

News

LandLearn NSW Speech Spectacular

Do you have students who:

- Can talk the leg off a chair? or
- Just like the sound of their voice?

Then this speaking competition is for you.

Entrants are asked to prepare a two minute response to a given topic. One of the topics is: *That working in the country is better than working in the city.* <http://www.landlearnnsw.org.au/>

Locust plague information

Did you know this spring a locust plague is due to hit NSW? One of the biggest we've seen for a while. The presentation: *From little things* introduces the problem and includes great video footage. It can be viewed at:

<http://www.slideshare.net/LandLearnNSW>

Tocal Field Days education program

Get in early to be part of the all new education program at next years Tocal Field Days April 29 – May 1, 2011. An exclusive education hub will operate for booked school groups featuring fabulous hands on activities. Find out more:

<http://www.tocalfielddays.com/>

Spotlight:

Narrandera Fisheries Centre (NFC)

NFC is the home of freshwater research in NSW as well as a productive hatchery, providing fingerlings of four native fish species (Murray cod, trout cod, golden perch and silver perch) to improve freshwater recreational fisheries and conservation initiatives.

The centre caters for visiting school groups with live fish exhibits, guided tours and beautiful grounds. Fishing workshops for kids are held regularly.

Find out more:

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/research/centres/narrandera-fisheries-centre>

Websites

Focus on soil carbon

CSIRO – soil carbon basics

<http://www.csiro.au/resources/soil-carbon.html>

LandLearn NSW – soil carbon & climate change

<http://www.landlearnnsw.org.au/sustainability/climate-change/agriculture/crops-pastures/soil-carbon>

Meet Lynne Strong

What do you do? My family and I are seventh generation dairy farmers. We have developed a highly efficient, sustainable and profitable farming enterprise that supports both agricultural production and biodiversity enhancement. I also spend part of everyday driving programs which engage youth in deep thinking about the processes and people who deliver food to our tables. I run Dairy Youth Australia, a youth group dedicated to delivering education programs which utilise art and technology to convey messages about fresh food, agricultural production and natural resource management. The groups latest undertaking the *Archibull Prize* will see high school students across south western Sydney create an artwork about food production in a time of climate variability, declining resources and urban expansion.

Best part of my job? The inspirational people I meet every day. They light my fire, feed my soul and challenge me to be my very best. It means I am living a life that makes me happy, allows me to share my gifts and make a unique contribution to the world.

Dairy Youth Australia - <http://www.dairyouthaustralia.com.au/aboutus/>



Catriona Rowntree Lynne Strong (centre) and Heather Campbell CEO of Landcare at the National Landcare Awards at Parliament House

Activity

Soil and water

Objective: To introduce students to the water retention properties of soils.

Introduction: Plants take in water by their roots. Different soils contain and hold different amounts of water. This can be shown in the following experiment.

Materials:

- 3 funnels & 3 bottles
- 3 pieces of blotting paper 8cm square
- sand, clay and garden loam (use dry samples)
- jug of water

What to Do:

1. Fold the blotting paper to fit into the funnels.
2. Place one piece in each funnel.
3. Half fill one funnel with sand, one with clay and one with loam.
4. Place each funnel in a bottle.
5. Pour the same amount of water into each funnel.



4. Which soil lets water through most rapidly?
5. Which soil lets water through least rapidly?
6. Which soil holds the most water?
7. Which soil holds the least water?
8. Which soil do you think would be best for plants? Why?
9. What soil does your school ground have?
10. Which dam would be best for holding water?



Deep, well drained red soil profile. Photo from the LandLearn NSW digital image library for schools.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/landlearnnsw>

References:

- **Soil health and fertility (AUS)**
<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/resource/s/soils>
- **CSIRO soil education links (AUS)**
<http://www.clw.csiro.au/education/soils/links.html>
- **UNE Living Soils website (AUS)**
<http://www.une.edu.au/livingsoils/>
- **Soil-net (UK)**
<http://www.soil-net.com/>
- **Department of Agriculture (USA)**
<http://www.sidney.ars.usda.gov/sidebar/justforkids6.html>

Activity adapted by LandLearn Victoria from the Soil Magic Landcare Activities for Middle Primary and from Our Land Landcare Activities for Upper Primary.

