

# Academic profiling – the story of a good idea

Michael Tunks



Admin Menu:

Teacher: Mrs Helen F · Class: 2012 Admin

View Results Manage Students Manage Staff **Manage Tests** Import Naplan

Save Changes Add Test Remove Test

Selected Class	Frequency	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
ESL Scales	2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
HOLO	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
SA Spelling	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
TORCH	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					

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## Mark-iT administration

An idea, at first, is just that – a passing thought, a wish, a “wouldn’t it be nice if” fancy. But when an idea gets a hold of you it can be a powerful and motivating force. This is the story of MARKiT, an idea I’m certain many educators have had and acted upon in many ingenious ways since education began – recording students assessment results.

An idea will often stem from a desire to improve a current practice and this was the case for Rebecca Huddy, Principal of Westport Primary School in South Australia. She has a comprehensive assessment program operating in her school but was looking for ways to improve how the collected data was used to track and monitor student performance, identify students at risk and to help teachers plan appropriate intervention strategies. After reading a previous article in *Education Today*, Rebecca contacted our office to discuss her ideas and questions. We had already commenced development of an online teacher markbook, however, her timely call provided a spark that led us in a very interesting direction. She was looking for a way to record results for a number of standardised tests. The conversation went something like this:

**R:** Can MARKiT record the raw scores from our test results as well as the percentile or stanine from the standardised results sheets?

**M:** Yes, we can do that. We could probably also automatically look up and enter the

stanines, percentiles, ages etc so the teacher would only have to enter the raw test score.

**R:** That sounds good. What about being able to then list all students across a grade and rank them by these scores and percentiles?

**M:** Yes, we could do that.

**R:** And graph the results? And... And...

And so the Standardised Test section of MARKiT was defined. Now, with a steadily growing bank of standardised test results, this section saves significant teacher time for data entry and analysis of results.

Helen Paris, Deputy Principal of Oakhill Drive Primary School in NSW, also had a desire to include national testing results – NAPLAN and Best Start – in a student’s academic profile. Working with Helen we were able to implement in MARKiT the ability for a school to upload their NAPLAN results and have them linked to students in a matter of seconds. We will soon also have the ability to do this with Best Start data. So now, as a student progresses from year to year, their academic profile goes with them and successive teachers can view a student’s performance history in all national and standardised tests. Also, when classes are assigned at the beginning of a new year teachers are able to view results from the previous year in a current class list as MARKiT can automatically retrieve results from previous classes and compile an academic overview for the new class.

As a National Partnerships school Hebersham Primary School in NSW’s Western Sydney region implemented an accelerated literacy pedagogy requiring comprehensive reporting of student performance and progress. Principal Sue Connell maintains an extensive assessment record in Excel spreadsheets but these could not easily facilitate the analysis required. We worked with literacy leader Deidre O’Brien to include in MARKiT the use of indicator icons and traffic light colour coding to identify students’ improving, plateauing or declining in performance between tests and comparing chronological age with test results age e.g. SA Spelling Age. Her aim was for teachers in stages to have professional dialogue about what their students could do and not do. She wanted a focus on how teachers could be encouraged to engage in reflection that leads to learning thus improving practices. The traffic light colour coding was a way of achieving this.

A report was also designed to aggregate the number of students improving/plateauing/declining for national partnership reporting purposes.

The third area of assessment is a teachers’ own classroom assessment schedule that might include regular measures of spelling, mathematics reading ability etc. MARKiT allows a teacher to create a test record for their own schedules e.g. 10 weekly spelling tests for

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ESL Scales		HOLO		SA Spelling		TORCH		National Tests		Custom Tests	
No.	Firstname	Lastname	Grade	Test 1		Test 2					
				Raw Score	Age	Raw Score	Age				
1	Charlotte	Ai	H	5	58	> 16 yrs	44	11 yrs 10 mo			
2	Stefania	Be	H	5	44	11 yrs 10 mo	32	8 yrs 7 mo			
3	Jasmine	Blk	H	5	20	6 yrs 7 mo	20	6 yrs 7 mo			
4	Stefanie	Br	H	5	35	9 yrs 4 mo	40	10 yrs 8 mo			
5	Yoko	Ca	H	5	34	9 yrs 1 mo					
6	Taylor	Cat	H	5	50	13 yrs 10 mo					
7	Laura	Cor	H	5	16	6 yrs 3 mo					
8	Naomi	Fer	H	5	34	9 yrs 1 mo					
9	Ashley	Go	H	5	12	< 6 yrs					
10	Saamia	Khr	H	5	34	9 yrs 1 mo					
11	Emily	La	H	5	22	6 yrs 10 mo					
12	Almee	Mc	H	5	21	6 yrs 8 mo					
13	Taylor	Rc	H	5	34	9 yrs 1 mo					
14	Hayley	Rui	H	5	22	6 yrs 10 mo					
15	Alyssa	Tr	H	5	45	12 yrs 2 mo					
16	Daniel	Ai	H	5	23	6 yrs 11 mo					

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### Mark-iT SA Spelling test Grade 5

Term 2. As weekly results are entered a colour code displays comparing results with week 1 and highlighting progress across a term.

The great thing about good ideas is that they can lead to significant improvements in the way we do things – and there are plenty more good ideas yet to be implemented in MARKiT. A wonderful thing about working closely with passionate educators is the inexhaustible flow of ideas. So, what if:

- Student academic profiles could follow the student to their new school at the click of a button

- At parent-teacher interviews, a teacher could show parents their child's academic profile in MARKiT with all other student names masked for privacy
- Schools could tag certain results to display in a customised academic profile that parents could access online. Similarly, high schools could look back at a students' academic history during primary school
- A teacher could print an academic profile for an individual student for intervention planning or parent discussion
- Teachers could record notes by project/task

- e.g. notes on a student oral presentation
- Executive could establish thresholds for a test and identify students across the school not achieving these thresholds
- Continuum performance and placement (e.g. Literacy continuum) could be automatically generated for each student. With alerts for the teacher identifying students falling behind or shooting ahead.

These are just some of the exciting ideas we will work through with schools to implement in MARKiT.

ET

## Mark-iT for Westport

Westport Primary School has been using MARKiT for the past year to track and analyse student achievement data. Prior to this our system was cumbersome, time consuming and had no quality assurance characteristics. Most importantly, teachers did not fully engage with the data which was the most critical factor in our exploration for a new way forward. For our school, MARKiT ticked all of the boxes. It is web based, customised to suit site needs, multi dimensional and most importantly, teacher friendly.

At Westport we use a number of focused screening tests and processes to track individual students and cohorts. Teachers enter the data into MARKiT themselves which is the first step to them purposefully engaging with their students' data. We do this during staff meetings and levels of schooling meetings. The entering of data takes just minutes. Following this, the remainder of the time can be used for analysis and future planning. Our special education teacher is also involved in this process to help identify students requiring specific intervention. Outside of these sessions, teachers

are free to access MARKiT anywhere at anytime which pleasingly they have been doing. They especially find the graphing icon valuable as it gives a very instant and visual image of their class profile.

"Working with the team from MARKiT has been a pleasure. They are extremely accommodating and efficient. Nothing is ever too much trouble and they are genuinely interested in building a tool to suit our specific needs."

*Rebecca Huddy Principal*



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