

TENZ Writers' Retreat in Queenstown

Surrounded by mountains, a glistening lake and spectacular views. A group of motivated and knowledgeable teachers from all around the motu gathered in Queenstown during the second week of the October holidays. We gathered together to problem solve how best we could create usable resources that teachers could use and adapt to their own learning environment. Sarah Washbrooke and Lisa Byers have begun working together to create a kit of learning that can be used in an authentic context within a range of age levels and school settings.

During the week Lisa and Sarah visited Buzz Stop, a local family business that has begun to share their knowledge and skills. What a fabulous venue, this is an excellent example of local business diversification. At Buzz Stop not only did we enjoy beautiful food within a great atmosphere. We experienced first hand some of the skills used in the production of honey. We experienced spinning honey, bottling and labelling our own personalised honey product. We also enjoyed making various products from honey (soaps, wraps etc) that could be used by teachers in the classroom. We definitely enjoyed this experience and I'm sure that many teachers across the country would love to integrate these practical learning experiences into their classroom programmes.

Sarah and Lisa are currently writing a range of learning experiences that integrate both technology learning areas within the wider New Zealand Curriculum. With the expertise of the wider TENZ team these activities will be collated and reframed into a version that is user friendly for teachers to personalize or use as they are. Watch this space as it is hard not to feel excited about this very topical and although small creature they certainly have huge importance in our world.

In conclusion, we will continue to weave together all our ideas, trial them and create resources that will be at teachers fingertips. We are all abuzz and hope that you too will find what we create to be useful, purposeful and relevant to your learners and local curriculum. It has certainly been a great journey uncovering the back story behind honey. It was a unique pleasure to be situated within the local geography where the bee's hives survive and thrive.



Written by Lisa Byers : Middle Team Leader at Tainui School, Dunedin

& Sarah Washbrooke : (has so many :) at Remarkables Primary School, Queenstown