



the **ARCHIBULL** PRIZE



THE ARCHIBULL PRIZE 2017 TEACHER INTERVIEW TRACEY DEVLIN - GWYNNEVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL

GWYNNEVILLE PRIMARY SCHOOL IN WOLLONGONG HAS BEEN A STALWART PARTICIPANT IN THE ARCHIBULL PRIZE FOR FIVE YEARS – STUDYING WOOL, GRAINS, CHICKENS, COTTON AND NOW, IN 2017, DAIRY. TEACHER TRACEY DEVLIN REFLECTS ON THEIR JOURNEY.

HOW IMPORTANT WAS THE VISIT FROM YOUR YFC JO NEWTON?

Jo Newton was fantastic. She is young, very interactive and engaging with the students and had some great apps on her iPad. She spoke about genetics in a way young kids could understand and this helped greatly when we did the farm visit and saw a cow being artificially inseminated. It made me realise how important genetics is to the dairy industry and how commonplace artificial insemination was.

HOW DID YOU ENGAGE WITH THE COMMUNITY?

We took a field trip to The Meadows at Albion Park, owned by Phil Tate – a third generation dairy farmer. It meant an early morning but we saw the milking process and the cows and calves and it helped our research for our newsletters and blogs. We named our Archie Meadow and were able to convey the day in a life of a dairy cow to let people know cows do more than just eat and sleep.

WHAT DO YOU FIND IS THE BEST WAY TO ENGAGE STUDENTS WITH THE PROGRAM IN THE INITIAL STAGES?

Because we have been doing the program for so long all our children are exposed to the cow and see it regularly and they have an excitement about coming to the senior classes (Years 5 and 6) to be directly involved. We focus this excitement early with hands on experiences such as making butter and ice cream, or we'll pick a popular song that is in the charts and make a parody by changing the words to suit our industry. Having those interesting and varied experiences is important.

DO YOU HAVE ANY USEFUL HINTS AND TIPS FOR SCHOOLS DOING THE PROGRAM FOR THE FIRST TIME?

Plan, delegate, keep it simple and be flexible.

HOW DO YOU REACH THE FINISH LINE EACH YEAR?

It is very challenging to reach the finish line, and that changes depending on the class group. Lynne sends out newsletters regularly and I find I physically can't stick to that timeframe. I know where I am starting and I know where I'm going to finish and I give myself little milestones each week to complete it. But I wouldn't want to cut anything out because all aspects of the program are valuable.

WHAT ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS OF PARTICIPATING IN THE ARCHIBULL PRIZE?

The highlights are seeing how engaged and enthusiastic the kids are, and the relationships you develop with them through collaboration and teamwork. Our whole class presents our work, meaning the kids have to get up in front of their peers and they gain such confidence from that. The kids get a real growth through the Archibull – and it's fun! Teachers and parents all love it.