



The Australian Journal of **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

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An alternative to the filing system is for each child to have a special book - 'the green book' we used to call it in Canberra - in which all written work on one day of the week or month is entered. This may be simpler than the filing system, but is less flexible, especially in the lower grades where work cannot be confined to books.

Although our record keeping system is still relatively new, I believe it is workable and provides a worthwhile, in fact, an essential part of the school. The major task is setting up the files in the first place. Once that is achieved, the amount of time required to keep the record system going is minimal. It helps us to maintain our awareness of each child, it should help new teachers find their feet in this strange but exciting environment, and therefore it must benefit the children.

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ODNADATTA SCHOOL/COMMUNITY LIBRARY



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Oodnadatta Aboriginal School has for a considerable time involved the community in its activities. From this liaison has grown several services to the community by the school which have become an indispensable part of the way of life in this most northern town in South Australia. Apart from comprehensive self-improvement and recreational courses offered through the Department of Further Education, the school offers a library service to the town and district.

Early in 1976, I, an avid reader myself, set about to overcome the void created by a total lack of community library facilities other than the Country Lending service. The school already had a comprehensive library available and the obvious move was to establish a community library. A committee was formed, representing the school staff, the school council and the local Progress Association. However, it was felt that to establish a library

along the guidelines set out, would not suit this community, mainly because of its very small size (about 300) and the short length of residence of most citizens. An alternative scheme was adopted, whereby the school takes out bulk loans from the Schools Library Board, the State Library and the Port Augusta Public Library. These stocks are periodically rotated so that there is always a new range of material available. (An important factor that could not be achieved if we purchased our own book stock, or even followed the guidelines of a 10% turnover per annum, as indicated in the School Community Library plan.)

Apart from school hours, the library is open on Wednesday evenings to allow for borrowing by townfolk. With parents coming to the school to borrow, we have had an increased response in child borrowings.

Each homestead and railway siding within the district has been invited to join the scheme. They receive two linen bags for books, so that they have a continuous supply of reading material. These books are despatched on the fortnightly mailrun for homesteads and on the train for railway workers. Currently the library has 23 town families borrowing, while 12 out-of-town groups are participants and an average weekly lending rate of 122 books, magazines and cassettes.

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ESTABLISHING A FUNCTIONAL LIBRARY

IN AN ABORIGINAL SCHOOL

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After spending five terms working in the library at Oodnadatta Special Aboriginal School, I can now say I have achieved something. However, this achievement cannot be measured by an up-to-date catalogue and an extensive picture file, for example. What I have created is a library and library borrowing scheme which works for the children in this school.

In the first instance I set about to structure the physical