



Newshounds ... Teacher Testimonials

Jayne Aguiar - Year 5/ 6 Teacher, Cannon Hill State School, Qld

"I cannot recommend it highly enough. The teacher manual that comes with Newshounds means I don't need to be an expert in media literacy to teach it. Within the curriculum we look at advertising and cybersafety - but the Newshounds media literacy program adds another important element. We're living in this world where kids have so much access to information and social media is still relatively new. A lot of teachers are coming from an age where we didn't have it - so it's hard sometimes to know exactly how to integrate it and teach kids to be savvy."

Catherine Beckett, Year 4 teacher, Ngunnawal Primary School, ACT

"This program is such a beautiful package for upskilling students to identify mis- and dis-information and to think critically when they come across a range of media. It is well paced and easy to deliver; one Year 4 class did it week by week, another delivered it as a one-week intensive - both were highly successful and well received by the students. Newshounds is incredibly well thought-out, which makes it an absolute cinch to deliver (and I felt like I was upskilled in the process). Can't recommend highly enough and plan to make it a standard in our delivery of digital literacies whenever we have access to this great program."

Christy Hutt, Year 5/6 Teacher, Exeter Public School, NSW

"I have been a teacher in the NSW Public Education system for 22 years. During this time, I have seen dynamic and revolutionary shifts in how the media is presented and how my students interact with it. It is forced upon them while browsing the web, gaming and even through pop-ups in apps and social media platforms. In today's media-saturated world, it has become increasingly crucial to equip my students with the skills to decipher and analyse what they encounter online. As 21st-century learners my students navigate through a barrage of media messages daily, making it imperative that they possess the ability to critically evaluate what they see and hear.

"I have been a foundation listener and subscriber to Squiz Kids for many years and I can honestly say that Squiz Kids has led the charge in demystifying media for students while presenting information in an

accessible and non-intimidating manner. The creation of the Newshounds program stems from the urgent need for students to develop critical evaluation skills in response to their daily media exposure. "According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Australian children aged between 5 and 14 spend an average of 2 hours a day passively consuming media. However, in my experience, I feel that this figure may be significantly higher. These statistics and my anecdotal accounts highlight the importance that students must acquire the capacity to engage with media critically and perceptively.

"Newshounds fills a vital gap in our classrooms, empowering my students to decipher media bias and assess its accuracy. It is a plug-and-play program that walks students through the steps of unpacking and addressing media bias, accuracy and the authenticity of its source. The content of Newshounds seamlessly integrates with the new English Syllabus and addresses outcomes in Oral Language and Communication, Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary, and Understanding and Responding to Literature. "As teachers, we are inherently time-poor. One of the many strengths of the Newshounds program is the ease of implementation and teaching. Having the resources readily accessible and having the teacher's manual on hand means that the delivery of the lessons is consistent and relieves teachers from the burden of additional programming. Additionally, the overwhelmingly positive feedback from families after their children have accessed the program and reiterated how their child now engages with media highlights the importance of having this program as a key component of our teaching and learning programs."

Karen Forster, Year 6 Teacher, Manly State School, Qld

"We completed ALL sessions of Newshounds last year and loved it all. We even made our own podcast at the end. My biggest take away is that since doing the program she can see all of her students applying what they have learned - they are fact checking everything they see online, which as an educator, is just the most heart-warming thing to see.

"The teacher manual made it super easy to teach and the curriculum mapping meant I was able to easily slot it into existing units of work. I'll be using it again this year with my Year 5 class."

Gerald Rea, Year 6 Teacher, Belmont State School, Qld

"As a teacher of 25 years' experience, I am always adapting to our changing society and student needs. Last year in grade 6, we were conducting a unit around media bias and I came upon the 'Newshounds', and have used Squiz Kids daily reports to bring awareness of news and current affairs to my students.

"I have long been passionate about producing life-long learners but this program allowed students to understand that not everything they read or view is factual. I followed the program through totally.

"The resource they have is easily accessed by a busy class teacher who isn't the most technologically blessed."

Chris Linton, Year 5/6 Teacher, International Grammar School, NSW

"There are a lot of assumptions about the media savviness of young people in Australia, but my experiences in teaching Newshounds with Year 6 showed time and again how much explicit instruction with contemporary examples was needed to guide students in recognising problematic media and in responding to it. This program is not about pointing out these inadequacies to students, but about

participating in fun and meaningful activities which guide them in recognising and creating quality media.

Anne Hibbert, Saint Francis Xavier School, Montmorency, Vic

“We have used NewsHounds with our Year 4 classes two years in a row. It runs at the end of the year, when most teachers are dishing out 'busy work', we are running a high quality Literacy program. We value NewsHounds for its ability to make students (and adults!) *stop, think, check* in a world where fiction and reality are becoming increasingly blurred.

“The content is easy to understand, engaging and can be modified for different year levels and length of lessons.

“The students particularly enjoy analysing how media is put together - especially the dubious misinformation and disinformation.

We are extremely grateful for the team at Squiz for providing this course and hope it reaches many more students.”

Dani Phelan, Year 5 teacher, Rochedale State School, Qld

“Newshounds is an excellent media literacy program. My students were engaged and immediately applying the content to other areas of their learning. The central ‘stop, think and check’ idea is an essential tool for children, and one that made a difference to the way my students consumed media.

“As a teacher, I appreciate the complete, ‘ready-made’ nature of the program - a full student booklet, teacher manual and set of episodes that are in a conversation-style format that the children found engaging.

“I have had the opportunity to use this program as a set of standalone media study activities as well as part of a larger English unit aligned with the Australian Curriculum and summatively assessed. Both of these were valuable, worthwhile experiences. Newshounds is an engaging, rich resource for student learning.”

Linda Wylie, Year 5 Teacher, Anglesea Primary School, Vic

“I am a teacher at Anglesea Primary School. I team teach a Year 5/6 class one day a week. My theme for writing and reading this year is Media Mondays. I brainstormed everything I thought my students might like and need to know. Then I set about finding resources online that would assist me in delivering a unit focusing on the media and adhering to the Victorian Curriculum.

“Stumbling across Newshounds has been life saving. The program covers everything I had thought of and more. It has quite literally saved me hours and hours of preparation. We are only two lessons in. The students are engaged and curious and are becoming critical thinkers regarding the media and all of its offerings.

“Our young people are being so bombarded by the media from so many different angles and on so many platforms, it is vital that students are explicitly taught how to make informed decisions on how they interpret today's media. Thank you, Squiz Kids, for producing Newshounds!”

Year 6 teacher, All Saints College, Perth, WA

“Myself and my kids loved the Newshounds program, a perfect way to end the year and send them into year 5. The teacher manual meant I didn’t have to be an expert on the topic of media literacy. The change in behaviour of my students when consuming information online has been remarkable.”

Year 6 Teacher, Abbotsford, NSW

“Love the content. Love that it is relevant to things happening in the world today. I can see the students applying what they have learnt. They STOP, THINK and CHECK now when they are online. Newshounds has completely changed the way they think about the information they are exposed to on the internet. It’s a total game changer.”

Year 6 Teacher, Munno Para, SA

“I absolutely loved doing Newshounds with my class last year. It was one of the best programs we did. My students were highly engage and loved making their podcasts which they shared with the whole school.”

Year 5 Teacher, Thursday Island

“Even up here on Thursday Island our kids are not immune to misinformation. So I was delighted when Squiz Kids created Newshounds and started to teach kids to think critically about the information they are being flooded with on a daily basis through their phones.

“Newshounds was easy to teach, the kids loved it, Squiz-E the Newshound is a bit of a cult-hero here and I’ll definitely be incorporating it into my teaching schedule again this year.”

Year 6, Teacher, Tarragindi, Qld.

It is a fabulous and relevant teaching resource and presented so well! All year five and six teachers need to engage students to be critical and creative viewers and thinkers and consumers of media and the progression of lessons allow for students to learn these skills and build their knowledge. The lessons are also connecting really well with our integrated unit.”

Year 5 Teacher, Ivanhoe, Vic

“Newshounds should be in every Year Four to Six classroom! It is a clear, engaging way to teach media literacy. The content is thought provoking, eye opening and helps the students to better navigate this complex world we live in. The lessons were easy to roll out - as everything had been prepared by the team at Newshounds.”

And parents like it too ...

Leli Setioni, Canberra

“As a parent who has been an avid listener of Squiz Kids for over five years, I am writing to express my strong support for the Newshounds program. While I understand your request is for teacher

testimonials, I believe my experience as a parent who has been directly impacted by Squiz Kids and its educational approach may offer some valuable insights.

“Newshounds has been an invaluable resource in equipping my children with essential media literacy skills, a crucial competency in today's information-saturated world. The ever-growing presence of misinformation, deepfakes, and biased media underscores the importance of educating our children to become discerning consumers and producers of information.

“Australia needs a proactive approach to fostering critical thinking in our youth. Newshounds offers a structured framework that empowers children to "stop, think, and check" information, encouraging them to question, verify, and engage in responsible media consumption. Its engaging and age-appropriate format makes learning enjoyable and effective.

“My children, now seasoned Squiz Kids listeners, can recite the "stop, think, and check" mantra effortlessly. They actively encourage their peers to critically evaluate information and double-check anything suspect. This program has demonstrably honed their critical thinking skills, deepened their understanding of news production, and instilled a healthy skepticism towards information they encounter.

“As a parent, I wholeheartedly recommend this program as a valuable tool for empowering both teachers and parents to equip today's youth - tomorrow's workers, voters, parents, educators, and leaders - with vital media literacy skills.”