In 2012, the fee was \$78.27 per student. Students choose from 12 books in each reading level. *Books in Homes* provides materials and activities to promote reading, such as competitions, book bags, certificates and stickers.

The New Zealand based *Books in Hands* project (Books in Hands, n.d.) collects new and pre-loved books for distribution to children in the Solomon Islands. The books are used for both educational and recreational purposes.

2.1.2 Research supporting the *Book Bank* model

In NSW, the English syllabus focuses on two aspects for the teaching of reading: teaching the skills of reading and teaching how texts are structured by their creators for specific purposes. In Years 3 to 6 texts become longer and the vocabulary is more challenging.

The *Book Bank* program focuses on two key elements: providing free books for students to keep and reading for pleasure. Program managers for DCC and the Department reviewed research to shape their ideas about how the program could do more than just provide free books for school students.

Engagement

Research by Guthrie provides a description of engaged reading as:

“... a merger of motivation and thoughtfulness. Engaged readers seek to understand; they enjoy learning and they believe in their reading abilities. They are mastery oriented, intrinsically motivated, and have self-efficacy.” (Guthrie, 2001, p.1)

Book Bank is designed to promote engagement with reading by giving books to students to read, share and take home to keep.

Sharing

Guthrie's (2001) *'Engagement Model of Reading Development'* is a combination of various theories and research findings. The model identifies 'collaboration' as an instructional priority for promoting reading development. Teachers who engage with *Book Bank* in the classroom encourage students to talk informally about the books they have read (or 'share') with their friends. This helps students choose books to read. *Book Bank* provides stickers so students can record their comments after reading and give feedback to help other students choose a book to read.

Book ownership

Book ownership and reading level are related according to the findings of a study by the National Literacy Trust in the United Kingdom (Clark, Woodley, & Lewis, 2011). The study compared the reading attainment of 5,580 students aged nine to fourteen. They divided the students into three groups according to reading ability: below expected level, at expected level and above expected level. Of the students who had no books of their own, 64% read at or below the expected level, compared to 45% of students who did have books of their own.

Book ownership facilitates multiple readings of a book, unlike books that are borrowed for a set period. Horst, Parsons, & Bryan's (2011) research with 16 three-year-old children, investigated the effect on word acquisition of repeated exposure to a story book. The study demonstrated the difference between reading many books and many readings of the same book. Students recognised new words after encountering them in the same context through successive readings of a single story. Children who had three different stories read to them, with the same new words, failed to learn any of the new words.

Book choice

Turner and Paris (1995) discuss the importance of student choice as a *'powerful motivator'* (p. 664). This applies to both tasks and texts. They referred to the work of Schiefele (1991) who found that when students choose books based on their own interest, they try harder to understand the text. Turner and Paris commented that choice also encourages wider reading as a result of browsing to make a selection.

Book Bank provides students with book catalogues that include fiction and nonfiction titles grouped in levels that link to learning stages from Early Stage 1 to Stage 4 from which they may select their books.

There is an extensive range of books in each catalogue. In Semester 2, 2011 the catalogues listed a total of 313 titles.

Guthrie (2001) commented that “*teachers create contexts for engagement when they provide meaningful choices about what, when, and how to read, and interesting texts that are familiar, vivid, important, and relevant.*” In the *Book Bank* program, teachers assist students in the selection of their books and students are encouraged to read their *Book Bank* books and to choose other *Book Bank* books to read at school and at home.

Reading for enjoyment

Thomson, De Bortoli, Nicholas, Hillman and Buckley, (2011) reviewed the results of the 2009 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) that assessed the reading literacy of a sample of 15 year-old Australian school students. Students’ enjoyment of reading was strongly linked to their reading performance. However, one third of the students who participated reported that they did not read for enjoyment.

Reading for enjoyment is the foundation of the *Book Bank* model. *Book Bank* provides books for students to read for pleasure within the school setting, expanding the supply of books in each class. Books may be taken home to read and swapped when finished.

2.2 Features of *Book Bank*

DCC *Book Bank* was developed to trial a combination of features thought to promote engagement with reading. The model works on three levels:

- books are provided at no charge, are chosen and owned by students
- the program is linked to the social environment of school, with support from teaching professionals
- participation is optional; there is no pressure on students to participate and no formal assessment of their reading is required at any stage.

2.2.1 Provision of books

The concept of the *Book Bank* was to give every student in Years 3 to 6 in each school, one book per term for a period of two school years (eight terms).

The *Book Bank* program comprised the following key features:

- Students chose two books prior to the beginning of a semester (one for each term) from one of four age-graded catalogues.
- The school-based *Book Bank* team assisted students with book selection, ordering and distribution.
- Books were available at school during the term, to be read and swapped with others.
- An additional five books were provided each term to add to each class’s book bank, to enable additional swapping opportunities.
- Students took their books home to keep at the end of the term or semester.
- Posters and book stickers are provided to support swapping and sharing.

Catalogues

Book Bank enabled students to select from four catalogues graded according to stage: K to Year 2, Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4), Stage 3 (Years 5 and 6) and Stage 4 (Years 7 and 8).

The DCC program manager decided to base the catalogue on the latest releases included in the NSW *Premier’s Reading Challenge* booklists. The list was compiled by the Department and sent to DCC in October each year. The *Book Bank* catalogue includes only books that are available in reasonable numbers.

There were four catalogues, which matched the levels used by the *PRC*. Books in each catalogue were organised alphabetically by title, accompanied by an image of the cover and a brief description. The catalogues were identified using only letters A to D. Table 2.1 shows the number of books students could choose from for each semester.

Table 2.1: Numbers of books offered to students per semester (Source: Dymocks Children’s Charities)

Grade:	K-2	3-4	5-6	7-9	TOTAL
Terms 3 & 4, 2010	82	122	186	51	441
Terms 1 & 2, 2011	53	99	86	89	327
Terms 3 & 4, 2011	51	91	89	82	313
Terms 1 & 2, 2012	93	91	130	77	391

Ordering

Book orders were completed twice a year, prior to the beginning of a new semester. Each school received a spreadsheet of the new catalogue titles to facilitate ordering.

Students selected two books at a time, each semester. In some schools, Stage 3 students entered their own choices into the spreadsheet supplied by the DCC program manager. The school *Book Bank* manager collated the orders submitted by class teachers, and forwarded them to Dymocks Children's Charities for processing.

2.2.2 Social environment

Book Bank books were seen as distinct from books borrowed from libraries in general because:

- they were owned by students rather than by the school
- they were swapped and shared within the classroom, between peers.

Swapping and sharing

Schools were encouraged to facilitate student engagement with reading by promoting the swapping of *Book Bank* books with classmates, and encouraging sharing sessions between students.

The program was developed with an understanding that books should be kept in the classroom and made available for reading and swapping during the school term. *Book Bank* books could be taken home to read, and returned and swapped. Each class received five extra books each term to maintain a reasonable range of choice for swapping.

Support materials included a *Book Bank* borrowing poster and book stickers for use in swapping books. Students’ fabric *Book Bank* bags were designed to promote care of books when they were taken home to read.

Book Bank stickers

Students were encouraged to write a comment on the sticker located in the front of each book. Stickers could be used to guide peers when making their reading selections or when ordering a book of their own.

2.3 Implementing the pilot

The five pilot schools were selected to participate in the project from a short list of schools supplied by the Department’s Priority Schools team. Principals received a letter from the Department confirming their acceptance into the pilot and providing details of the program. As part of their participation in the *Book Bank* schools were expected to:

- nominate and support school *Book Bank* managers (two or more Stage 3 students)

- form a small organisational team consisting of a parent or community member, a school staff member (teacher, teacher librarian or member of school executive) and Stage 3 students
- [ensure students] become active participants in all aspects of the program, from book choice, to swapping and sharing
- plan and implement activities involving their communities, other schools and the Dymocks Children’s Charities *Book Bank* Ambassadors, in which the program is promoted, books are presented and student reading is recognised and rewarded
- participate in the evaluation to measure the impact of the pilot.

Each school was provided with information about the processes of ordering and distribution of books, and support for class activities.

2.3.1 *Book Bank* teams in schools

The school *Book Bank* team was provided with an outline of the various roles in an information booklet developed by the DCC manager. It was intended that selected Stage 3 students would be responsible for management of the program, including promotion across the school community, helping other students select books, book ordering and distribution. They were to be involved in events such as the launch of *Book Bank*. It was envisaged that the role would contribute to the development of student leadership skills.

Student *Book Bank* team members were to be supported by a teacher contact person and a member of the school community, who would be responsible for communication within their area of influence.

According to the Department’s program manager, the inclusion of students needed to be a school focus:

“You needed a teacher who was really committed to giving those students leadership opportunities.”

2.3.2 Funding

The DCC Program manager actively sourced funds for the books through grant applications, corporate sponsorship and fundraising activities. Funding for the pilot program aligned with the objectives of DCC, which include ‘helping kids in need’ (DCC, 2009a).

At the annual fundraising event for 2012, DCC offered potential sponsors a package valued at \$10 000, which would provide books through the *Book Bank* program to eligible schools with up to 200 students enrolled in Years 3 to 6.

The Department supported the *Book Bank* program in two ways:

- officers fulfilled the role of program manager as part of their support for curriculum in NSW schools
- pilot schools contributed time and resources to ensure the program ran smoothly.

The Department also funded the evaluation of the pilot program.

2.3.3 Launching the *Book Bank*

A community event was used to launch *Book Bank* in each school. DCC enlisted ‘ambassadors’ to help launch the program and encourage students to read. One ambassador handed out autographed bookmarks printed with a reminder about the importance of reading: ‘*Reading makes you smart.*’

Two school communities used video conference facilities to enable an ambassador to launch the program, owing to problems with distance. In some cases, media attended the launch and the event was publicised in local newspapers.

Part 2 Evaluation findings

This section presents the findings of the program evaluation, addressing each of the Terms of Reference of the evaluation, and presenting issues that emerged through data collection.

There are interrelationships between many of the themes that emerged from the data. For this reason, the evaluation findings include themes that were common across groups, even when the data set for these is small.

3. Student outcomes

All stakeholders were asked about the impact on student engagement with reading and reading achievement that resulted from participation in the *Book Bank* pilot. The findings are presented below.

3.1 Student engagement

Book Bank was designed to increase engagement with reading among primary school students, through the provision of quality books that the students choose and keep as their own. Findings related to enhanced student engagement with reading are set out in the following two sections:

- demonstrations of enhanced student engagement with reading
- discussion of the features of the *Book Bank* model that contribute to enhanced engagement.



3.1.1 Enhanced student engagement with reading

Across all sources, the evaluation findings suggest that increased student engagement with books and reading was the most significant benefit of the *Book Bank* program and that this was maintained across the life of the pilot.

Reading engagement is demonstrated by:

- enjoyment and interest in reading
- student enthusiasm for *Book Bank* sessions, or the arrival of new books
- frequency of reading [*Book Bank*] books reading for longer periods.

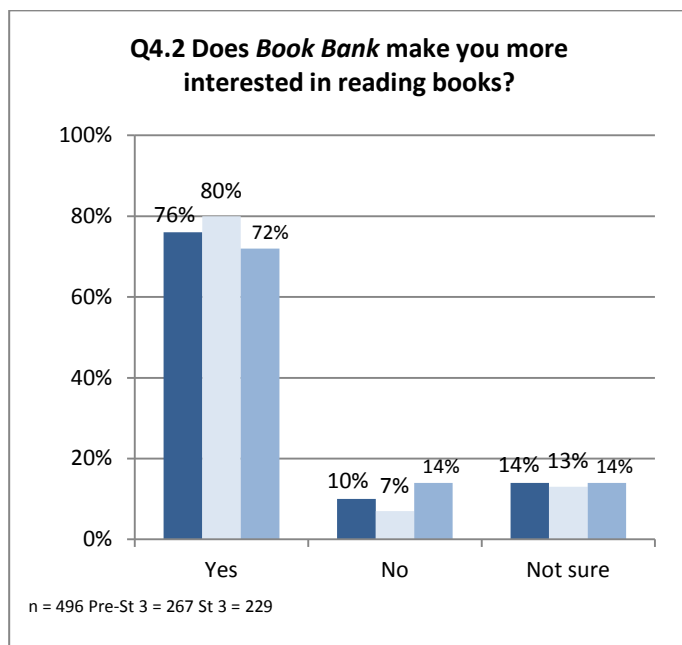
Enjoyment and interest

In the student survey and during interviews, almost all students indicated that they had enjoyed reading the books from *Book Bank*. This was summed up by one student who said that:

“Book Bank means: read for fun.”

Figure 3.1 shows student responses to the question of whether participation in *Book Bank* made them more interested in reading. Results are shown by learning stage, with approximately three-quarters of students reporting increased interest across all groups in both phases.

Figure 3.1: Student survey: Impact of the program on reading interest



Increased enjoyment was strongly reported by teachers in interviews and the teacher surveys, in both phases, where 100% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that students' attitudes to reading have improved since the introduction of *Book Bank*.

All interviewed principals gave examples of the positive impact of *Book Bank* on reading behaviours. They observed that *Book Bank* fostered reading as a form of recreation and that it added to *“that fabric of richness”* around reading in the school.

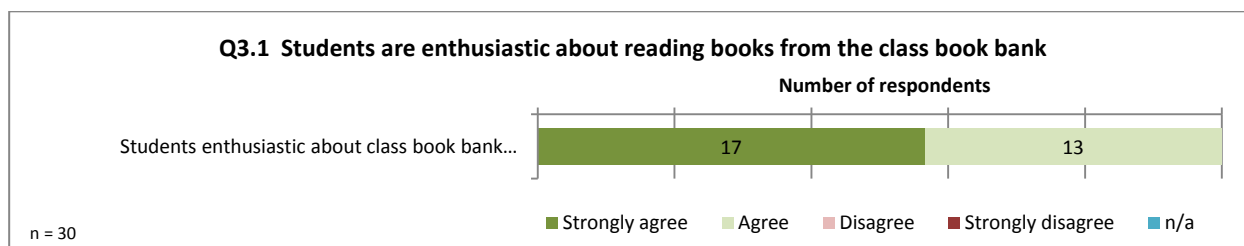
When interviewed, most parents reported an increase in interest in reading attributed to their child receiving books from *Book Bank*. One parent commented:

“My boy’s attitude has changed altogether because now he picks up novels and reads them cover to cover without me sitting over [him].”

Student enthusiasm for *Book Bank* program

Many students responded in the survey that they thought that *Book Bank* made reading fun, with 77% responding positively to a statement to that effect. All respondents to the teacher survey agreed that their students showed enthusiasm for reading books from the class book bank, as shown in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2: Teacher survey: Student enthusiasm (Phase 1)



This level of enthusiasm for reading was maintained for students' own books and classmates' books through Phase 2 of the evaluation.

Twenty-three out of 30 teachers in Phase 1 and 16 out of 19 in Phase 2 also reported that students demonstrated increased self-initiated reading for pleasure. They reported that students increasingly sought opportunities to read in class: when they finished their work; during silent reading time; and, according to one teacher, *"whenever they get the chance"*. For some students this was a new effect. In interviews, several teachers described the strong sense of anticipation shown by students about the arrival of the next book.

In all classes visited, the evaluation team observed a high level of engagement with reading books from *Book Bank*. Enthusiasm was not limited to books the students chose for themselves, but included books that other students had enjoyed and recommended. One teacher commented:

"Children who are not usually keen on reading are actually recommending books to each other."

Some parents and teachers talked about students who enjoyed reading and read frequently before the *Book Bank* program was introduced. These students enjoyed *Book Bank* because it provided further opportunities to read. One student, who identified himself as liking books and reading, commented:

"I don't usually go out and buy [books]. So getting a book each term has sort of helped me increase my love of reading."

In contrast to these very positive responses, teachers identified a number of students for whom the program made little, if any difference. One parent also described her son's limited engagement with books, attributed to by the difficulty he had in sitting still and reading, including books from *Book Bank*.

Reading frequency

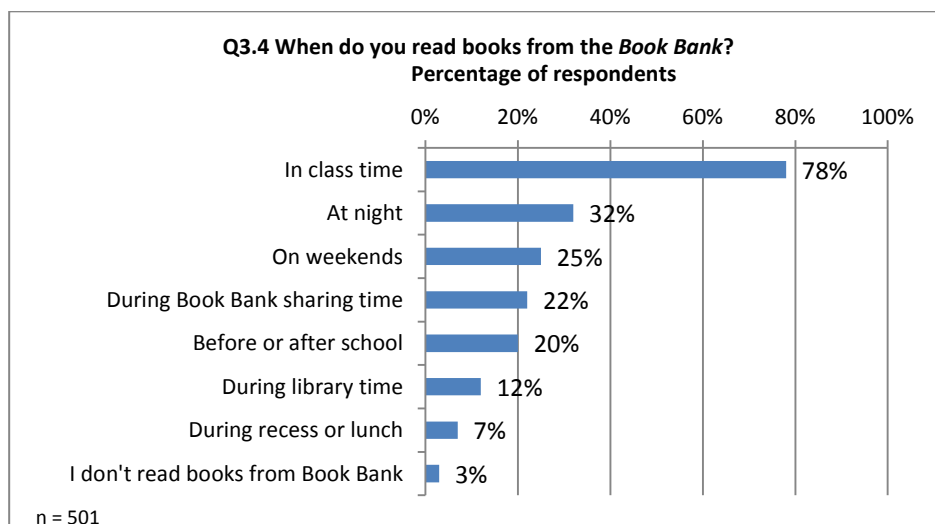
Increased engagement may be demonstrated by an increase in how frequently students read by choice. In the survey, students were asked to identify when they read their *Book Bank* books. As shown in Figure 3.3, 78% of students reported reading their books at school, in class time. Students also reported reading their books outside school hours, with 20% of students selecting *'before or after school'* and a quarter saying they read on weekends. One student interviewed commented:

"Book Bank encourages us and helps us. Ever since Book Bank started I have been reading more each day after dinner and at bedtime, as well as in the car."

Another student commented on the overall number of books that students received as part of the program.

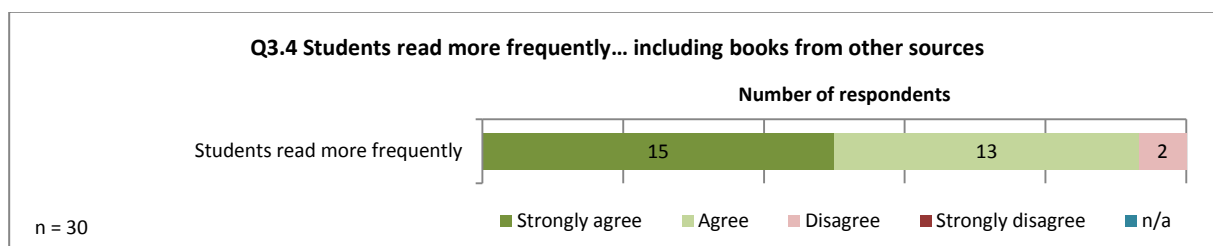
"You get to read a lot more books. Usually you'd have to save up... You get more books in your life and you get to read more."

Figure 3.3: Student survey: Times when *Book Bank* books are read



In the teacher survey, almost all respondents agreed that students are reading more frequently since *Book Bank* was introduced, as shown in Figure 3.4. This included books from all sources.

Figure 3.4: Teacher survey: Student reading frequency (Phase 1)



Principals recounted seeing a definite increase in the number of students reading, especially in the playground before school. All interviewed parents agreed that their children were reading more at home.

More than one teacher suggested that a possible reason for the increase in reading frequency may be the popularity of books that are part of a series.

Sustained focus on reading

In interviews, teachers remarked on improved student participation in class literacy activities such as writing book reviews, talking about authors and silent reading time, as a result of the introduction of *Book Bank*.

Parents commented on how their children’s reading habits have changed. One parent commented that *Book Bank* encouraged children to have a wider interest in things. Another remarked:

“Now she is an avid reader. Now I can’t talk to her because she tells me to let her read.”

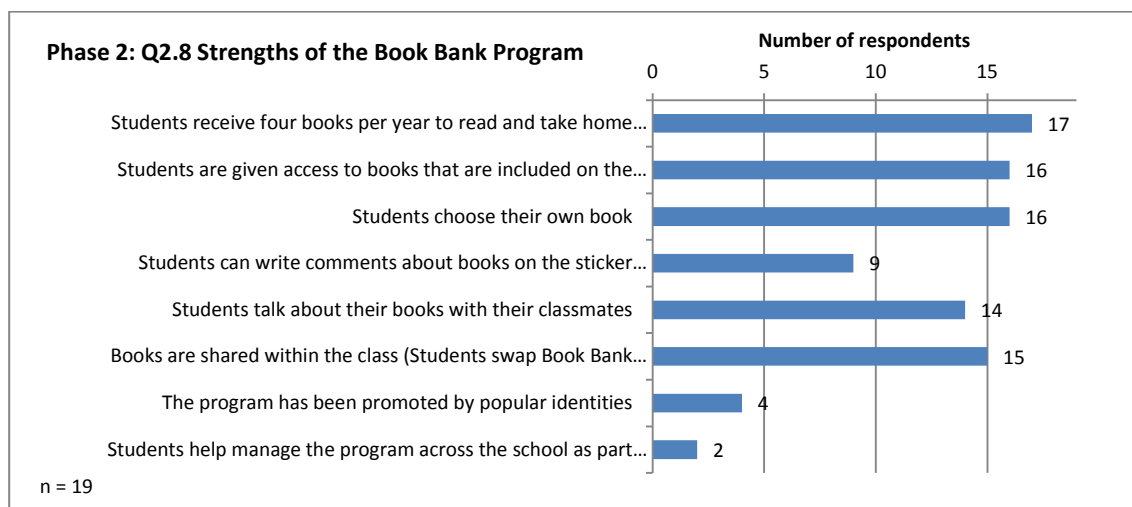
3.1.2 Features of the *Book Bank* model that contribute to enhanced engagement

The design of *Book Bank* is based on three key ideas:

- student book choice
- student book ownership
- social interaction facilitated by class activities where students swap and share books.

The evaluation sought to determine if these features of the program contributed to enhanced student engagement with reading. Figure 3.5 shows teachers' identification of the major strengths of the program.

Figure 3.5: Teacher survey: Strengths of the *Book Bank* program



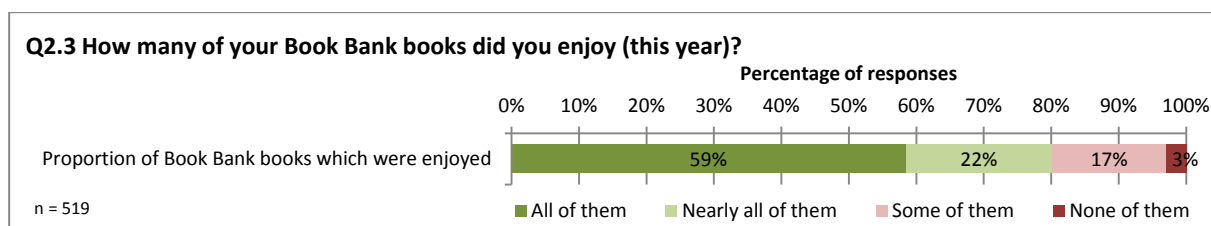
In both phases of the evaluation the teacher survey and subsequent interview data confirmed the strength of the program's key features: book ownership; student book choice; and sharing. In 2012 teachers also ranked highly the fact that the books were drawn from the *NSW Premier's Reading Challenge* booklists.

Student book choice

Many students stated that they liked reading their *Book Bank* books because they were allowed to choose them themselves. When asked about why he liked the books provided through the program, one student commented *"...because they're not chosen by your teacher. You choose it yourself"*. Another stated that the best thing about *Book Bank* was being able to pick and order the books they wanted. All stakeholders talked about the excitement and enthusiasm students showed when choosing their books.

Almost all students reported enjoying at least some of the books they chose. More than 80% reported enjoying most or all of the books they chose, as shown in Figure 3.6.

Figure 3.6: Student survey: Proportion of *Book Bank* books which were enjoyed

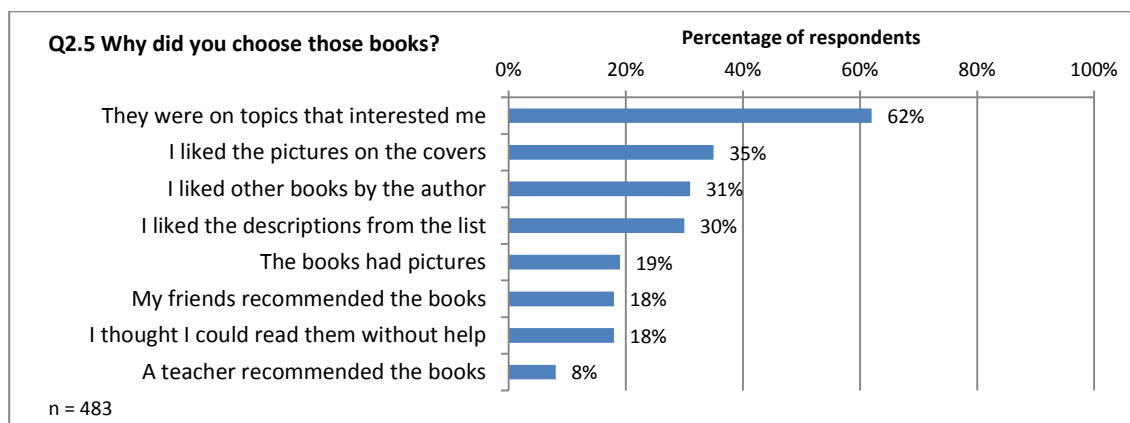


Students were able to articulate the types of books and authors that they liked, and what was popular in their class or grade. However, one participant recognised that it was possible to make a *"wrong choice"*. He was quick to add that it wasn't a problem because:

"If you don't like your choice, you can read another book [from Book Bank]."

As shown in Figure 3.7, survey responses indicate that the majority of students chose books that were about topics that interested them. Recommendations, especially from teachers, were not as important as features of the books such as the cover, author, or the catalogue description.

Figure 3.7: Student survey: Reasons for book choice



Most surveyed teachers rated student book choice highly as a strength of the program, and attributed it with boosting reader engagement. It was second only, but almost equal to, the fact that students receive four books a year to keep (refer to Figure 3.5). More than a third of comments in the teacher survey emphasised the value of student choice.

In some cases, especially early on in the program, teachers did not allow students to choose their own books, as discussed in Section 4.1.3. The Department’s program manager recalled one student who was dissatisfied because the teacher had chosen the book:

“I remember a situation where a teacher had chosen a boring, low level book and the student wasn’t interested [in reading it].”

At one school, a teacher described the way some students worked together when selecting their books, organising themselves to choose a range of titles that they were all interested in. In this way, they were all able to read more than one book of their choice, each term. The teacher described the process:

“In my class there are friendship groups among the boys. They organise what books to order so over the term they all get to read the books they wanted.”

Across all the interviews there were only positive comments about the variety of books chosen by students. The catalogue offered new authors and books that were different to class texts. One student stated that *Book Bank* offered books *“you wouldn’t normally find in a library”*. Another teacher commented that *Book Bank* enabled students to choose *“outside the square”*.

The Department’s program managers commented that teachers’ feedback about students’ choices surprised them. *Book Bank* was seen to help teachers discover what students are interested in reading. A school *Book Bank* manager put it this way:

“It’s given teachers a broader idea of what sorts of interests their kids have got.”

Several teachers commented in interviews, that allowing students to choose their own books led to a greater commitment to reading. The link between liking a book and liking reading was also expressed by students. One student made it clear:

“I think not many people in my class really liked reading before Book Bank but they’ve become a bit more interested because they got the book they liked.”

In interviews, all parents highlighted the value of children choosing their books in encouraging their children to read. Many were aware that their children were promoting reading amongst themselves by talking about their books, both at school and at home. One parent commented that:

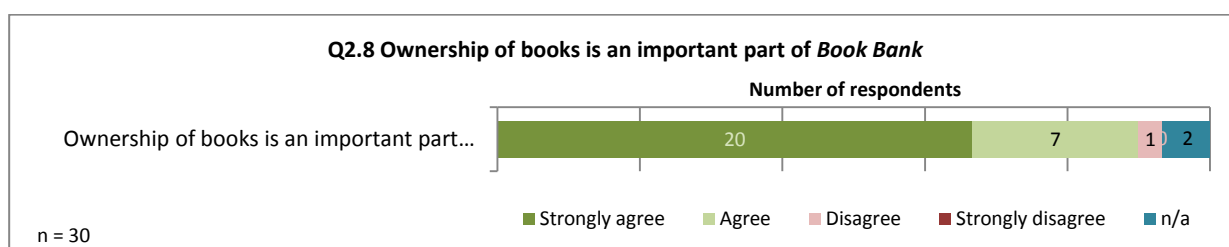
“They love bringing the books home and having a look at them. They have the opportunity to look and choose. They really love it.”

Another parent explained that *Book Bank* made a difference not only by increasing the time her daughter spent reading, but that she now reads *“different books”*. Across the interviews, parents, teachers and principals were all pleased that *Book Bank* was broadening students’ reading preferences.

Book ownership

Throughout the interviews and surveys, participants consistently indicated the importance to students of book ownership. Teachers identified the lack of ubiquitous access to books as a barrier to engagement with reading for at least some of their students. Twenty-seven out of 30 respondents viewed the provision of books for students ‘to read and take home to keep’ as an important part of the program, as shown in Figure 3.8. Similarly, in Phase 2, 17 out the 19 teacher survey respondents named “Students receive a book they can keep” as one of the most important aspects of *Book Bank*.

Figure 3.8: Teacher survey: Ownership of books is important (Phase 1)



Groups of parents and teachers each made comments about how owning the books, and having them at home, provides opportunities for students to read whenever they choose. They commented on students’ very positive attitudes to their books and how ownership makes them choose carefully and handle the books with care. One parent described this behaviour as *“that treasuring of books”*. According to one school *Book Bank* manager:

“It’s just been fantastic especially for those lower SES kids. It’s been such an absolute gift, the way they care for them. They are so protective of their books.”

Parents and students described how *Book Bank* books were stored in set places at home, most commonly in the child’s own room. For some students this was a new experience.

“In this area kids don’t have a lot of disposable income. All of a sudden these kids have four books each year, a collection of books that they’ve chosen [and] they cherish.”

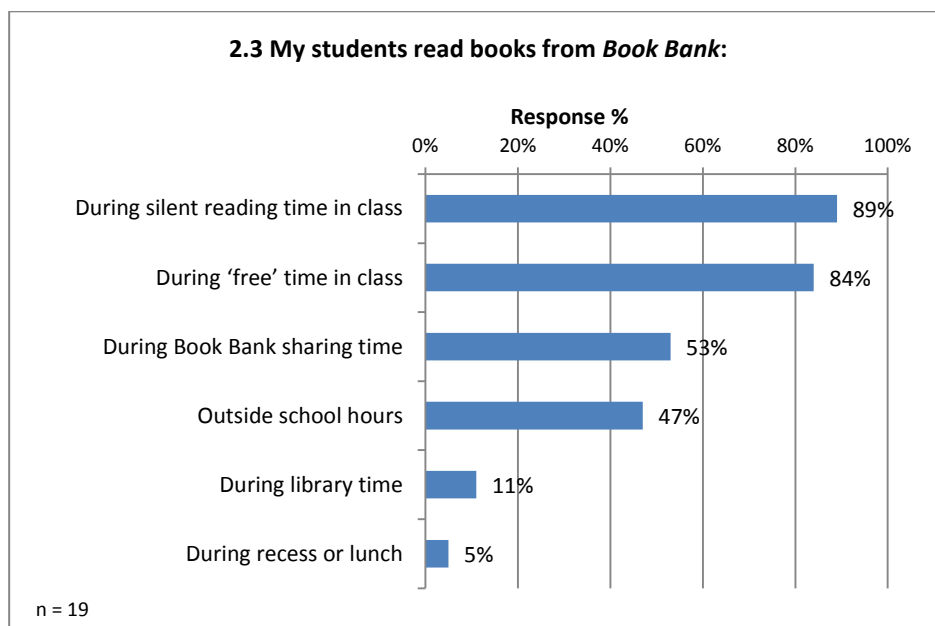
An unexpected result, and the only downside of these feelings, was that some students worried about their new book being damaged and found it difficult to swap with others.

Class activities

Participating teachers used *Book Bank* books for a variety of activities including literacy groups, writing book reviews, discussions about authors, contract reading activities and for homework activities. Class observations and discussion in teacher interviews indicated that teachers most frequently used *Book Bank* books for silent reading. This remained the case across the life of the pilot. The Department’s program manager related how one school had reinstated silent reading time because *“the students wanted it when they had Book Bank books to read”*. She similarly recounted teachers’ reports that students in schools were reading *“more often and more regularly”*.

As shown in Figure 3.9, teacher survey results consistently indicated that most students read their *Book Bank* books at school. Many students surveyed also reported reading their books at home.

Figure 3.9: Student survey: When students read *Book Bank* books



Several teachers commented that it was important to keep the books at school to facilitate swapping.

Two features of the program were designed to promote social interaction around reading: students sharing their reading experiences, and swapping books with classmates.

Sharing books

Sharing, where students discussed their responses to their *Book Bank* books, took place both formally and informally in most classes. Sharing was the social aspect of *Book Bank* that built relationships between students, and between teachers and students, and was commented upon positively by all stakeholders. Some sample comments include:

"The physical reading of books hasn't changed but maybe some of the stuff around it has, [especially] the exchange of books. Perhaps they talk a bit more about books amongst themselves." (Parent)

"They're actually telling each other – 'This is really good. When I've finished this you should read it'." (Teacher)

"They share opinions and are genuinely interested in what is 'hot' and what is not." (Teacher)

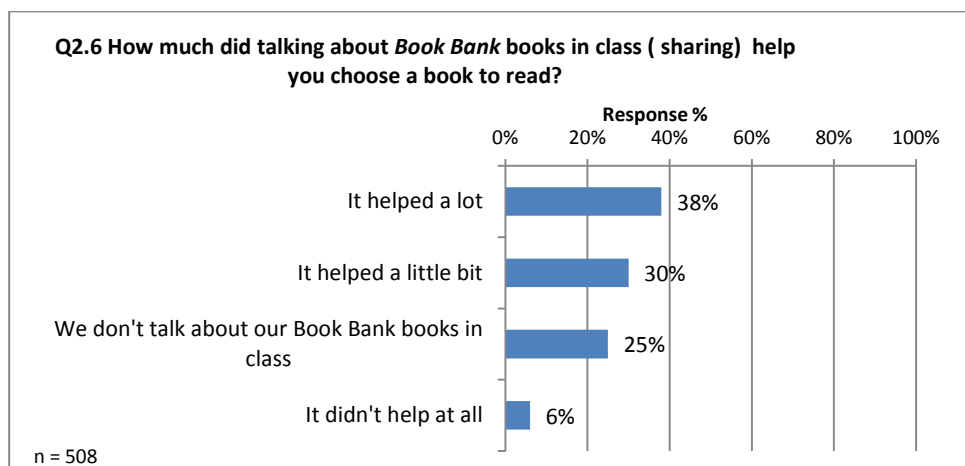
Often teachers initiated formal opportunities for students to talk about the book they were reading, ranging from simple sharing sessions at the end of silent reading, to more structured written book reviews, or discussions about particular authors and titles beyond the *Book Bank* books.

Year 6 students at one school shared their books by reading to Kindergarten students. One teacher responded to the student's interest in the books, explaining *"[the students] wanted to talk about their books"*, so she established formal sharing sessions where students talked about the books they liked and didn't like.

In the student survey (Phase 1), 72% of students agreed that sharing information and opinions about their books increased their interest in reading.

Many students confirmed that talking about books often occurred informally as they made choices of books to swap or choose from the catalogue, as shown in Figure 3.10. The majority of students surveyed (68%) agreed that sharing in class helped them choose a book to read.

Figure 3.10: Student survey: Talking about books (sharing) and choosing a book



Sometimes books were swapped because the book owner had 'shared' and promoted the book to other students.

A couple of students indicated in their interview that they would be interested in sharing beyond the school. They were interested in the experiences of students at the other *Book Bank* schools. One suggested that it would be good to know which books were the *"top ten picks!"* across all pilot classes. The other wanted *Book Bank* to *"be on the internet"* so students could *"keep track of books people chose, like on YouTube"*.

One school *Book Bank* manager highlighted the social function of *Book Bank*, reporting that students were keen to swap books their peers had read:

"[Sharing means that] if one person reads a book and likes it, you will find out that their five friends have read it too."

Swapping books

Once students have read their own *Book Bank* book, they are encouraged to swap their book with a classmate or borrow from the class book bank. Swapping was a feature of the *Book Bank* program that clearly distinguishes it from other reading or book purchase programs.

Swapping books again brought students into a social setting where reading became a shared interest. One teacher described students sharing *"interests around similar themes and particular characters"*. Swapping was also a back-up for students who found it hard to choose a book for themselves.

Swapping books was often discussed in the student interviews. Students indicated that they felt a commitment to read the books, especially when the swapped book belonged to a friend or classmate. Students who chose 'good' books were recognised by their peers. Some students swapped books directly with others without returning the book to the class book bank. Frequently students organised among themselves who would get their book next. In some situations, the books became almost a currency that was traded eagerly.

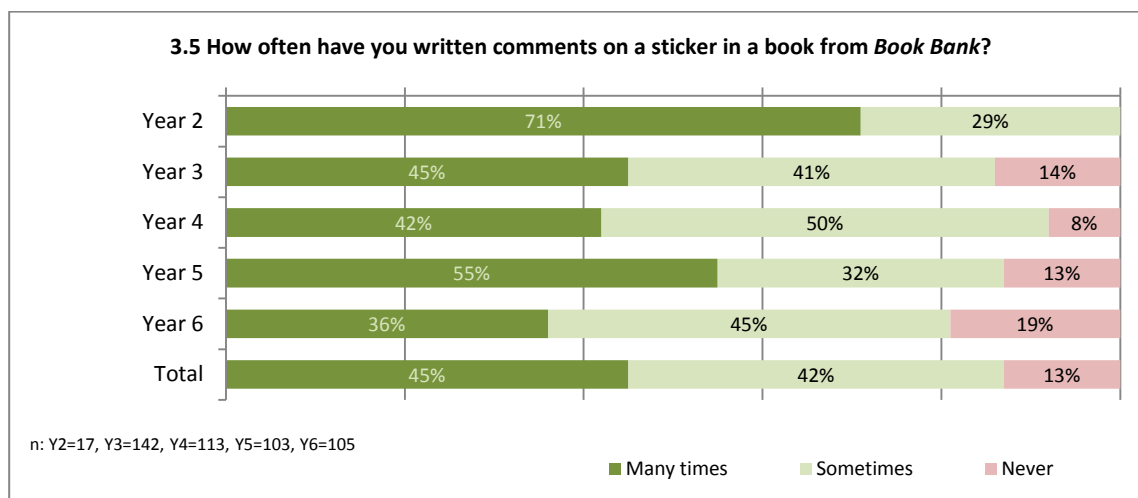
Some students spoke of the obligation to take care of their friends' books. One parent recognised this and commented that *Book Bank* promoted, *"responsibility towards books of other people"*.

Further details about the frequency of swapping *Book Bank* books and who supports students to swap may be found in Section 4.1.3.

Book Bank stickers

Stickers were provided in the front of each book. Students were encouraged to write their opinions of the books they read. While writing comments is optional, the student survey results indicated that most students chose to write comments at least sometimes, as shown in Figure 3.11.

Figure 3.11: Student survey: Frequency of *Book Bank* sticker comments



Students indicated that they value the stickers for a variety of reasons, including:

“... it tells you who read the book.”

“... it helps the teacher know what books you’re into.”

“... when other students look at the comments it makes them want to read it more.”

“... you can look back through your book and see what other people thought.”

“... at the end of the year you can see what the popular book is.”

Comparison of Phase 1 and Phase 2 data indicated that interest in reading the comments on the stickers was maintained over time, with 87% of respondents answering positively, across the range of school stages.

While they were popular with most students, not everyone wrote on the book stickers. Interview responses provided possible reasons for not using the comment sticker. One student explained that other students don’t get to read his book because *“I get longer books and it takes a while for me to read (them)”*. Another suggested that *“sometimes people forgot”*.

One parent explained that:

“My daughter really likes not having to write a comment.”

Another parent mentioned that her daughter thought it would be good to write comments online to share with other schools.

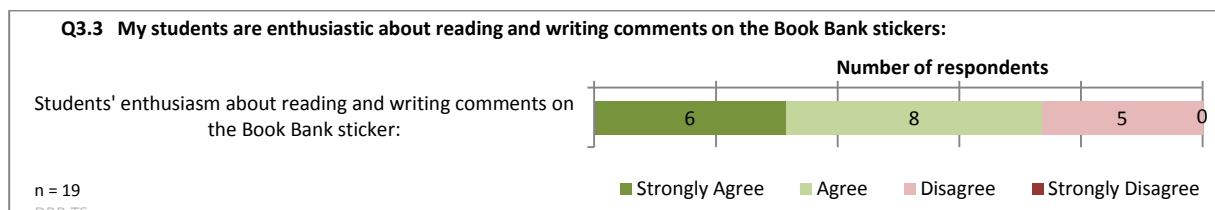
The Department’s program manager admitted that initially she had been *“concerned about what the students would write”*. However, during a school visit, one student spoke to her about the comments on the sticker in her *Book Bank* book:

“[She] said it was like her Year 6 farewell book ‘because I have all these memories of my friends who have read this book with me’.”

Teachers reported that there were only rare instances of inappropriate or silly comments being written on the stickers, and a reminder to students quickly resolved the problem.

Several interviewed teachers commented about how much students liked both writing and reading the comments, whether they said the book was good or bad. Fourteen out of 19 surveyed teachers agreed or strongly agreed that students were enthusiastic about the use of stickers to read and write comments as shown in Figure 3.12.

Figure 3.12: Teacher survey: Students' enthusiasm for *Book Bank* stickers



One principal acknowledged that there was a *“bit of competition”* about how many names a student had on the sticker in their book.

Features of *Book Bank* books

The books themselves were frequently mentioned as contributing to students' enthusiasm for the program. Three particular features of the books emerged as important across the pilot schools: the fact that the books were new, of high quality and were seen to be a gift.

New books: the experience of receiving a new book was unusual for many students. One student commented that she would be devastated if *Book Bank* ended because:

“At home I read but I haven't got new books. Book Bank is my only chance of getting new books.”

According to teachers, the fact that the books were new, and often new releases, increased their value to the students, and motivated students to read.

Quality books: parents were impressed that *Book Bank* was providing 'good books', just as teachers appreciated the quality of the books available in the catalogue. According to one principal:

“To have quality literature going into their classrooms that they are excited about is totally different.”

The gift of a book: students were aware that the books provided by *Book Bank* were free. There was excitement at receiving each book because it was viewed as a gift. One teacher commented on this generosity:

“Children are excited to be choosing their own text and at the generosity of the program – [it created] amazing engagement levels.”

3.2 Student achievement

The effects of *Book Bank* on reading engagement were addressed in Section 3.1. Research around learning achievement suggests that increased levels of reading have a positive impact on student learning outcomes (Guthrie, 2001; Clark, Woodley & Lewis, 2011).

This section presents findings related to the impact of *Book Bank* on student learning achievement in reading, including motivation and confidence, reading skills, and aspects of achievement in speaking, spelling, vocabulary, writing.

In the majority of classes, *Book Bank* operated in conjunction with the class literacy program. In particular, *Book Bank* supported silent or independent reading both at school and at home.

3.2.1 Reading motivation and confidence

Teachers were asked in both interviews and surveys if, in their professional judgement, the addition of *Book Bank* has had an impact on reading behaviours. As shown in Figures 3.13 and 3.14, the most commonly reported impacts, in both Phase 1 and 2 were:

- students’ self-initiated reading for pleasure
- students selecting more complex and varied reading materials
- increased participation and self-confidence shown in class reading activities.

Figure 3.13: Teacher survey: Impact of *Book Bank* on students’ reading behaviours (Phase 1)

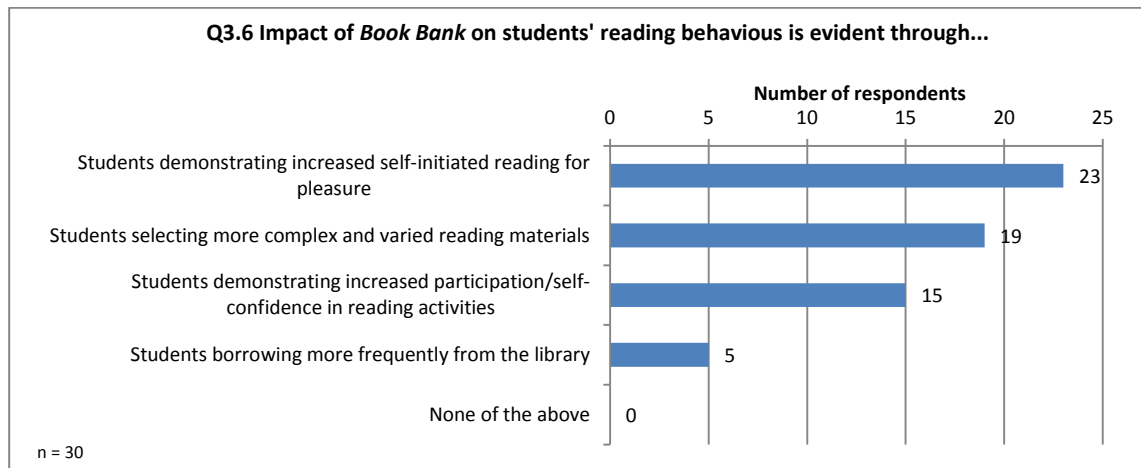
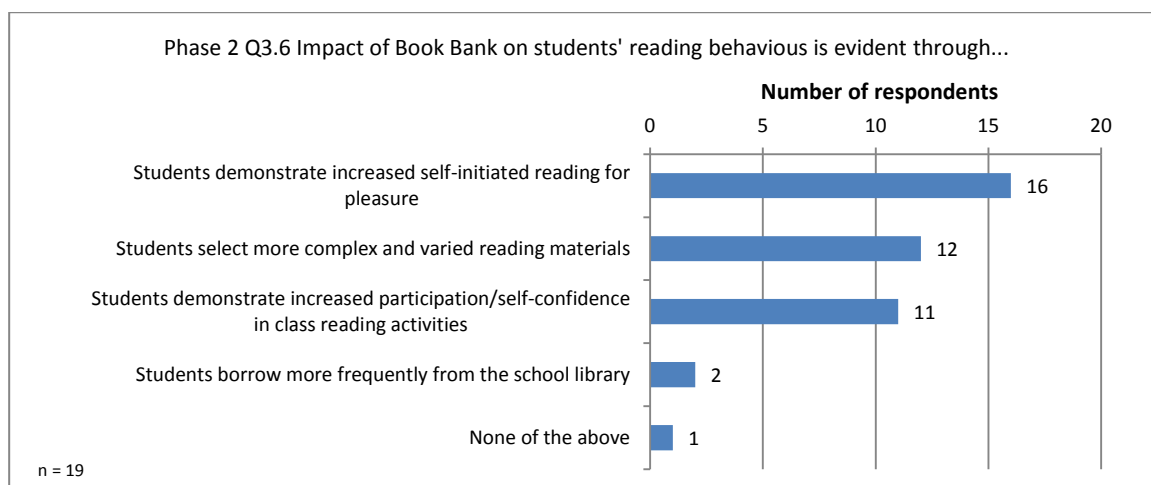


Figure 3.14: Teacher survey: Impact of *Book Bank* on students’ reading behaviours (Phase 2)



Teachers commented that students were choosing to read more challenging texts for pleasure; often texts above their instructional level. One teacher commented on the sharing aspect of the program as an indicator of increased student confidence:

“They have confidence to recommend a book. Even to have those conversations about ‘This is really a great book.’ They are confident in their approach to reading.”

Another teacher described how *Book Bank* had helped two of her ‘most reluctant readers’. Before long, they wanted to organise *Book Bank* in the classroom. The teacher summed it up as follows:

“For them, now, because they can read, they can get loud and proud.”

Several students also indicated that the *Book Bank* increased their motivation to read. The following quotes from students highlight the value of having interesting books available in classrooms:

“You are getting really good books for free each term. That’s what is encouraging other students to read.”

“I wouldn’t be motivated to read as much because I would probably forget to bring something to read.”

Increased participation in reading, according to one student interviewed, is due to increased confidence achieved through having books to read at home:

“You practise at home and get in and have a go, then in class you won’t be afraid that the class will laugh at you when you make a mistake.”

Parents too commented on the motivating effects of the variety of the books provided, with one parent explaining:

“... since they’ve got that range he’s now getting into reading. It was a novel, a chapter [book] and he read it from start to finish, which twelve months ago he’d never [do]. He just wouldn’t have done that. He just wasn’t interested.”

3.2.2 Reading skills

Students were asked in their interviews whether *Book Bank* was helping them become better readers. They identified skills they were using more frequently, since participation in the program, including decoding, fluency and comprehension:

“To improve you read (books) a puny bit harder than you usually do.”

“Reading more helps.”

“I’m a little bit faster at reading and after a couple of tries I get the words quicker and easier.”

“It has [helped] with being able to understand the text. Now that I am reading big chapter books ... I can understand it word by word and I don’t have to ask, ‘What does this mean?’”

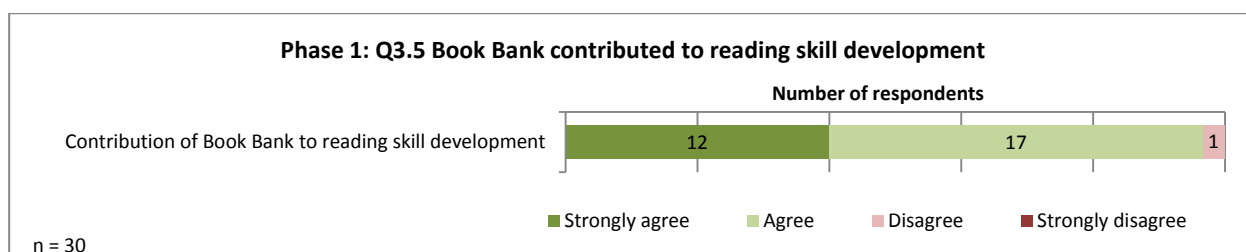
Comments made by parents during interviews also attributed improvement in reading skills to participation in *Book Bank*:

“His reading has improved that much he’s above the benchmark now whereas when he first started he was below it.”

“After that [participation in Book Bank] she is a good reader now and she reads very fast.”

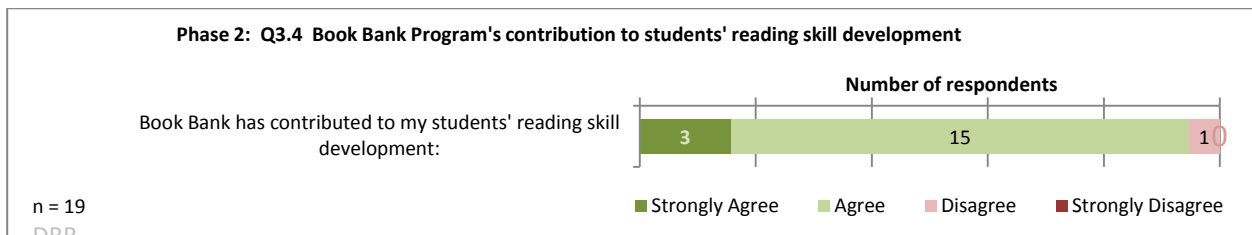
Survey results, shown in Figures 3.15 and Figure 3.16, reveal that nearly all teachers agreed that *Book Bank* contributed to students’ reading skill development throughout both Phase 1 and Phase 2.

Figure 3.15: Teacher survey: Contribution of *Book Bank* to reading skill development (Phase 1)



Initial enthusiasm for the effects of *Book Bank*, as reported in Phase 1, was somewhat tempered by Phase 2 data collection, as shown in Figure 3.16.

Figure 3.16: Teacher survey: Contribution of *Book Bank* to reading skill development (Phase 2)



In follow-up interviews teachers reported that *Book Bank* supports English syllabus outcomes and complements existing class programs. Teacher described:

“It blends well with our Focus on Reading [program]. It has connected [students] to those strategies and they use them [when reading] on their own.”

“...the kids’ reading skills and interest has grown considerably”

In addition to general comments about enhanced reading skills, individual teachers reported specific improvements in reading comprehension skills, oral reading and self-selection of books at an appropriate reading level.

Comprehension

Improvement in comprehension skills was frequently mentioned, and one teacher highlighted this by adding *“especially as [students] are choosing harder texts”*. *Book Bank* was seen as a resource where students were challenging themselves with more demanding books.

Oral reading

While development of oral reading skills was not a focus of the evaluation, reading with improved expression was mentioned by both parents and students as an outcome of *Book Bank* participation.

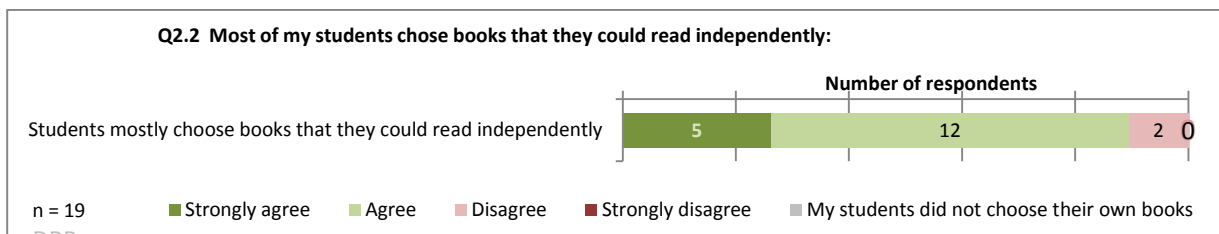
One parent mentioned that she thought the program had assisted her son to improve his oral reading:

“He feels more confident. He has a stutter and since he started reading and loving the reading he’s more confident when he’s reading.”

Reading level

One of the important aspects of successfully teaching reading is ensuring students have access to texts at the correct instructional level. Teachers made individual decisions about which catalogues to provide to their students. Almost all teachers in both phase surveys confirmed that their students had chosen a book they could read independently. Responses from Phase 2, shown in Figure 3.17 were consistent with earlier Phase 1 results.

Figure 3.17: Teacher survey: Students chose books they could read independently



One teacher reported that:

“Our top readers are choosing Stage 4 books. It’s great for them because they know where their level is.”

One student commented that even though the chosen book was too hard, *“I would ask Dad [to read it to me]”*. On the other hand, at least one teacher reported instances where students *“gave up when it got difficult”*.

In one school, teachers ensured students received a book they could read by organising an exchange if necessary. Similarly, some Year 3 students had been able to *“cross class swap”* because their book was too easy. According to one parent, an advantage of *Book Bank* was that it provided *“benefits for students with all levels of reading ability”*.

3.2.3 Improvements in other aspects of literacy

Many survey and interview respondents commented on improvements to student outcomes beyond reading skills. They drew links between the features of *Book Bank* and the impact on students' broader literacy skills: speaking, spelling and vocabulary, writing, and literacy across the range of learning areas.

Speaking skills

Teachers commented on the improvement in the quality of students' language when talking about texts, as a result of engaging with *Book Bank*. A school *Book Bank* manager commented on students' increased speaking skills, stating that, *“book talks have really improved”*. The program has encouraged students to talk about characters and how they develop, from a wider range of books.

Spelling and vocabulary

Students identified spelling as an area that improved with reading more books, some suggesting it made spelling easier. For younger students, *Book Bank* assisted in learning to read *“bigger words”*.

Parents and teachers commented on students' increased vocabulary, attributed to experiencing a wider range of written texts. As one student expressed it, *“you can discover new words you haven't heard of before”*.

Writing

Access to a range of books through *Book Bank* was perceived to help students with writing. One principal described how reading engagement contributes to the development of writing skills:

“Reading develops pictures in their heads and helps them write better stories.”

Improvement in writing skills was identified by several students as a benefit of increased reading and exposure to a wide range of books. Students made several comments about the value of reading for generating ideas for writing, commenting that the new words they learnt in books they had read were a source of ideas for their writing. A student who wants to become an author commented that reading books was the first step to creating stories.

One parent stated that:

“A wide variety of books gives [my son] a large variety of imaginative things he can create in his writing.”

Learning across learning areas

Both fiction and nonfiction books were included in the *Book Bank* catalogues, with a view to catering for all areas of student interest. Some students commented on their interest in the nonfiction books. One student reported that her book *“gave me a heap of interesting facts”*. Another viewed reading as supporting learning in other topics, suggesting, *“It's a good chance to build up your mind”*. In one interview, a student reported that improved reading skills have helped when reading mathematical problems.

4. Implementation and management of *Book Bank* in schools

The *Book Bank* model was developed by the program managers from Dymocks Children’s Charities (DCC) with assistance from the NSW Department of Education and Communities (the Department). The program was introduced in the five pilot schools, with support for the implementation shared between the two program managers.

This section outlines findings related to:

- implementation of the program at the school level
- operation at a whole-of-program level, across participating schools.

Throughout this section, there are two uses made of the term *Book Bank*:

- *Book Bank* refers to the program implemented at school level
- class ‘book bank’ refers to the collection of books retained in the classroom to enable swapping of books during each term.

4.1 Implementation in the pilot schools

At the commencement of the pilot, the *Book Bank* program managers visited three schools to explain the program and help each school with planning and implementation. The remaining two schools were contacted via video conference due to their location.

Members of each school *Book Bank* team made changes to the operation of the program to address local issues, such as how the selection of books was conducted, whether *Book Bank* books could be taken home during term and when students could take their book home to keep. Schools used the feedback generated during the first phase of implementation to make improvements throughout the program’s ongoing operation.

There were numerous issues raised by participants during the early stages of the implementation, including:

- teacher and student involvement in the introduction of the program
- establishment of a *Book Bank* school team
- various aspects of the *Book Bank* model regarded as problematic
- the operation of *Book Bank* in individual classes
- the relationship of *Book Bank* to school literacy programs.

4.1.1 Teacher and student involvement

Two thirds of respondents to the teacher survey confirmed that they were involved in initial discussions about the introduction of *Book Bank* to their schools. Of the ten teachers who reported that they *did not* participate in discussions, six were not working at the school when *Book Bank* was introduced.

It was initially suggested by the Department’s program manager that schools select Stage 3 students to take on the role of *Book Bank* managers. Most schools involved students in preliminary meetings, although how they would take full responsibility for the program was unclear. One program manager described the situation:

“The students were keen and had a voice but whether they could really manage the program alone was uncertain.”

In practice, three schools reported having Stage 3 students work with the school *Book Bank* manager. Their roles largely involved:

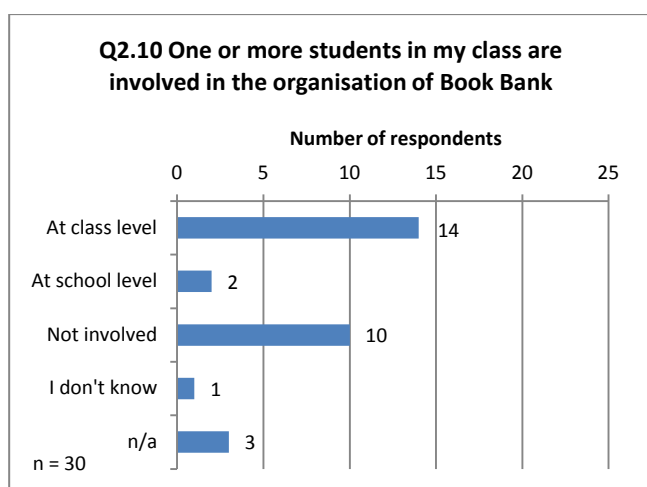
- explaining *Book Bank* to other students

- assisting to compile the book orders
- distributing books to each class.

One school initially involved some Year 5 and 6 students in running the book orders, but soon found the job was better done by a teacher.

In Phase 1 of the evaluation, teachers were asked to indicate whether any of their students were involved, and at what level. As shown in Figure 4.1, 14 teachers reported that one or more students in their class were involved in organisation of *Book Bank* at class level, while only two indicated involvement at a wider, school level. Ten teachers responded that no students in their class were involved at any level.

Figure 4.1: Teacher survey: Student involvement in organisation of *Book Bank* (Phase 1)



The Department’s program manager later commented on the expectation that students could lead the program:

“I probably had some inflated expectations about students managing the program... My initial perception that the students would do most of the legwork really wasn’t realistic.”

Schools that had attempted to use students to lead the program decided that too much teacher assistance was required so this aspect of the program was not expected in Phase 2.

4.1.2 *Book Bank* team

In this report, the group of people helping the school *Book Bank* manager is referred to as the *Book Bank* team. The suggested model for the *Book Bank* team included a community support person, a staff support person and Stage 3 students.

The composition of each team varied from school to school. In all schools, the staff support person soon became the school *Book Bank* manager. This person was responsible for the coordination of the program and for enlisting support from the school community where possible.

In most cases, it was difficult for schools to find the right person to take on the community support role. One school had a parent support person in the first year but was unable to replace her when she left the community. Two schools decided not to seek a representative from the school parent community. Another two schools found that the initial parent member wasn’t suited to the role, with one principal reporting that a parent had volunteered at the beginning but didn’t continue. He commented:

“There is a lot of paperwork. We would have to know that someone is capable. We don’t want it [Book Bank] to fall in a heap.”

In all schools, the school *Book Bank* manager was supported by other members of other staff, such as the Aboriginal Education Officer or library assistant. In cases where the manager had a teaching role, principals usually provided extra time off class, especially during the book ordering period. At one school, a library volunteer helped with ordering and at another the teacher librarian helped K-2 students select their books. In a third school, the Aboriginal Education Officer helped with ordering and distribution.

All school *Book Bank* managers interviewed commented positively on the program from the ease of ordering the books to the extent of uptake of the program by participating teachers and students.

4.1.3 *Book Bank* model

In each pilot school the model was varied to suit local needs. Various methods were negotiated to implement the key features of the model:

- focus on Years 3-6
- book selection by students
- frequency of swapping and sharing books
- opportunities for students to take their books home to keep.

Issues with Years 3-6 focus

Book Bank was intended to be implemented for students in Years 3 to 6. School D is a small school, comprising only three multi-age classes and one Kindergarten class. The principal requested that *Book Bank* be implemented in all the school’s classes, from Kindergarten to Year 6, given the small number of staff available to support the program.

The School D *Book Bank* manager indicated that several issues emerged in the younger classes, especially related to the difficulties students had choosing their books and the time taken to assist them to do so. One teacher commented:

... but for Kindergarten it does take time. I can see why it [Book Bank] wasn’t designed for Kindergarten.

Changes were made to the program, such as Stage 1 students choosing their books from a reduced number of titles and students using *news* sessions for book sharing rather than filling in comment stickers.

Several teachers, across all year levels, suggested that a great deal of time was spent assisting students to browse the catalogues, each of which contained between 51 and 93 titles. Especially for younger classes, the number of books students had to choose from was often overwhelming.

The decision to offer *Book Bank* only to Years 3 to 6 was also problematic in other schools, where there were Years 2/3 composite classes. Teachers had to find ways to make the program work for their whole class. In two cases, teachers shared the Year 3 students’ books with the Year 2 students so the program could operate across the whole class. One teacher supplemented the class book bank with books from the school library, to increase opportunities for swapping and sharing. Another commented that:

... [my Year 2s] thoroughly enjoy the books. I just set it up as a class library. They’re allowed to read the books. Once they’ve finished and commented, they put it back into the class community share box.

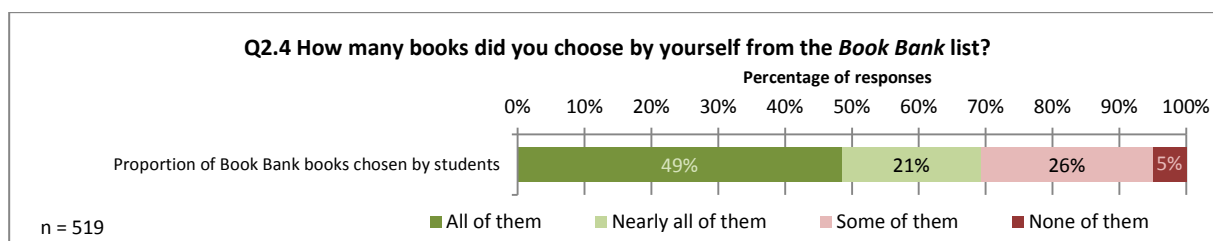
At one school, with a composite Year 2/3 class, the teacher decided that all the *Book Bank* books stayed in the classroom until the end of the year and only then did the Year 3 students take their (four) books home. In another school, joining the program in Year 3 was seen as a valuable *rite of passage*.

One principal commented that the Year 2 teachers at the school had mentioned several times that they would have loved to have been included in the program.

Book selection: student choice of books

In Phase 1, student survey data indicated that 88% of students reported choosing their own *Book Bank* books. Phase 2 data as shown in Figure 4.2 suggests that the choice of books may have been more frequently influenced by teachers, than previously suggested.

Figure 4.2: Student survey: Student chose own book



While most students selected their own books from the catalogues, in a number of classes teachers described the increased role they played in making book choices. Methods included:

- teachers choosing books for each student
- teachers choosing a selection of books, from which students in the class could choose
- teachers guiding students' choices, in one case in order to avoid too much duplication.

During initial discussions to introduce *Book Bank* and explain the model, the Department's program manager observed that several teachers were concerned that allowing students free choice might "*set up students to fail*", in that they might select a book that was too difficult for them to read independently.

One teacher, who chose a set of books for her class from the catalogues, explained that her students liked to see the actual books when choosing. She included the extra class books provided by *Book Bank* so that all students had several from which to choose.

Another teacher noted: "*lots [of students] choose the same book as their friends*". In some cases, teachers guided student choices in order to limit the number of students choosing the same title, to maintain the greatest possible variety of books available to be swapped in class. A careful balance was needed to ensure that students were not deprived of their choice of books (to keep) while ensuring there was sufficient range in the class book bank each term.

In interviews, students and teachers described other situations when students were not able to choose their own book:

- the student was absent when selections were made
- the student was new to the school
- the book of choice was not available.

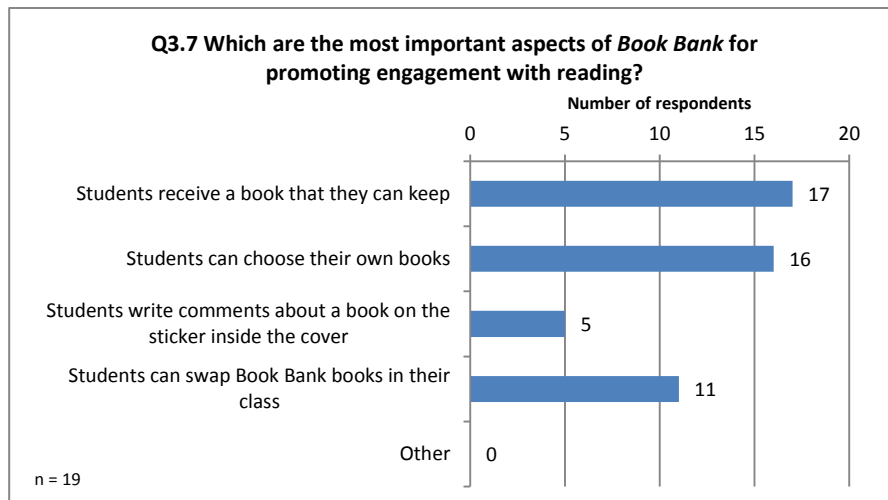
Most interviewed teachers reported offering students only the catalogue at their grade level. At one school, the school *Book Bank* manager allowed Year 6 students to order from the catalogue for the stage below as well as from the catalogue for their stage. Another school offered students the catalogue

for Stage 4 (secondary school), particularly for students in opportunity classes (OC)². However, the teacher-librarian at the school guided students to ensure that the books they chose were “...at the appropriate reading level as well as appropriate interest (level) for them”.

In schools where students had not chosen their books in the first round, the program managers assisted the school to implement this process. The decision to allow students to choose their own books was often made by the school *Book Bank* manager, as well as by individual teachers. A change of teacher or a new school *Book Bank* manager made a big difference in some cases.

Phase 2 data revealed that, as the program progressed, many teachers saw the high levels of engagement that resulted from student choice of books and acknowledged the importance of this aspect of the program, as shown in Figure 4.3.

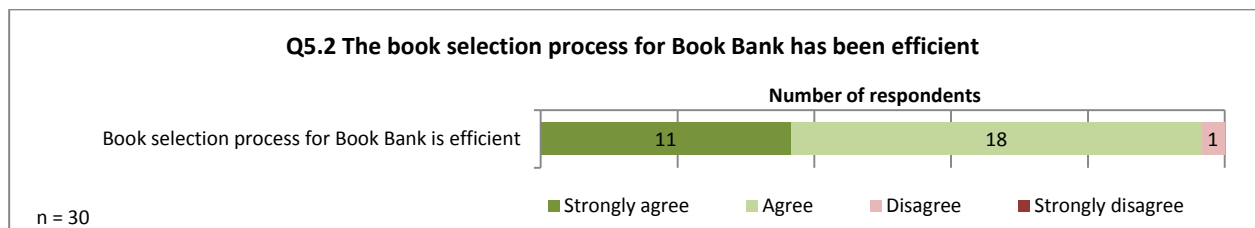
Figure 4.3: Teacher survey: Promoting engagement with reading



Book selection process

Figure 4.4 shows that almost all teachers agreed that the selection process at their school was efficient and effective in Phase 1. This level of agreement was sustained in Phase 2.

Figure 4.4: Teacher survey: Efficiency of the book selection process (Phase 1)



Overall, teachers reported using a range of strategies to assist book selection, including:

- making choices as a whole class
- breaking the class into small groups to look through a paper copy of the catalogue to select books
- using the interactive whiteboard to display the choices
- using a printout of the catalogue
- using the internet to gain further information on a book in the catalogue.

² Opportunity classes provide intellectual stimulation and an academically enriched environment for gifted and talented children in Years 5 and 6.

During one focus group, a student explained how the selection process worked in their class:

“We looked at the books through the computer as a whole class and we put up our hand when we saw a book we wanted.”

At another school the *Book Bank* manager was the teacher-librarian. She was familiar with many of the books in the catalogue so used this information to help students make their choices. She explained her process as follows:

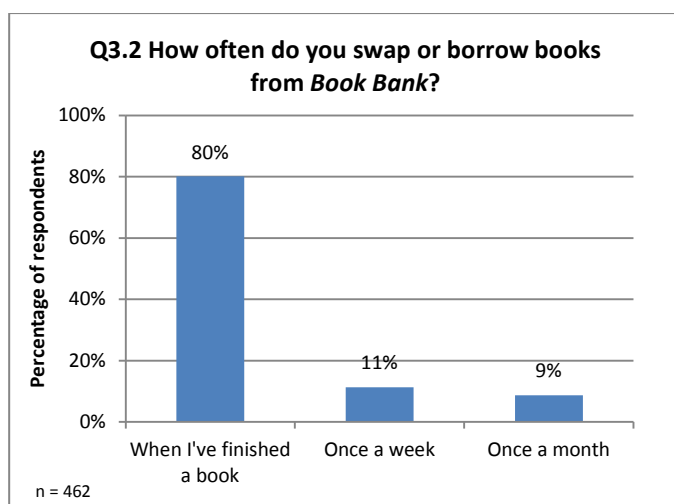
“We found it was easier for me to [select books with the students] than the teachers. I had a day off class to pull out groups to choose their books.”

Swapping books

All stakeholder groups confirmed that swapping books with other students took place as part of the program, with the exception of one teacher who did not permit students to swap books.

In the Phase 1 student survey, 75% of students indicated that they swapped books from *Book Bank*. Of these, 80% indicated that they swapped books or borrowed from the class book bank when they finished a book, as shown in Figure 4.5. The frequency of swapping depended on the time it took to finish a book rather than on a weekly or monthly program. However, 55 survey respondents did not complete this question.

Figure 4.5: Student survey: How often students swap books (Phase 1)



Similar patterns of book swapping occurred in both phases of the evaluation. In Phase 2 however, about 10% fewer students indicated that they swapped or borrowed books from the class book bank. Teachers reported that the number of times students swapped books varied both across and within classes. Obvious variations by grade relate to the length and complexity of the books, as well as the ability of students. One student, when interviewed, reflected this:

“I would like to borrow five if I was allowed. I get books for [ages] 7 to 9 and they are longer.”

Swapping books did not always occur easily. When interviewed, students and teachers provided examples of some the challenges encountered, including:

- students being slow, or reluctant, to return their own book to the classroom book bank
- books being taken home to read and not returned (or lost)
- when books get lost there are *“squabbles”*
- having to wait until someone returns a book.

Stickers

Each book had a sticker in the front to record both the name of the owner and the names and comments of people who read the book. The sticker and process of writing comments were features that distinguished *Book Bank* from library books or other book purchasing programs.

Figure 4.6 *Book Bank* sticker

This book was awarded to _____
Date / /

We encourage you to read and enjoy this book, take good care of it and then share it with a classmate via the **BOOK BANK** in your classroom

This book was shared with:

NAME	DATE	COMMENT

The Dymocks Children's Charities Book Bank Project has been developed with the Department of Education and Training and runs in conjunction with the Premier's Reading Challenge.

NSW Education & Training | DYMCKS CHILDREN'S CHARITIES | Premier's Reading Challenge

If found please return toSchool

Students and teachers saw stickers as an essential part of the sharing process. Comments assisted students to choose books to read, or to order in future. Teachers and students explained:

"I think I like [writing in the stickers] because I like reading the comments- how people say it's interesting or not and you can recommend it to your friends." Student

"What I find really good about comments is when I want to get a new book and other people wrote comments, you find it easier to choose if they have really good comments." Student

"They write their comments at the front – if they enjoyed it, if they didn't. Their peers go and check and say, I enjoyed this book so maybe I will because we like the same things." Teacher

Several parents commented on the stickers during interviews, pointing to the pleasure that their children took from reading the comments written by their friends:

"[My daughter] gets a real buzz out of reading the comments in her books."

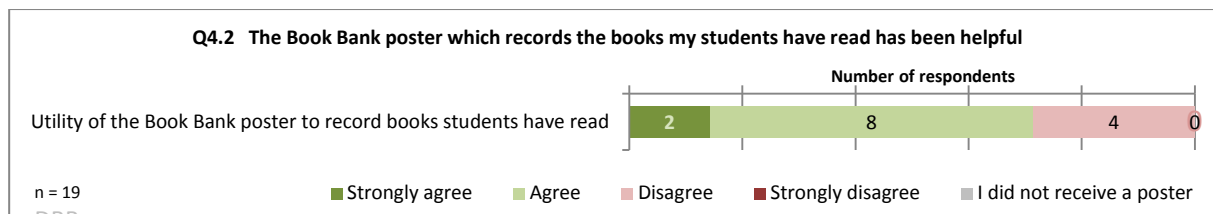
"Tom still looks at his books at home to see who has read them."

There was mention by one teacher of inappropriate comments written by some students, but this issue was dealt with quickly and did not continue to be a problem.

Class poster

The *Book Bank* poster was designed to record swapping, so a book could be tracked to the current borrower. Approximately half the teachers during Phase 1, who received a poster, agreed that it was useful. A similar level of support was expressed in teacher interviews and in Phase 2 surveys (Figure 4.7), with one teacher explaining “*you can see the popular books*”. Others expressed some ambivalence about the poster.

Figure 4.7: Teacher survey: *Book Bank* poster



Note: Five survey respondents did not complete this question.

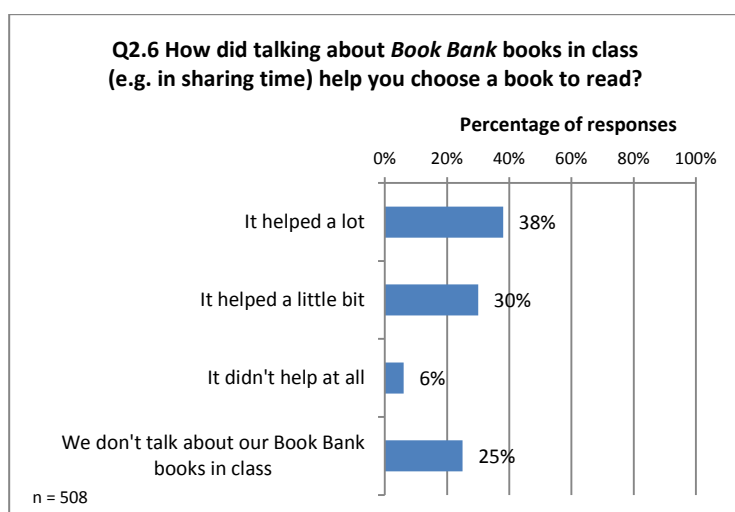
In interviews, several students confirmed that the poster was used in their class, even if the teacher had to remind them. One student said it was useful because “*you know who has your book*”.

A small number of teachers, especially during Phase 1, indicated they had not received a *Book Bank* poster. This problem was not apparent during Phase 2 of the evaluation.

Sharing or talking about books

About two thirds of students indicated that they had formal *Book Bank* sharing times in class lessons. The majority found it helped when choosing a new book to talk with other class members about the books available as shown in Figure 4.8.

Figure 4.8: Student survey: Sharing time helps when choosing books



These responses are consistent with the teacher interview comments, which distinguished between formal and informal sharing among students. Formal sharing was sometimes facilitated by teachers as a class activity, whereas informal sharing often occurred spontaneously between students. One student interviewed described those occasions:

“*We do a bit of chit chat when we are out of class.*”

Teachers were generally positive about sharing, with 22 out of 30 survey respondents agreeing that a strength of the program was how students talked about their books with their classmates. Teachers identified the benefits of students sharing:

“They are sharing their positive reaction to literature and their enthusiasm.”

“They want to share and read their friends’ books too.”

Students made many positive comments about sharing *Book Bank* books. They particularly liked:

- talking to friends who were reading the same book
- the flexibility to talk about books both in class and in free time
- reading books to other students.

4.1.4 The class book bank

The *Book Bank* presence was evident in each of the classes observe, however books were stored and used in different ways in each of the five schools.

Establishing the class book bank

Most classes established a class book bank, displaying books on a shelf clearly labelled with a cardboard strip supplied by DCC. Some classes had books in tubs, boxes, bookstands or on tables. Some kept the books in individual folders and some separated books into girls’ and boys’ titles.

In each school, the intention to create a pool of books for sharing and swapping was well established. In some cases individual teachers made the decision to retain all books at school for this purpose.

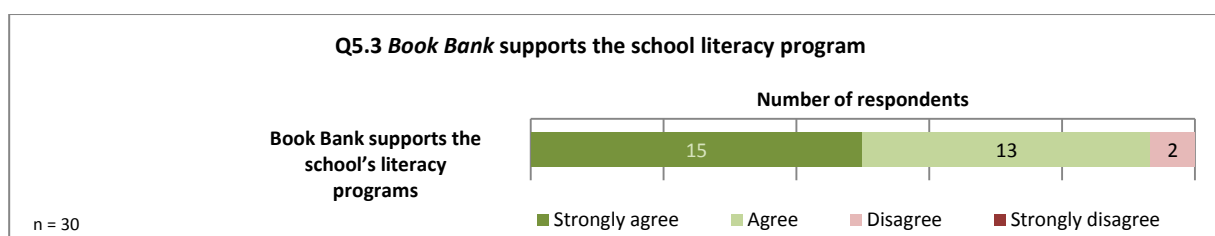
Relationship to class literacy programs

In the introductory letter to schools, principals were advised that the *Book Bank* program ‘*is designed to work alongside classroom lessons and school-based programs, rather than rely upon teacher time or intervention*’. Great variation was evident in the ways this was interpreted by individual teachers and schools, perhaps reflecting the variation in general approaches taken to literacy learning.

The importance of teacher encouragement and promotion of the program was noted in several schools, by principals and parents as well as teachers themselves. One parent said in interview that *Book Bank* “*was a jolly waste of money if the teachers aren’t completely involved in it*”.

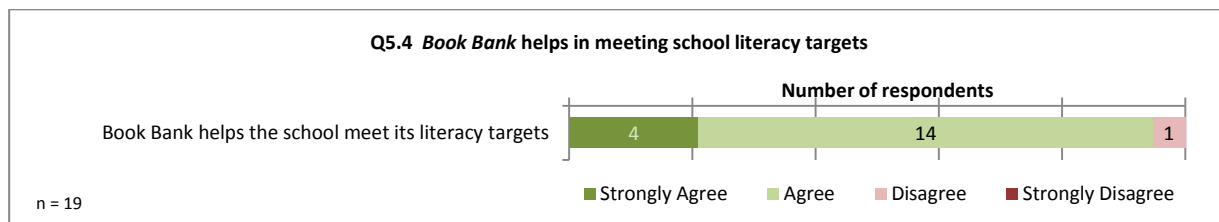
As shown in Figure 4.9, the teacher survey revealed support for the suggestion that *Book Bank* supports school literacy programs, with only two teachers disagreeing.

Figure 4.9: Teacher survey: *Book Bank* supports the school’s literacy program (Phase 1)



Of the teachers surveyed in Phase 2, all but one indicated that the *Book Bank* program helped in meeting their school’s literacy targets as shown in Figure 4.10.

Figure 4.10: Teacher survey: *Book Bank* helps meet school’s literacy targets (Phase 2)

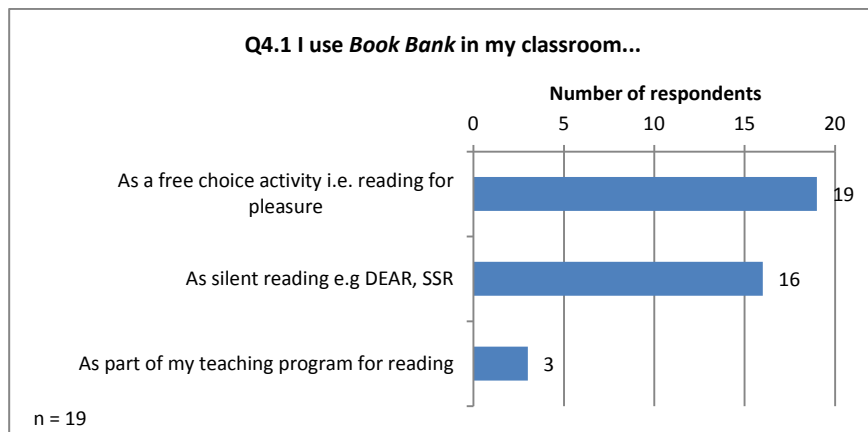


By contrast, at one school the principal encouraged teachers to keep *Book Bank* at a distance from other literacy activities, suggesting:

“Book Bank is really not part of class literacy programs because the students take the books home to read. (It is) viewed as a student resource.”

Figure 4.11 indicates the manner in which *Book Bank* books were used in classrooms, with the majority of teachers using a combination of activities designed to incorporate *Book Bank* into their daily classroom activities.

Figure 4.11: Teacher survey: How *Book Bank* is used in the classroom



In interviews, teachers provided further detail of how they utilised *Book Bank* beyond silent reading, including:

- as the focus of contract work, such as *“with Bloom’s taxonomy sheet that’s generalised”*
- as reading for enjoyment, such as *“during fruit break time”*
- as the selected text for structured reading activities
- to support discussion of books
- for teacher reading to whole class.



One teacher described how *Book Bank* books were included in the class literacy program.

“I include a couple of Book Bank books in the Reading to Learn program. I already had the interest base because many of the students had read them.”

4.1.5 Relationship to whole-school literacy programs

Whole-school literacy programs were discussed in the interviews with principals. All schools were involved in implementation of whole-class or whole-school literacy programs such as *Accelerated Literacy* (Commonwealth of Australia, 2007), *Reading to Learn* (2011) or *Language, Learning and Literacy* (NSW DET, 2007). Each of these programs utilises quality literary texts as the basis of class reading activities.

Book Bank does not have a professional learning component and does not involve explicit instruction in reading. It provides the opportunity and incentive to read for pleasure and only requires that the books are accessible to students. Sharing and swapping were encouraged and supported in most participating classes in the pilot schools.

4.2 Management of *Book Bank* at program level

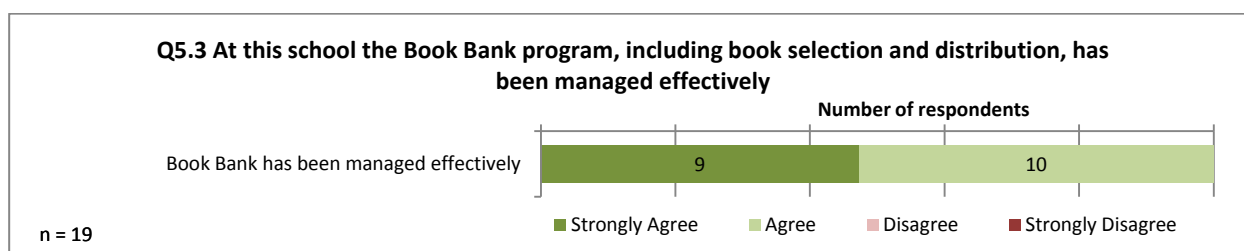
The day-to-day operation of *Book Bank* was managed by class teachers in all the pilot schools, as described in Section 4.1.

Section 4.2 focuses on the support provided to students and teachers by the school *Book Bank* managers and team members, in the processes of selecting and receiving their books. The main functions of the school *Book Bank* manager were:

- sending the catalogues to students and classes
- collating class orders and placing the school order
- checking the books once they arrive at school, against the school order and student name
- distributing the books.

All teachers surveyed agreed that the *Book Bank* program at their school had been managed effectively in both phases of the program, as shown in Figure 4.12.

Figure 4.12: Teacher survey: Management of *Book Bank* program at school level



In interviews, principals acknowledged that the ordering and distribution tasks were time-consuming. In some of the pilot schools the school *Book Bank* manager was provided with additional relief time for organisation of *Book Bank*. In other cases it was noted that much of the time was contributed by the school *Book Bank* manager out of their own time.

Teachers also mentioned the time taken in class, or in release from face-to-face (RFF) time, to help students choose their books. One principal said time was needed *“to vet student choices”*.

The Department’s program manager identified the demands on teacher time as an issue, especially during the initial phase:

“There is a fair bit of legwork by the teacher support person at the start of the program.”

However, participating school *Book Bank* managers stated that the program ran relatively smoothly and problem-free once the program was established in the schools.

4.2.1 Ordering

In all pilot schools the school *Book Bank* manager compiled the orders from each class. Some teachers completed their class order on the spread sheet and emailed their students' selections to the school *Book Bank* manager. In other classes, Stage 3 students entered their own choices without teacher assistance.

There were mixed comments expressed in interviews about the ordering process. The following points summarise teacher and student responses:

- Ordering two books at a time worked well.
- Ordering two books at a time was particularly beneficial if a book is not available; the student still had one book to start the semester with.
- Responsiveness of the program managers, and the improvements in the ordering spreadsheet made early in the pilot, were appreciated by teachers.
- Processing orders in class sets was effective at school level as it relieved the school *Book Bank* manager of the task of sorting the books when they arrived.
- Sometimes the tight timeframe made it difficult for students to make their selections and submit the class book order.
- The timing of the ordering was problematic for teachers. Both ordering processes (June and December each year) occurred at times of the year when teachers are already particularly busy.

One teacher summed up the process as a *"bit of a nightmare"*. This comment related to the general busyness of schools throughout the year. This issue was acknowledged by the DCC program manager who felt that a longer time frame for ordering would allow schools to fit in ordering around the other activities that take place in schools.

All school *Book Bank* managers expressed satisfaction with the current ordering system running at their school.

Additional *Book Bank* books

Each class received an extra 20 books per year (five per term) which were chosen by the class teacher. These books were used by teachers to:

- replace lost books
- provide books for new students
- to help students who were unhappy with their choice
- add to series that students had selected as their individual books
- extend the repertoire of books available in the classroom in terms of genre and subject
- extend the level of books available to students, both above and below average levels in the class.

At one school the school *Book Bank* manager held some books for the first three circumstances described above. Other schools left the allocation and use of spares to each class teacher. One principal commented on the provision of books:

"They always give extra books so a child doesn't miss out. We have a fairly fluid enrolment so that is good."

The DCC program manager emphasised that teachers did not need to use the additional books for replacing lost books or for allocation to new students. In such instances, the *Book Bank* program would have provided replacement books or additional books for new students. The program's intention was

for the additional class books to be retained by the school, to augment class book banks and add to the swapping pool.

4.2.2 Delivery and distribution of books

Early in the program, changes were made to the system of book delivery to make distribution more efficient at the school level. The ordering form was quickly changed from organisation by individual students, to ordering and delivery in class lots.

School *Book Bank* managers have used different methods of distributing books. One manager personally distributed the books to one student at a time. Another used students in her own class to deliver the class orders to other classrooms. Some students recalled receiving their books at a school assembly.

An estimate from one principal suggests that the process took at least half a day for the manager and an assistant.

4.2.3 Launching *Book Bank* and the role of ambassadors

Each of the pilot schools held a special event to launch the *Book Bank* program. A high profile ambassador was invited to promote the program to the students and school community. Ambassadors included:

- Ahn Do, comedian, author and local identity
- Adam Spencer, author and broadcaster
- Rob Carlton, actor and writer, known by the local community of the school he visited.

Ahn Do grew up in the area of the school he visited, adding extra value to his story. One principal described the visit by the ambassador as inspirational, whilst another principal commented:

“For these kids who rarely leave the area, to have someone come, it was just mind-boggling. [Students perceive] school is a fun place to be.”

One teacher described the visit by the ambassador as *“an amazing experience”*, adding that:

“The fact that we have copies of his books and he was a real, live person... [The students] were amazed.”

Unfortunately, the two non-metropolitan schools did not have an ambassador present at the launch of *Book Bank*. Students at these schools watched two videos of Ahn Do and Adam Spencer talking about reading and about *Book Bank*. The students received autographed bookmarks and students on the *Book Bank* teams received a copy of Ahn Do’s book. However, there was significant disappointment in these communities, as expressed by one principal:

“[We were] very unhappy that our school didn’t get an ambassador. The explanation was that it was too far to travel.”

The Department’s program manager acknowledged that for those schools, *“it amplified the issue that the schools felt isolated”*.

While the value of the ambassadors was well-appreciated at the time of the launch, when surveyed some months later, few students could recall any special *Book Bank* events, as shown in Figure 4.13.

Figure 4.13: Student survey: Special *Book Bank* activity held at school (Phase 1)

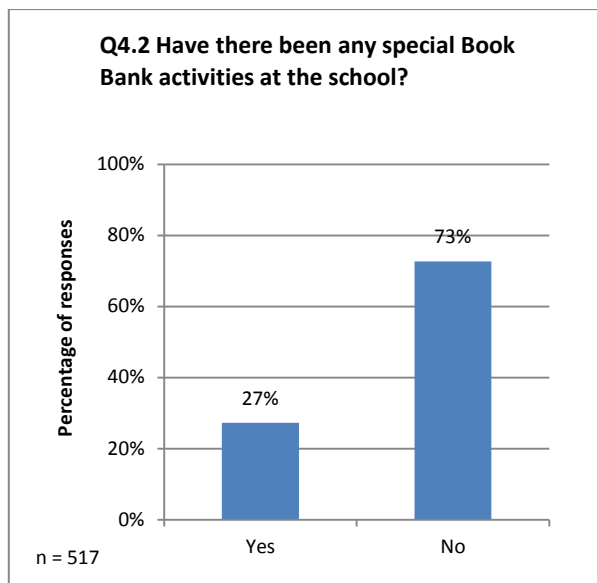
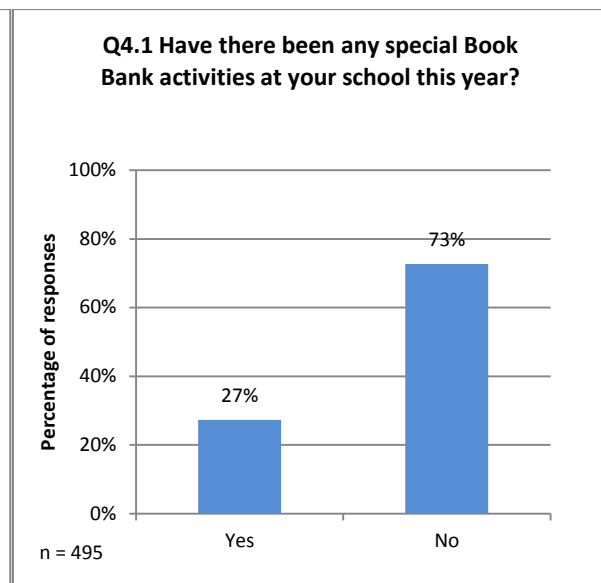


Figure 4.14: Student survey: Special *Book Bank* activity held at school (Phase 2)



Further special events were either not organised by schools or were not well-remembered by students, as shown in responses to the equivalent question in Phase 2 as shown in Figure 4.14.

Several school staff members mentioned that they thought it important that there be some type of launch of the program each year to sustain interest in the program. One parent, who was on the school *Book Bank* team, commented:

“When I did the coverage of the launch I saw such excitement and [the children] were genuinely interested. The whole school was a sea of books.”



4.2.4 Communication

Regular and effective communication between all parties involved in the *Book Bank* program was identified as presenting ongoing difficulties. Schools saw the need to have clear processes in place.

Communication with the school community

The *Book Bank* team was responsible for the promotion of *Book Bank* to the school community. The *Book Bank* information booklet given to the pilot schools asked students on the team to ‘organise one big sharing event’ in addition to the launch of the program.

The *Book Bank* model included promotion of *Book Bank* to parents as part of the role of parent community support person. None of the schools had a support person at the time of the first evaluation visit. One principal acknowledged that communicating with parents is “an area for improvement”.

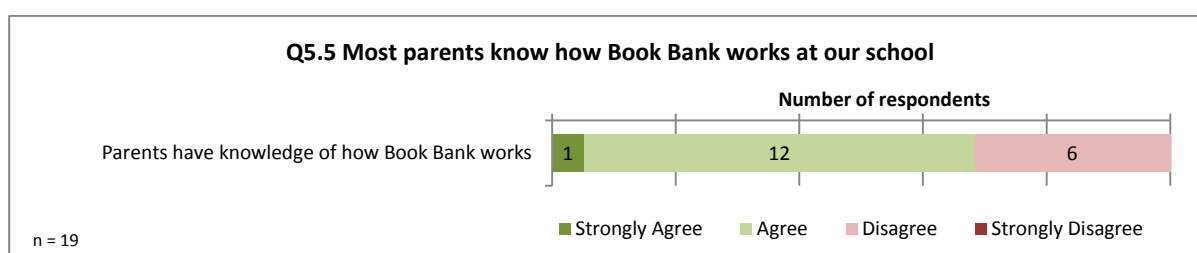
School events were organised by some school *Book Bank* teams. Two schools held promotional events. One school created a game at school and held an evening for the school community where students were asked questions about their favourite *Book Bank* books. Another school celebrated Book Week with students dressing as their favourite character from a *Book Bank* book they had read.

One school organised for the local newspaper to be present at the launch of *Book Bank*. A teacher remarked in an interview that “it would be nice to repeat [these events], to refresh, [and] keep engaged”.

Most frequently, principals used the school newsletter to promote the program to the school community, such as including “reminders to keep reading”. Two schools included discussion about *Book Bank* in their Annual School Report.

Teachers surveyed were asked for their opinion of whether parents knew about how *Book Bank* works. In both phases, over two thirds agreed or strongly agreed that parents were familiar with the operation of *Book Bank*, as shown in Figure 4.15. However, one parent conceded that she didn’t actually know what *Book Bank* was until the night before the interview, when her son explained it to her.

Figure 4.15: Teacher survey: Parent knowledge of *Book Bank* program



In interviews, there were many comments about the difficulty in successfully passing information on to parents about the *Book Bank* program. One principal acknowledged that there was room for improvement but that “it was difficult to communicate about any matter, anyway”. Two principals identified difficulties for parents with language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE).

Communication between program managers and schools

The DCC and Department program managers obtained feedback about the implementation of the program through visits and communication with the participating schools. The school visits provided opportunities for the program managers to monitor the operation of *Book Bank*, especially early on. In particular, the managers were able to observe how the essential features of *Book Bank* were being implemented.

Throughout the pilot there was no defined role for the DCC and Department’s program managers, nor suggested procedures in the event that schools experienced difficulties in any aspect of the program. One program manager commented on the need for DCC and the Department to clarify areas of responsibility, so that schools could be better supported:

“Communication with schools is a big problem. Who makes the phone calls? Who chases up the books if they are not there in time? Who coordinates the launches and the ambassadors? All of that is very difficult.”

School visits

At each school launch the *Book Bank* ambassador spoke to the students about the importance of reading. The program managers repeated this message when visiting schools and classrooms.

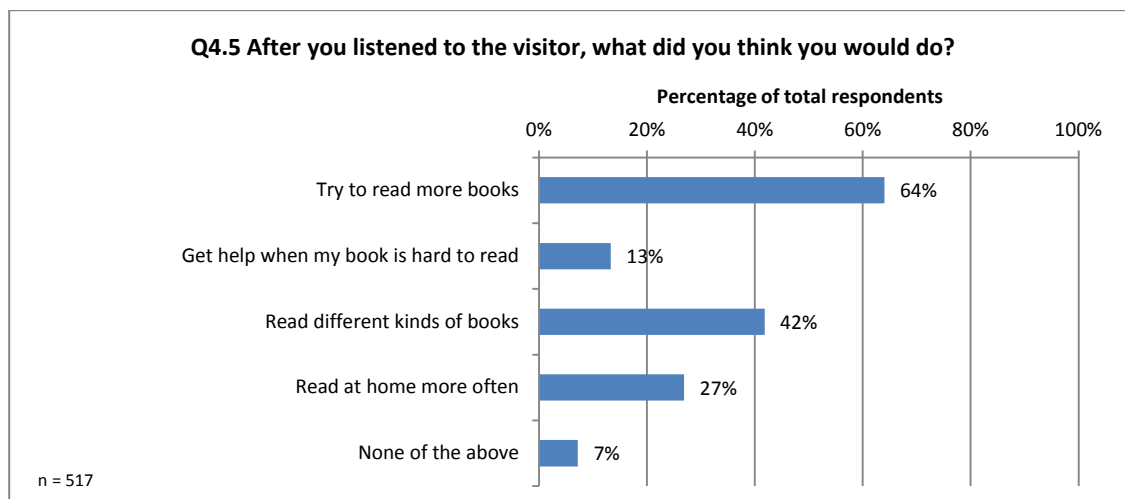
According to the DCC program manager:

“When [we] went out to schools we talked to children about what makes a good reader. There were many kids (who) said they would only read what they had to. They would never pick up a book by choice.”

In the phase 1 survey, 86% students recalled visits by ambassadors or *Book Bank* managers, with 64% of students responding that following the visits they would ‘try to read more books’ and 42% that they would ‘read different kinds of books’, as shown in Figure 4.16.

When interviewed, several students more readily recalled the visits by the program managers and suggested they provided the most effective motivational effect.

Figure 4.16: Student survey: responses to visits (Phase 1)



5. Sustainability and scalability of the *Book Bank* program

As discussed in the previous sections, a number of benefits were identified during the evaluation. How these benefits might be maintained is a long-term challenge for participating schools, for NSW Department of Education and Communities (the Department) and for Dymocks Children's Charities (DCC).

5.1 Benefits and improvements

Students, parents, teachers and principals interviewed as part of this evaluation recommended that the *Book Bank* program be maintained in their school. While there were many suggestions made for improvements or changes, some of which are discussed in Section 5.1.2 below, these were minor compared to the benefits attributed to participation in the program.

5.1.1 Benefits

All stakeholders expressed high levels of satisfaction with the program. From the beginning, principals and teachers anticipated the benefits that would flow from students being given books of their own choosing to keep.

The most notable benefit attributed to *Book Bank* by all stakeholders was putting free, high quality books of their own choosing, in the hands of students. For many this was a new experience, as can be seen by the following interview comments:

"We have definitely had children who said that they previously did not own books. They have never been bought a book."

School Book Bank manager

"Book Bank is putting a library in their classroom and a library in their home."

Principal

In addition to enhancing students' engagement with reading, as discussed in detail in Section 3.1, *Book Bank* also provided a quality resource for students and teachers at school. The extra books given to class teachers to keep in their *Book Bank* become school resources. Several participants from all school stakeholder groups commented positively on the quality of the books provided as part of the program.

Several teachers commented that they particularly appreciated the *Book Bank* books as they brought new releases into the class. According to one teacher, they helped when *"class library books are a bit stale"*. Another teacher explained, *"[Book Bank] bulks up your class library"*. Principals agreed that *Book Bank* provided extra resources for reading.

One principal interviewed summed up the benefits of *Book Bank* as *"great for kids in our area"*. Others were enthusiastic in their praise for the program and its intent:

"There's nothing I would like to change. It is running very successfully in the school. The main thing is getting kids switched onto literacy."

Principal

"I think it's been outstanding. You wouldn't say 'no' for the world. Book Bank is promoting literacy. It is definitely contributing, along with all our other literacy programs, in a major way."

Principal

"..and you have a couple of siblings, so double that. We are putting books in the right place. We know that literacy levels affect social competence and life opportunity. It's just such a wonderful program that supplements what we are already doing."

School Book Bank manager

5.1.2 Improvements and suggested changes

Early in the implementation of the program, several changes were made to the ordering and distribution processes in response to initial teacher feedback. During interviews, school staff, students and parents were asked if there further changes they would like to make to *Book Bank*.

The following issues and suggestions were identified by teachers, principals and school *Book Bank* managers:

- Barcodes similar to those in library books would assist in keeping track of books.
- Use of the word 'charity' in the promotion of *Book Bank* was problematic for some. One principal suggested "*Dymocks Book Club Bank*" as an alternative title for the program.
- Some teachers were concerned about the Year 3-6 focus of the *Book Bank* model, where composite Year 2/3 classes received only enough books for Year 3 students.
- Some teachers were concerned about the amount of class time used for students to choose their books.
- One teacher suggested that students could make their book choices online.

Students raised issues that concerned them, such as:

- The need for the catalogue to include the number of pages per book to assist in choosing the right book.
- The risk of books getting lost or damaged.
- A lack of sticker comments. While some students reported they had more written comments on the stickers on their books than other students, three students commented that no one had written on their book stickers.

Many students wanted more books. One mentioned that it would be good to have extra books for the holidays.

5.2 Sustainability

In interviews, principals were asked if the management and operation of *Book Bank* was sustainable. All principals confirmed that they would maintain the operation of *Book Bank* within the school as long as DCC continued to provide the books.

Maintenance of the program will rely on sustaining:

- funding and organisational support required to provide the books
- willingness of individuals to contribute time and effort to manage school-based operation
- support from the Department and DCC to ensure the demands on school staff are reasonable.

5.2.1 Funding and organisational support

Most participants interviewed regarded DCC provision of the books as essential to the continuation of the program.

One principal explained that there are similar organisations that offer books for students, for a fee. She believed that model would not work in the same way as *Book Bank* because school funds would not be available to cover the fees. If parents were asked to pay, according to the principal, there "*would be only partial uptake*" and not all students would benefit. Partial uptake would not only directly disadvantage those not receiving books, but the swapping and sharing functions would also be significantly compromised.

Parents and teachers also suggested that funding from DCC was very important for the continuation of the program. For many parents this was an issue of equity as they commented that not all families within the school could afford to fund the program if funding was in the form of a levy on parents, as seen in the comments below:

"If it's going to cost parent money, the children are going to be disadvantaged because not all parents will pay."

“You’d find it [parent paying for Book Bank] extremely difficult in this school with some parents not even having the capacity to buy their children uniforms.”

Several teachers discussed the problem of funds for the program coming from school funds if DCC withdrew funding support, commenting that:

“We don’t have the funding to keep doing Book Bank.”

“We’d return to bulk borrowing [from the library] because we don’t have the funds to do anything else.”

When interviewed, the DCC program manager suggested that the charity could perhaps assist schools to source funds for the program from local community groups or organisations so that DCC funding could be used to support new schools on the program. However, one principal commented that the local community found it difficult to assist schools with funding due to economic issues and competition for funding from a number of schools within the community.

5.2.2 School-based support

Principals were enthusiastic about continuing to support the *Book Bank* program by providing teacher and aide time to manage the program within the school. Some parents indicated a willingness to volunteer time to assist with the organisation within the schools, in order for the program to continue within their children’s schools. One parent was already giving time to assist as indicated below:

“We’ve got a volunteer from the library who is amazing who does all the boxes for us and packs all the books up.”

School *Book Bank* managers commented on the time needed to manage the program. One manager said it was *“OK to give up time to do Book Bank”*. Another said she liked her job as manager. She also said that she was involved with *Book Bank* only *“at special times when the new books come”*.

The estimated time required to manage the school-based operation of *Book Bank* ranged from 2-3 hours per term for smaller schools to substantially larger blocks of time for bigger schools, especially around ordering and distribution times.

According to one principal, commitment to the program would be maintained if teachers saw value for their students. Incorporating *Book Bank* activities into class programs was regarded as a sign of the value teachers’ placed on the program, and increased potential for continued participation.

5.2.3 Program-level support

The Department and DCC program managers provided support to the pilot schools during implementation. DCC refined the ordering to make the process easier for the school *Book Bank* manager and visited every school to launch the program. The Department’s program manager acknowledged the importance of visiting the schools:

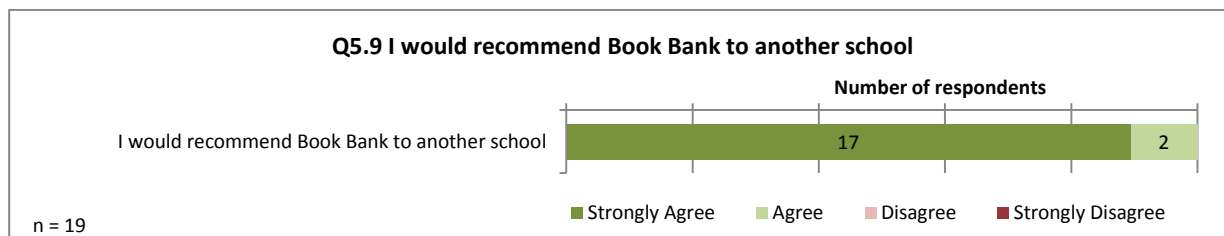
“The regular visits... give a sense of whether this is actually sustainable and manageable in a small context.”

The Department program manager stated that the sustainability of *Book Bank* in the pilot schools required Departmental support. She identified that this support might be vested with *“[a unit] related to [literacy], whether it is the School Libraries team or the Premier’s Reading Challenge”*. However, the amount of non school-based officer time that *Book Bank* requires is a sustainability issue for the maintenance of the program.

5.3 Expansion of the *Book Bank* program

Teacher support for *Book Bank* was unanimous. As shown in Figure 5.1, the teacher survey revealed that 100% of respondents would recommend *Book Bank* to another school, with 90% strongly agreeing.

Figure 5.1: Teacher survey: Recommend participation in *Book Bank* to another school



One teacher survey respondent indicated their enthusiasm:

"I would fully support its growth throughout other schools, especially those with kids in need of extra assistance."

Many respondents in interviews and surveys indicated their support for the expansion of the *Book Bank* program beyond the schools involved in the pilot. One student suggested the program be introduced to high schools, with another commenting:

"I would like it if Book Bank would deliver books to everyone and then Australia would be the smartest country."

Parents also indicated their belief in the value of the program by suggesting its expansion to other schools beyond those in the trial.

One principal commented that he and his deputy talked with their colleagues in other local schools about the program and that these schools *"would dearly love to be on Book Bank"*.

The expansion of *Book Bank* is dependent on the availability of funds to purchase books, and personnel to manage the cycle of book selection, ordering and delivery. The role of the Department's program manager was to ensure that the program was effective, and to support students and the work of schools. A Department program manager commented:

"If you were going to expand the program you would need someone dedicated full time at DEC and DCC. Things would run more smoothly. They [DCC] were juggling many things as were we."

Arranging school information sessions for schools new to the program, the launch of the program and visits to monitor implementation, were all time-consuming.

An issue for the Department program manager, with regard to expansion of the *Book Bank* program was the lack of agreement about the process for selecting new schools and decisions around continuation in the pilot schools. Given the significant resource that the program represents, equity of access to the program was a major consideration in offering additional schools the opportunity to be involved. He explained that possible funding sources and models needed to be explored, in line with selection criteria for potential participants.

Expanding the program was also problematic for the DCC program manager who was concerned about the available funds to support *Book Bank* commencing in more schools. She commented as follows:

"One option is that we concentrate on fundraising in 2013 ... so 2014 would look like a very different year because we've then got enough money to put another 20 to 25 Book Banks in place."

6. Effectiveness of the partnership

As outlined in Section 2, *Book Bank* is an initiative of Dymocks Children's Charities (DCC) working with the NSW Department of Education and Communities. Each organisation nominated a program manager to oversee the implementation of the pilot.

6.1 Program development

The *Book Bank* model was developed by DCC and presented to the DCC Board. Following acceptance of the proposal, the Department provided advice and support for the pilot. Each of the program managers brought particular expertise and objectives to the development of the program. The Department program manager supported the exploration of the idea of book ownership and its potential impact on improved reading behaviours at school and at home. The DCC program manager wanted to see a more interactive process involving swapping books and "*sharing of stories*". The Department program manager described the benefits of these discussions:

"As a professional, it was a good experience to have conversations with somebody who doesn't have an educational background ... to challenge the things we do as teachers regarding the teaching of reading."

The DCC program manager acknowledged the benefits of working with her Department counterpart, saying:

"[The DEC program manager] was vital in physically liaising with schools, opening doors for all of us but also in developing a range of resources which were very good for the children, like tips on choosing books, how to choose the right level – bringing that level of educational expertise."

When interviewed, each of the original program managers stated that they used current research to shape their ideas about how the program could do more than just provide free books for school students. They hoped that by teachers linking book ownership to class based activities focused on reading for pleasure, the life of each book would be extended.

DCC developed a draft proposal early in 2010 and requested support from Department to advise on educational aspects and the selection of schools to pilot the program. The Department contribution to the partnership was to provide expertise on:

- teaching methods to encourage reading
- student book selection strategies
- reading levels
- information about suitable schools for the program.

The operational side of *Book Bank* was the domain of DCC. In interview, the Department program manager acknowledged the contribution of Dymocks Children's Charities:

"[The] advantages are that we have a funding source, access to books and someone prepared to do the legwork to put that together."

6.2 Role of the program managers

The *Book Bank* program had two levels of management:

- the overall program level
- the school level.

The initial role of the Department program manager was to provide advice in relation to the selection of schools and implementation of the program. The Department program manager collaborated with DCC

when the program was being developed and had a role in responding to the recommendations of the evaluation. The Department also initiated the evaluation of the program in the pilot schools.

As discussed in Section 4, the school level operation of *Book Bank* was managed by a member of the school staff, with support from the *Book Bank* team. The delivery of books to schools was the result of a process managed by DCC. The school manager and the DCC program manager liaised throughout this process.

The partnership between the DCC and Department program managers did not have clearly defined roles and responsibilities at the outset of the program. As one of the program managers expressed it, they were *“loosely organised in the beginning”*. As a result there were times when, *“identifying whose role was what, was tricky”* particularly in regard to school visits and communication with schools.

The Department program manager reflected on the importance of her role:

“The initial contact with schools and the ongoing support; I see that as being an essential part of the Departmental role, getting that bit right.”

As the pilot evolved, the Department provided support for the program on two levels. Officers at the NSW Curriculum and Learning Innovation Centre (CLIC) provided support to:

- identify schools to participate in the program
- make initial contact and liaise with schools
- prepare the annual booklists
- provide suggestions and advice on class activities.

At the school level, principals supported the program by providing time for a staff member to undertake management of the ordering process and distribution of the books to students by the school *Book Bank* manager.

The DCC program manager coordinated the provision of the books and promotional materials involving:

- development of program guidelines
- *Book Bank* swapping poster, book stickers, display material and book bags for class use
- preparation of the four stage-based catalogues, each semester
- sorting and packaging books for shipment to schools
- organisation of promotional events
- sponsorship funding.

The major ongoing responsibilities of DCC were the production of the catalogues each semester, and preparation and distribution of the class sets of books.

Each year CLIC sent the list of new releases for the *NSW Premier’s Reading Challenge* (PRC) to DCC in October. The communications and fundraising coordinator at DCC sorted the books by publisher and checked availability, before creating each of the four catalogues. The process took about two weeks.

DCC purchased the books and compiled the sets of books, organised by class and term. The school orders were distributed by DCC and school *Book Bank* managers contacted DCC if there were any problems with the books.

At the commencement of the pilot, the DCC program manager organised an event for each school. A DCC ambassador launched the program and spoke to students about reading and *Book Bank*. The Department program manager was present at each launch.

The program managers made several visits to pilot schools, especially at the beginning of the program. One school *Book Bank* manager interviewed appreciated the support DCC personnel has provided:

“[The program managers] from Dymocks are great. We’ve done a lot of things with them. They are very supportive if we need extras [books].”

6.3 Sponsorship

The most effective aspects of the partnership between DCC and the Department were the development of the *Book Bank* model and the pilot project to trial the program. The outcome was that over 1100 students received eight books of their own choosing to keep at no cost to the schools or their communities.

Students were aware that the books were donated. One school *Book Bank* manager commented:

“At the beginning of the project we discussed the fact that they were getting the books free.”

One student mentioned how *Book Bank* helped disadvantaged students:

“If people are poor, and they have a child who really likes to read, the Book Bank is giving them free books. It makes it a bit fairer.”

One parent indicated the value of *Book Bank* in terms of community engagement,

“The money comes from private business and I think that’s wonderful that the community is able to contribute to our school.”

Glossary

TERM	DESCRIPTION
AECG	Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc. (NSW)
AEO	Aboriginal Education Officer
Ambassador	A high profile individual who promotes reading through the <i>Book Bank</i> program to students and the wider community (e.g. Ahn Do and Adam Spencer)
Assessment	Method of evaluating student performance
Benchmark	Standard against which performance is measured
Best practice	Judgement of a particular practice against a stated benchmark
<i>Book Bank</i>	Students in Years 3-6 are provided with a book of their own each term for reading, sharing and swapping. http://www.bookbonus.org.au/AboutBookBank.aspx
<i>Book Bank</i> school team	The <i>Book Bank</i> model includes a school team made up of student <i>Book Bank</i> managers, a staff support person (school <i>Book Bank</i> manager), and a parent community support person.
Book Bonus	<i>Book Bonus</i> is a fundraising partnership between participating schools and Dymocks Children's Charities to raise funds for new books for each school and for <i>Book Bank</i> through sponsorship of individual students in the PRC. (http://www.bookbonus.org.au/)
DCC	Dymocks Children's Charities
DEC	Department of Education and Communities (from April 2011)
DET	NSW Department of Education and Training (prior to April 2011)
Effective	Producing a desired result
Efficient	Well organised; achieving result with minimal resources, time and effort
EMSAD	Educational Measurement and School Accountability Directorate
Engagement	Student engagement in learning is identified by on-task behaviours that signal a serious investment in class work (Professional Support and Curriculum Directorate, 2003).
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy
OC	Opportunity classes for gifted and talented students in Stage 3 provided in 74 schools in NSW.
PEC	Program Evaluation Committee (Public Schools NSW)
PERG	Program Evaluation Reference Group
PRC	NSW Premier's Reading Challenge

Priority Schools Program (PSP)	Schools which serve communities with the highest concentrations of low socio-economic status families. Schools are identified by a voluntary and confidential survey of families every four years.
SED	School Education Director
SES	Socio-economic status
SLSO	School Learning Support Officer
SMART	School Measurement, Assessment and Reporting Toolkit
Strategy	Action to achieve a goal in a particular program
Teaching sequence	Units contained within a specific program working together to achieve overall effect
ToR	Terms of Reference

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Appendix 1: 2011 student survey results

STUDENT SURVEY 2011

Q1.1 The name of my school is...

Student respondents by school	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
School A	59	11%
School B	182	35%
School C	224	43%
School D	32	6%
School E	20	4%

Q1.2 I am in...

Year of respondent	
Year 2	8%
Year 3	21%
Year 4	19%
Year 5	18%
Year 6	34%

Q1.3 I am a...

Gender of respondent	
Boys	48%
Girls	52%

Q1.4 Are you a member of the Book Bank team at your school?

Book Bank team member	
Yes	35%
No	27%
I don't know	38%

Q2.1 How often do you read just because you want to?

Frequency of reading for enjoyment	
Every day	46%
2 or 3 times a week	31%
About once a week	12%
Hardly ever	10%

Q2.2 Did you enjoy the book you received from the Book Bank?

Enjoyment of the book received from Book Bank	
Yes	93%
No	7%

Q2.3 When you talk about your book to others, does it make you want to read more books?

Sharing and interest in reading	
Yes	72%
No	28%

Q2.4 Did you choose your own book from the Book Bank list?

Student choice of book from <i>Book Bank</i> list	
Yes	88%
No	12%

Q2.5 Why did you choose that book?

Reasons for choosing the book	
Because it was about a topic that interests me	58%
Because I liked the description from the list	25%
Because it had pictures	15%
Because my friends recommended it	10%
Because a teacher recommended it	5%
Because I liked the picture on the cover	28%
Because I knew I could read it without help	24%
Because it was written by an author I liked	22%

Q2.6 Do you have Book Bank sharing time in your class?

<i>Book Bank</i> sharing time	
Yes	69%
No	31%

Q2.7 Does talking about the Book Bank books in class help you choose a book to read?

Sharing in class and book choice	
Yes, it helps a lot	41%
Yes, it helps a little bit	36%
No, it doesn't help at all	5%
No, we don't talk about our books	18%

Q2.8 What did you do with the book you received from Book Bank last time?

Ownership of the book from <i>Book Bank</i>	
I didn't get a book last time	10%
I took the book home to keep	51%
I left the book at school	32%
Other	7%

Q3.1 Do you swap or borrow books from Book Bank?

Swapping or borrowing from <i>Book Bank</i>	
Yes	75%
No	25%

Q3.2 How often do you swap or borrow books from Book Bank?

Frequency of swapping or borrowing	
When I've finished a book	80%
Once a week	11%
Once a month	9%

Q3.3 Who helps you swap books from the Book Bank?

Help with swapping the book	
My teacher	25%
The librarian	9%
My classmates	23%
A student who helps run <i>Book Bank</i>	4%
A teacher from another class	3%
Someone from my family	3%
A school parent or helper	4%
Nobody	41%

Q3.4 When do you read books from the Book Bank?

Times of reading the book	
In class time	83%
During recess or lunch	5%
During library time	9%
During <i>Book Bank</i> sharing time	16%
After school	22%
At night	27%

Q3.5 Where do you read books from the Book Bank?

Where books are read	
At school	88%
At home	44%
Before or after school care	6%
Other	8%

Q3.6 Have you written a comment on a sticker in the book from Book Bank?

Writing comments on the <i>Book Bank</i> sticker	
Yes	79%
No	21%

Q3.7 Do you think writing a comment about the book on the Book Bank sticker is a good idea?

<i>Book Bank</i> sticker comments are valued	
Yes	65%
No	35%

If Yes, please say why...

Q4.1 Do students help run Book Bank at your school?

Student involvement in running <i>Book Bank</i>	
Yes	34%
No	17%
I don't know	48%

Q4.2 Have there been any special Book Bank activities at your school?

Special <i>Book Bank</i> activities at the school	
Yes	27%
No	73%

If Yes, please write what happened.

Q4.4 Has anyone visited your school to talk about Book Bank?

School visitors to talk about <i>Book Bank</i>	
Yes	86%
No	14%

Q4.5 After you listened to the visitor, what did you think that you would do?

Special <i>Book Bank</i> activities at the school	
Try to read more books	64%
Get help when my book is hard to read	13%
Read different kinds of books	42%
Read at home more often	27%
None of the above	7%

Q4.6 Did the *Book Bank* at school make you more interested in reading books?

Impact of <i>Book Bank</i> on interest in reading books			
Impact of <i>Book Bank</i> on interest in reading books, by Stage	Pre-Stage 3	Stage 3	All
Yes	89%	86%	87%
No	11%	14%	13%

Appendix 1: 2011 teacher survey results

TEACHER SURVEY 2011

Q1.1 The name of my school is...

Student respondents by school	Respondents	Percentage of total
School A	8	26.7%
School C	8	26.7%
School D	2	6.7%
School E	6	20.0%
School B	6	20.0%

Q1.2 My role at school is best described as...

Role at school	
Class teacher	23
Teaching executive	6
Non-teaching executive	1

Q1.3 I have been working at this school for...

Working at this school for	
This year only	6
1-3 Years	3
More than 3 years	21

Q1.4 I am currently teaching...

Currently teaching	
Stage 1/2	4
Stage 2	9
Stage 2/3	1
Stage 3	13
Other	3

Q1.5 I have been using Book Bank with my students for...

Using Book Bank for	
This year only	10
This year and last year	18
I am in a non-teaching role	1
I have not used Book Bank with my students	1

Q2.1 My students needed assistance choosing their first book from catalogue this year...

Needed assistance	
Strongly Agree	2
Agree	13
Disagree	14
Strongly disagree	0
Not applicable. I have not implemented the Book Bank with a class this year.	1

Q2.2: Most students chose a book that they could read independently...

Read Independently	
Strongly agree	8
Agree	19
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	0
Not applicable. I have not implemented the <i>Book Bank</i> with a class this year.	1

Q2.3 Students read books from Book Bank...

Read books from <i>Book Bank</i> during	
During silent reading time in class	26
During <i>free</i> time in class	24
During library time	0
During <i>Book Bank</i> sharing	12
During recess or lunch	4
Outside school hours	13
Not applicable. I have not implemented the <i>Book Bank</i> with a class this year.	2

Q2.4 I use Book Bank in my classroom...

<i>Book Bank</i> in my classroom	
As a free choice activity i.e. reading for pleasure	2
As silent reading e.g. DEAR, SSR	9
As part of my teaching program for reading	2
As silent reading and as part of my teaching program for reading	2
All of the above	13
Not applicable. I have not implemented the <i>Book Bank</i> with a class this year.	2

Q2.5 My students swap or borrow books from Book Bank...

Swap or borrow books	
More than five time a term	9
Three to five times a term	9
One or two times per term	9
Not at all	0
Not applicable. I have not implemented the <i>Book Bank</i> with a class this year.	3

Q2.6 Students read the sticker inside each book and write comments...

Read the sticker and write comments	
Strongly agree	9
Agree	14
Disagree	4
Strongly disagree	1
Not applicable. I have not implemented the <i>Book Bank</i> with a class this year.	2

Q2.7 The Book Bank poster which records books my students have read has been helpful...

Book Bank Poster	
Strongly agree	4
Agree	12
Disagree	8
Strongly disagree	1
I did not receive a poster	3
Not applicable. I have not implemented the <i>Book Bank</i> with a class this year.	2

Q2.8 Student ownership of books is an important part of Book Bank...

Ownership of books	
Strongly agree	20
Agree	7
Disagree	1
Not applicable. I have not implemented the <i>Book Bank</i> with a class this year.	2

Q2.9 I have been effectively supported to implement Book Bank with my students...

Support to implement Book Bank	
Strongly agree	10
Agree	14
Disagree	3
Strongly disagree	1
Not applicable. I have not implemented the <i>Book Bank</i> with a class this year.	2

Q2.10 One or more students in my class are involved in the organisation of Book Bank...

Students involved in the organisation	
At class level	14
At school level	2
Not involved	10
I don't know	1
Not applicable. I have not implemented the <i>Book Bank</i> with a class this year.	3

Q2.11 The following are strengths of the Book Bank program based on my experience...

Strengths of Book Bank	
Students receive four books per year to read and take home to keep	27
Students are given access to books that are included on the list for the NSW Premier's Reading Challenge	22
Students choose their own books	26
Students can write comments about books on the sticker inside each book	15
Students talk about their books with their classmates	22
Books are shared within the class	24
The program has been promoted by popular identities	9
Not applicable. I have not implemented the <i>Book Bank</i> with a class this year.	1

Q3.1 Students are enthusiastic about reading books from the class Book Bank...

Enthusiastic about reading books	
Strongly agree	17
Agree	13
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0

Q3.2 Please write the reasons for your response to the statement above.

Q3.3 The attitude of students to reading has improved since they received their first book from Book Bank this year

Attitude of students	
Strongly agree	13
Agree	17
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0

Q3.4 Students read more frequently since we have had Book Bank in the class (including books from places other than Book Bank)...

Students read more frequently	
Strongly agree	15
Agree	13
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	0

Q3.5: Book Bank has contributed to students' reading skill development...

Reading skill development	
Strongly agree	12
Agree	17
Disagree	1
Strongly disagree	0

Item 3.6: The impact of Book Bank on students' reading behaviour is evident through...

Impact on students' reading behaviour	
Students borrow more frequently from the school library	5
Students demonstrating increased self-initiated reading for pleasure	23
Students demonstrating increased participation/self confidence in reading activities	15
Students selecting more complex and varied reading materials	19
None of the above	0

Item 3.7: The aspect of Book Bank which most supports student's engagement with reading is...

Students' engagement with reading	
Students receive a book that they can keep	24
Students choose which book they get to keep	22
Students write comments about a book on the sticker inside the cover	9
Students talk with others about the books they have read	13
Students can swap <i>Book Bank</i> books in their class	20
None of the above.	0

Item 4.1: I am part of the Book Bank team...

Part of the <i>Book Bank</i> team	
Yes	4
No	26

Item 4.2: I have been involved in discussions about the implementation of Book Bank...

Involved in the implementation of <i>Book Bank</i>	
Yes	20
No	10

Item 4.3: Are any parents / school community members involved in the organisation of Book Bank...

Involved in the implementation of <i>Book Bank</i>	
Yes	6
No	24

Item 5.1: The Book Bank program at my school has been managed effectively...

Management of <i>Book Bank</i>	
Strongly agree	16
Agree	14
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0

Q5.2: The book selection process for Book Bank has been efficient...

Selection process is efficient	
Strongly agree	11
Agree	18
Disagree	1
Strongly disagree	0

Q5.3: Book Bank supports the school literacy program...

<i>Book Bank</i> supports school literacy program	
Strongly agree	15
Agree	13
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	0

Q5.4: *Most parents know how the Book Bank program works at our school...*

Parents know how the <i>Book Bank</i> program works	
Strongly agree	7
Agree	14
Disagree	7
Strongly disagree	2

Q5.5: *I would recommend participation in the Book Bank program to another school...*

Recommend participation in the <i>Book Bank</i>	
Strongly agree	24
Agree	6
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0

Appendix 2: 2012 student survey results

STUDENT SURVEY 2012

Q1.1 The name of my school is...

Student respondents by school	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
School A	189	36%
School B	95	18%
School C	48	9%
School D	17	3%
School E	177	34%

Q1.2 I am in...

Year of respondent	
Year 2	18
Year 3	149
Year 4	119
Year 5	105
Year 6	135

Q1.3 I am a...

Gender of respondent	
Boys	260
Girls	266

Q2.1 At home I mainly like to... (You can select up to 3 answers.)

Student home and leisure interests	
Make or draw things	181
Listen to music	155
Watch TV	254
Play a musical instrument	27
Read	203
Use the computer	170
Play electronic games, e.g. Xbox, Playstation	209
Play inside	63
Play outside	216

Q2.2: How often do you read just because you want to (just for fun)?

Frequency of reading for fun	
Every day	45%
2 or 3 times a week	31%
About once a week	13%
Hardly ever	9%
Never	3%

Q2.3 How many of your Book Bank books did you enjoy (this year)?

Enjoyment of books	
All of them	59%
Nearly all of them	22%
Some of them	17%
None of them	3%

Q2.4 How many Book Bank books did you choose by yourself, from the Book Bank list?

Student choice of book from <i>Book Bank</i> list	
All of them	49%
Nearly all of them	21%
Some of them	26%
None of them	5%

Q2.5 Why did you choose those books? (You can select more than one answer.)

Reasons for choosing books	
They were on topics that interested me	299
I liked the descriptions from the list	146
The books had pictures	93
My friends recommended the books	88
A teacher recommended the books	38
I liked the pictures on the covers	167
I thought I could read them without help	88
I liked other books by the author	148

Q2.6 How much did talking about Book Bank books in class (e.g. in sharing time) help you choose a book to read?

Sharing in class and book choice	
It helped a lot	38%
It helped a little bit	30%
It didn't help at all	6%
We don't talk about our <i>Book Bank</i> books in class	25%

Q2.7 What did you do with the first book you received from Book Bank this year?

Ownership of the book from <i>Book Bank</i>	
I didn't get a book	4%
I took the book home to keep	38%
The book is in the class <i>Book Bank</i>	57%
The book was lost	2%

Q 2.8 How many books from Book Bank have you been given to keep so far this year?

Number of books received from <i>Book Bank</i>	
1 book	8%
2 books	22%
3 books	51%
4 books	16%
I didn't get a book to keep this year	4%

Q3.1 Does your teacher let you take any Book Bank books home to read?

Taking <i>Book Bank</i> books home	
Yes	58%
No	42%

Q3.2 Did you swap (borrow) books from Book Bank?

Swapping or borrowing books	
Yes	59%
No	41%

Q3.3 Who most helps you to swap books from Book Bank? (You can select more than one answer)

Help with swapping the book	
My teacher	74
My classmates	107
Another teacher	13
A school helper	12
Nobody helps me	79
I don't need any help to swap my book	114

Q3.4 When do you read books from the Book Bank? (You can select more than one answer.)

When <i>Book Bank</i> books are read	
In class time	392
During recess or lunch	35
During library time	58
During <i>Book Bank</i> sharing time	111
Before or after school	101
At night	161
On weekends	126
I don't read books from <i>Book Bank</i>	17

Q3.5 How often have you written comments on a sticker in a book from Book Bank?

Writing comments on the <i>Book Bank</i> sticker	
Many times	45%
Sometimes	42%
Never	13%

Q3.6 Do you like reading comments on the stickers inside the Book Bank books?

<i>Book Bank</i> sticker comments are valued	
Yes	86%
No	14%

Q4.1 Have there been any special Book Bank activities at your school this year?

Special <i>Book Bank</i> activities at the school	
Yes	25%
No	28%
I don't know	47%

Q4.2 Does Book Bank make you more interested in reading books?

<i>Increased interest in reading</i>	
Yes	76%
No	10%
I am not sure	14%

Q4.3 Does Book Bank make reading fun?

<i>Book Bank increases reading fun</i>	
Yes	77%
No	10%
I am not sure	13%

Q4.4 Is there anything you would like to change about Book Bank?

<i>Changes to Book Bank</i>	
Yes	74%
No	26%

Appendix 2: 2012 teacher survey results

TEACHER SURVEY 2012

Q1.1: The name of my school is...

Student respondents by school	Respondents	Percentage of total
School A	6	29%
School C	5	24%
School D	2	10%
School E	3	14%
School B	5	24%

Q1.2: My role at school is best described as...

Role at school	
Class teacher	16
Learning support teacher	0
Teaching executive	5
Teacher librarian	0

Q1.3: I have been working at this school for...

Working at this school for	
Less than one year	1
1-3 Years	7
More than 3 years	13

Q1.4: I am currently teaching...

Currently teaching	
Stage 1/2	2
Stage 2	8
Stage 2/3	4
Stage 3	7
Other	0

Q1.5: I have used Book Bank with my students in the following calendar year or years... (select one or more)

Used Book Bank for	
2010	8
2011	15
2012	20

Q2.1 My students needed assistance choosing their first book from catalogue this year...

Needed assistance	
Strongly agree	5
Agree	12
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	0
My students did not choose their own books	0

Q2.2 Most students chose a book that they could read independently...

Read Independently	
Strongly agree	5
Agree	12
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	0
My students did not choose their own books	0

Q2.3 Students read books from Book Bank...

Read books from <i>Book Bank</i> during	
During silent reading time in class	17
During <i>free</i> time in class	16
During library time	2
During <i>Book Bank</i> sharing	10
During recess or lunch	1
Outside school hours	9

Q2.4 Most of my students swap or borrow books from Book Bank...

Swap or borrow from <i>Book Bank</i>	
More than 5 times per term	4
3-5 times per term	8
1 or 2 times per term	6
Not at all.	1

Q2.5: My students take Book Bank books home to read on a regular basis...

Take books home to read	
More than 5 times per term	2
3-5 times per term	3
1 or 2 times per term	7
Not at all	7

Q2.6: My students take their own Book Bank book home to keep...

Take books home to keep	
At the end of term	9
At the end of the semester	8
At the end of the year	2
Their books stay at school	0

Q2.7 One or more students in my class are involved in the operation of Book Bank across the school...

Students involved in <i>Book Bank</i> operation	
Yes	5
No	14

Q2.8 Based on my experience, the following are the strengths of the Book Bank program... (select one or more)

Strengths of program	
Students receive four books per year to read and take home to keep	17
Students are given access to books that are included on the list for the NSW Premier's Reading Challenge	16
Students choose their own book	16
Students can write comments about books on the sticker inside each book	9
Students talk about their books with their classmates	14
Books are shared within the class (Students swap <i>Book Bank</i> books)	15
The program has been promoted by popular identities	4
Students help manage the program across the school as part of the <i>Book Bank</i> team	2

Q2.9 Is there anything you would like to change about the way Book Bank works?

Changes to Book Bank	
No	15
Yes	4

Q3.1 My students are enthusiastic about reading their own books from Book Bank...

Enthusiastic about reading own books	
Strongly agree	13
Agree	6
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0

Q3.2 My students are enthusiastic about reading classmates' books from Book Bank...

Enthusiastic about reading classmates' books	
Strongly agree	8
Agree	11
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0

Q3.3 My students are enthusiastic about reading and writing comments on the Book Bank sticker...

Enthusiastic about using stickers	
Strongly agree	6
Agree	8
Disagree	5
Strongly disagree	0

Q3.4 Book Bank has contributed to my students' reading skill development...

Reading skill development	
Strongly agree	3
Agree	15
Disagree	1
Strongly disagree	0

Q3.5 Book Bank promotes the enjoyment of reading for my students...

Promotes enjoyment of reading	
Strongly agree	11
Agree	8
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0

Item 3.6: Because of Book Bank... (select one or more)

Impact on students' reading behaviour	
Students demonstrate increased self-initiated reading for pleasure	16
Students demonstrate increased participation/self-confidence in class reading activities	11
Students select more complex and varied reading materials	12
Students borrow more frequently from the school library	2
None of the above	1

Q3.7 Which are the most important aspects of Book Bank for promoting engagement with reading... (select one or more)

Students' engagement with reading	
Students receive a book that they can keep	17
Students can choose their own books	16
Students write comments about a book on the sticker inside the cover	5
Students can swap <i>Book Bank</i> books in their class	11
Other	0

Q3.8 If the Book Bank program ended, what impact would that have on your students' engagement with reading? (maximum of 600 characters)

Q4.1 I use Book Bank in my classroom: (select one or more)...

Use in classroom	
As a free choice activity i.e. reading for pleasure	19
As silent reading e.g. DEAR, SSR	16
As part of my teaching program for reading	3

Item 4.2 The Book Bank poster which records the books my students have read has been helpful...

Usefulness of poster	
Strongly agree	2
Agree	8
Disagree	4
Strongly disagree	0
I did not receive a poster	5

Item 4.3 I have Book Bank sharing time so my students can talk about Book Bank books they have read...

Book Bank sharing time in class	
Yes	13
No	6

Q4.4 My students write comments for other students on the Book Bank sticker...

Students write comments on stickers	
Many times	8
Sometimes	6
Hardly ever	5

Item 5.1 I am a member of the Book Bank team this year...

Member of Book Bank team	
Yes	3
No	16

Q5.2 This year I have participated in discussions with other teachers about the operation of Book Bank to... (select one or more)

Discussion with other teachers	
Share ideas	11
Make improvements	3
Solve issues	1
I have not discussed the operation of Book Bank with other teachers this year	7

Q5.3 At this school the Book Bank program, including book selection and distribution, has been managed effectively...

Program managed effectively	
Strongly agree	9
Agree	10
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0

Q5.4 Book Bank helps the school meet its literacy targets...

Helps meet literacy targets	
Strongly agree	4
Agree	14
Disagree	1
Strongly disagree	0

Q5.5 Most parents know how Book Bank works at our school...

Parents understand Book Bank	
Strongly agree	1
Agree	12
Disagree	6
Strongly disagree	0

Q5.6 Do you know who provides Book Bank for your school?

Know who provides <i>Book Bank</i>	
Yes	16
No	3

Q5.7 Ambassadors are an important part of Book Bank because: (select one or more)...

Ambassadors are important	
They encourage students to read	15
Students are motivated to listen to a popular identity	16
They promote the idea that reading is important	15
The ambassador makes the students excited about reading books	14
The students like receiving their book from the ambassador	8
There is a special event when ambassadors visit the school	7
I don't think ambassadors are an important part of <i>Book Bank</i>	0

Q5.8 Would it be helpful for you to make contact with other schools that run Book Bank?

Contact with other schools	
Yes	10
No	9

Q5.9 I would recommend Book Bank to another school...

Recommend <i>Book Bank</i>	
Strongly agree	17
Agree	2
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0

Appendix 2: 2012 parent survey results

PARENT SURVEY 2012

Q1 The name of the school my (eldest) child attends is...

School Name	
School A	29%
School B	4%
School C	41%
School D	19%
School E	6%

Q2 My eldest child at this school is in...

Eldest child school year	
K to Year 2	29%
Year 3	4%
Year 4	41%
Year 5	19%
Year 6	6%

Q3 Do you have other children at this school participating in Book Bank?

Other children using Book Bank	
Yes	31%
No	60%
I don't know	9%

Q4 How did you find out about the Book Bank program? (You may tick more than one answer)

Parent information about Book Bank	
My child/children told me about Book Bank	46
A teacher at the school told me about Book Bank.	22
I heard about Book Bank at a school meeting or assembly	11
I read about Book Bank in the school newsletter	21
I went to a special event for Book Bank	2
Another parent told me about Book Bank	1
I have not heard about Book Bank before today	6

Q5 Do you know how Book Bank works in your (eldest) child's class?

Knowledge of Book Bank operation	
Yes	60%
No	40%

Q6 Does your child bring home any books from Book Bank to read?

Child brings Book Bank book home to read	
Yes	71%
No	11%
I don't know	8%
I am not sure if the books are from Book Bank	11%

Q7 Did your child bring home a book from Book Bank to keep?

Child brings <i>Book Bank</i> book home to keep	
Yes	74%
No	8%
I don't know	18%

Q8 Has your child enjoyed choosing their own books from Book Bank this year?

Child enjoys choosing books from <i>Book Bank</i>	
Yes	74%
No	2%
I don't know	22%
My child didn't choose a book from <i>Book Bank</i>	3%

Q9 At home, does your child read other students' books from Book Bank?

Reads other students' <i>Book Bank</i> books at home	
Yes	46%
No	32%
I don't know	22%

Q10 Does your child write comments on the sticker inside other children's books from Book Bank?

Child writes comments on other students' stickers	
Yes	32%
No	29%
I don't know	26%
I have not seen any <i>Book Bank</i> stickers	12%

Q11 Does your (eldest) child read at home for fun?

Child reads at home for fun	
Yes	92%
No	8%
I don't know	0%

Q12 When does your child read at home for fun? (You may tick more than one answer.)

Times child reads at home for fun	
Before school	8
After school	23
At night	49
On the weekends	31

Q13: Has your child's interest in reading at home increased since they've had Book Bank at school?

Increased interest in reading at home	
Yes	57%
No	14%
I don't know	29%

Q14: Has your child's interest in reading activities at school increased since they've had Book Bank at school?

Increased interest in reading at school	
Yes	59%
No	10%
I don't know	32%

Q15 Which aspect of Book Bank do you think most helps your child with reading?

Helpful aspects of Book Bank	
My child receives four books a year to keep	16
My child can choose the books they get to keep	31
My child is encouraged to talk with classmates about the books they have read	17
My child can swap Book Bank books with classmates	21
Book Bank provides books from the Premier's Reading Challenge list	9
None of the above	6

Note: Data indicates parents chose more than one aspect

Q16 Does Book Bank make reading fun for your child?

Book Bank makes reading fun	
Yes	86%
No	0%
I don't know	14%

Q17 Are you aware of any request for parents or community members to help with the running of the Book Bank at school?

Requests for parent help	
Yes	15%
No	85%

Q18 Have you been aware of any Book Bank events at school?

Awareness of Book Bank events	
Yes	44%
No	56%

Q19 Do you know who provides Book Bank for your school?

Awareness of origin of Book Bank	
Yes	41%
No	59%

Appendix 3: Qualitative evaluation schedules

Interview Questions 2011

Students

1. How does the *Book Bank* work at your school?
2. Who organises *Book Bank* in your school?
3. Have you had any visitors come to school to talk about reading and *Book Bank*?
4. What do you like about *Book Bank*?
5. What helps you learn to read and become a better reader?
6. Is there anything you would like to change about *Book Bank*?

Teachers

1. How does the *Book Bank* work at your school?
2. Does *Book Bank* have an impact on your students' engagement with reading? How?
3. Do you think *Book Bank* helps your students improve their reading?
How? How do you know?
4. Who organises *Book Bank* in your school?
5. Have you had any visitors come to school to talk about reading and *Book Bank*?
6. Would you like *Book Bank* to continue at your school? Why?

Principal

1. How does the *Book Bank* work at your school?
2. Who organises *Book Bank* at your school?
3. Have you had any visitors come to school to promote *Book Bank*?
4. Has *Book Bank* had a positive impact on teaching practice in reading/literacy?
5. Does *Book Bank* have a positive effect on reading engagement for all students?
6. Do you think *Book Bank* helps your students learn to read and become better readers?
7. Please outline any other benefits of the *Book Bank* program for your school.
8. Are there any issues associated with *Book Bank*?
9. Is the management and operation of *Book Bank* at your school sustainable?
10. Would you like *Book Bank* to continue at your school? Why?

Parents

1. Do you know about *Book Bank*? Tell me what you know.
2. Do you think *Book Bank* has increased your child's interest in reading?
3. What helps your child learn to read and become a better reader?
4. Have any visitors come to school to talk about reading and *Book Bank*?

Book Bank team

1. How does the *Book Bank* work at your school?
2. What is your role?
3. Have you had any visitors come to school to promote *Book Bank*?
4. Would you like *Book Bank* to continue at your school? Why?

DCC and Department Program Managers

1. What are the essential elements of the *Book Bank* program?
2. What research informed the design of the program? Is *Book Bank* modelled on any other programs? If so, what are they?
Book Bank was designed to promote reading engagement in terms of students choosing to read more often, read for longer periods, read more widely and make positive comments about books and reading.
3. What evidence is there, in the feedback you have obtained from schools, that there have been positive changes in student engagement with reading? What comments have schools made about the effectiveness of the *Book Bank* model, i.e. book choice, book ownership, book sharing (talking about books) and book swapping?
4. Is there any evidence that the sticker provided for writing comments has contributed to student engagement with reading?
5. What evidence is there, in feedback you have obtained from schools, that there has been a positive impact of *Book Bank* on student reading achievement?
6. Please give details of any changes to the operation of *Book Bank* that have occurred during the implementation of *Book Bank* in particular schools or with particular processes.
7. How have you supported schools in the operation and management of *Book Bank*?
8. Are there any issues for DCC/DEC with the organisation and management of *Book Bank*, including issues for particular schools? Please outline.
9. Who are the key participants in the pilot schools? Have there been any changes to the key roles identified in the original design?
10. What has been the impact of the *Book Bank* ambassador in the pilot schools?
11. What feedback have you received from the *Book Bank* managers/team about their impact on *Book Bank*? Have you considered any changes? If so, please explain.

DCC and Department Program Managers

12. How many schools, teachers and students were involved with *Book Bank* in 2011? Have there been any changes in 2012?
13. Please describe the workload for the program manager in terms of personnel and time involved.
14. Please identify any issues of sustainability for the *Book Bank* program that you envisage.
15. Is the *Book Bank* model suitable for expansion? In what ways?
16. In what ways is it unsuitable?
17. What would be required in terms of personnel and funding?
Are there any other aspects that need to be considered?
18. What were the steps in the development of the design of the program and your role in the decision making?
At what point was the partnership with DBB/DEC established?
19. What are the strengths of the partnership between Dymocks Children's Charities and the NSW Department of Education and Communities?
What are the weaknesses?
20. The *Book Bank* catalogue is updated annually to link to the list of books for the Premier's Reading Challenge.
What are the advantages and disadvantages for Dymocks Children's Charities and Department with this arrangement?
What could be improved?
21. Outline any advantages or disadvantages of the partnership model that was set up. Describe your degree of satisfaction.
22. What has your organisation planned for *Book Bank* beyond the end (Semester 1, 2012) of the pilot?
23. Is there anything you would like to add?

Interview Questions 2012

Students

INTRODUCTION – Names and classes of students

1. Does *Book Bank* work differently to last year? How?
What have you done with the books you received from *Book Bank*?
(Check: swap, own, share, sticker)
2. Who organises *Book Bank* in your school?
What does your teacher do with *Book Bank*?
How do you know when the books have arrived?
3. Have you had any special events about *Book Bank* this year?
4. Do you think *Book Bank* has helped you learn to read and become a better reader? How did it help?
Are you doing the NSW Premier's Reading Challenge?
5. What is the best thing about *Book Bank*?
Does it make school more fun?
6. Would you like *Book Bank* to continue? What if it stopped?

Teachers

INTRODUCTION – Classes being taught

1. How does the *Book Bank* work in your classroom?
Have you made any changes in your approach to reading (how you teach it) and/or literacy now that *Book Bank* has been established?
Does *Book Bank* support your role as a literacy teacher? How?
How do you assist students select their books?
2. Who organises *Book Bank* in your school? Does the model work? Could it be done differently?
3. In Phase 1 I heard a lot about how *Book Bank* raised students' motivation and confidence in reading. Do you think *Book Bank* is continuing to help your students improve their reading?
What specific aspects of reading/literacy is *Book Bank* having an impact on? (comprehension, spelling, vocab, writing...) How do you know? What is maintaining this, do you think?
In what ways?
4. For those students who have had *Book Bank* since 2010
What aspects of *Book Bank* continue to engage them?
What aspects have become less important?
Has there been an impact on the use of the school library?
5. Have you had any visitors come to school to talk about reading and *Book Bank*? Any special events?
What sort of person makes a suitable ambassador?
6. Would you like *Book Bank* to continue at your school?
What would you do when *Book Bank* stops?

Principal

1. What is the program's legacy to date?
What benefits have your school derived from *Book Bank*?
2. How are decisions about the operation and management of *Book Bank* made?
What support for the program has your school received from the Department and/or DCC this year?
3. In what ways does your school support *Book Bank*?
Are these aspects sustainable?

Has *Book Bank* had a positive impact on teaching practice in reading/literacy?
4. Do you think *Book Bank* helps your students learn to read and become better readers?
Does *Book Bank* have any impact on any new literacy reading initiatives? How?
5. Are there any issues associated with the operation of *Book Bank*?
Are there any opportunities?
6. If the sponsorship of the books for *Book Bank* program was withdrawn what would happen to the program at your school?
If Dymocks Children's Charities continued to manage the program what options would you consider?
7. Would you like *Book Bank* to continue at your school? Why?
Would you recommend *Book Bank* to another school?

Parents

1. What do you know about how *Book Bank* works in your child's class?
Did your child bring any books home to keep?
Does your child read at home? How often and for how long? Is this homework? Do they read for fun at home? Does your child read books from the *Book Bank* at home? How do you find out how is going?
If your child had *Book Bank* last year, are there any differences in the way it is used this year?
2. Do you think *Book Bank* has increased your child's interest in reading?
What does your child say about *Book Bank*?
Book Bank has been running for a while. Is your child as interested in reading books now as when the program first started? Why do you think this?
Does your child swap books with other students?
Is your child interested in the sticker inside the book from *Book Bank*? Why?
3. Does *Book Bank* encourage your child to read more and become a better reader? In what ways?
4. Have there been any events to promote *Book Bank*?
What happened? How does the school promote *Book Bank* to the school community?
5. If the sponsorship of *Book Bank* stopped would parents be willing to pay for the books their child receives if Dymocks Children's Charities continued to manage the program?
Would you recommend the program to other parents?
What is your main reason?

Book Bank team

INTRODUCTION – How long have you been the teacher manager/ a team member of *Book Bank*?

1. Have there been any changes to the way *Book Bank* works at your school?
Is there any variation between classes?
Were there any aspects of the model changed to suit the school?
Have there been any enhancements?
How do students choose their book? Is it a difficult process? Why?
Are there any issues with book ordering?
What support do you receive from DCC and the Department?
Do students take other student's books home to read?
What did students do with the book they were given from *Book Bank* at the beginning of the year?
2. What is your role? (Direct this question to any student *Book Bank* team members.)
What time is involved? Is it easier now *Book Bank* has been running for a while?
Is there a team? Is a team necessary or helpful?
What do team members do?
Do you interact with the students in class? When?
Do classes get spares/extras?
Have any books been lost or damaged? What did you do about this?
3. Have there been any events to promote *Book Bank*?
Describe what happened.
If not, do you think it would be helpful to have a special event? Any ideas?
How is *Book Bank* publicised, i.e. school community made aware of the program?
4. Please outline any other benefits of the *Book Bank* program for your school.
Is your school involved in the NSW Premier's Reading Challenge?
5. Would you like *Book Bank* to continue at your school? Why?
Is there anything you would like to change about *Book Bank*?
What would happen if funding for the program stopped? Has this been discussed?
What do you see as the program's legacy to date?

Policy, Planning and Reporting Unit
Level 1, 1 Oxford St
Darlinghurst NSW 2010

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Education &
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