

Reading Rulz this summer!



The simple rules for a fun summer holiday are to read, read some more and read whatever you like, according to *Reading Rulz!*, a national summer reading program to be held in public libraries across Australia throughout December and January.

Summer reading programs are traditionally run in public libraries over the six-week summer holiday period. Programs engage and occupy young people of all ages in reading and sharing books, writing experiences, and fun activities such as games, craft and storytelling. Reading programs are non-competitive, recreational in nature, and have components that attract readers and non-readers from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds.

Over the 2003–2004 summer holiday period, the State Library of Queensland, in collaboration with

Queensland public library staff, developed the very successful *Dive into a book* summer reading program. *Dive into a book* generated a lot of interest from other States in Australia and a number of libraries in New South Wales and South Australia used the program over the 2003–2004 holiday period. Due to this interest, state libraries from Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australian, South Australia and ACT libraries have combined efforts to partner in the first national summer reading program, *Reading Rulz!*

The program will consist of two components:

- a library-based program where children are invited to join Summer Reading Clubs at their local library and participate in fun activities and games; and
- an interactive website [<http://www.connectqld.org.au/>

[readingrulz.com.au](http://www.readingrulz.com.au/)] created by State Library of Queensland, where young people are provided the opportunity to create and submit stories, artwork and have fun with games, puzzles and quizzes.

Reading Rulz! will be available over the six-week summer holiday period and will offer an interactive, stimulating environment which encourages young people to enjoy themselves while learning and share these activities with parents and carers.

Reading Rulz! is funded by OPAL (Online Public Access in Libraries), a State Government initiative that supports the development of Queensland web content and connectivity. Sponsors include The Bookhouse, Bolinda Publishing and James Bennett Pty Ltd. *Reading Rulz!* has been endorsed by the Council of Australian State Libraries, ALIA and the Public Library Association. ■

State premiers promote reading around Australia

Reading does rule in Australia in 2004-2005. The Australia-wide *Reading Rulz!* program is not the only reason kids will be reading over summer as there are special reading programs being held in most states and territories as well. Below is a brief outline of what is available.

Australian Capital Territory Chief Minister's Reading Challenge

Jon Stanhope, ACT chief minister, has challenged all ACT students who are in Years 3 to 8 to read twenty books in one year, starting from September 2004. Students must choose fifteen of the books from the extensive Chief Minister's Reading Challenge booklist which is broken up into three categories — Years 3 and 4, Years 5 and 6, and Years 7 and 8. Students can only read from the booklist for their year level, or the level above. Each school has to register for the challenge, and all student reading records will be submitted through the school.

Each student who successfully completes the challenge will receive a certificate, and students who complete the challenge for four consecutive years will receive a Gold Award for Reading. Prizes of book packs will be awarded to schools with the highest percentage of participants completing the challenge.

The challenge is supported by the Dymocks Literacy Foundation and *The Canberra Times*. For more information about the Chief Minister's Reading Challenge visit the website at: <http://activated.decs.act.gov.au/actlearn/readingchallenge/index.htm>.

New South Wales NSW Premier's Reading Challenge 2005



The NSW Premier's Reading Challenge is a special initiative of the Premier of New South Wales and is presented by the NSW Department of Education and Training. 2005 will be the fourth year of the challenge for students in Years 5 to 8, the second year for students in Years 3 to 4, and is the first year for students in Years K to 2. The challenge is open to students in all NSW government and non-government schools, home schools and accredited international schools. To successfully complete the challenge, students in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 must read twenty books in one year, fifteen from the challenge booklist, starting in September 2004. Students in the Years K – 2 section must experience forty books from the booklist. These students can either read the books themselves, have the books read to them, or read the books with someone in a shared reading experience.

Students who complete the challenge receive a signed certificate from the premier. Students who receive certificates for four years in a row will receive a Gold Award for Reading.

The NSW Premier's Reading Challenge 2005 is supported by the Dymocks Literacy Foundation and *The Sun-Herald*. For more information about the challenge, visit the website at: <http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/premiersreadingchallenge/index.htm>.