




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR NUDGE

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Book Week

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (2.53 pm): Like the member for Greenslopes, I rise to talk about Book Week. Each year across Australia the Children's Book Council of Australia celebrates Book Week. The week kicks off with the announcement of the Children's Book Council book of the year and continues with a celebration across schools with library displays, book character parades and guest readers. This week is always an absolute highlight for me, having established a tradition four years ago of selecting two schools in my electorate each year to visit to read to the preppies—sometimes in book character costume—and presenting every prep student with a book of their very own.

Mr Molhoek interjected.

Ms LINARD: I take that interjection. I was a rabbit this year but I am not giving you any photos. As a mother of two young boys, one a preppie himself next year, I love books.

Ms Grace: And they are gorgeous.

Ms LINARD: Thank you, Minister. I also love inciting their love of reading. This, coupled with a conversation with one of my principals who shared with me early on in my time in office that some of her students were not lucky enough to own their own books, gave rise to the idea.

This year I visited 127 prep students at Nundah State School and St Joseph's Nundah and had a fantastic time reading *Hickory Dickory Dock* and *Rodney Loses It!*—Rodney is a rabbit—with the students. Watching the students' faces light up when they found out they get to keep their very own copy of *Rodney Loses It!*—this year's Book Week early reader winner—was an absolute highlight. I take this opportunity to again thank Principal Kerry Latimer, Deputy Principal Shona Arneil, their prep teachers and the lovely preppies for the warm welcome last Friday.

It is not just Book Week we celebrate at this time of year. It is also the Premier's Reading Challenge. Prep to year 9 students as well as children enrolled in an early childhood centre participating in this year's challenge have been busily reading across Queensland since mid-May with the challenge finishing tomorrow. Last year over 155,000 young Queenslanders participated in the challenge.

Research shows that children who struggle with reading in their early school years are unlikely to ever catch up. We know that, while most Australian children are meeting international benchmarks for reading at year 4, nearly one in five are not meeting these benchmarks. Four out of five children meeting benchmarks nationally will never be enough for our government because every child deserves the very best education and start in life. Whether it is the Premier's Reading Challenge or our annual commitment of \$5 million to continue the First 5 Forever program delivered by the State Library of Queensland or the Ready Reading program in schools across the state, our government is committed to ensuring that Queensland children establish the vital developmental and literacy competencies required to succeed from the critical early years of life and right throughout their schooling.

NAPLAN results from 2017 confirm that our government's long-term commitment to, and investment in, lifting literacy and numeracy outcomes across the state is reaping rewards. Well done to the Queensland Minister for Education, Grace Grace.