Early Career Teachers: Preparing for the Profession,
Nuriootpa High School and Tanunda Primary School
DECD TV Webisodes

Simon Baker. History and Social Sciences Teacher, Nuriootpa High School
Morning!

Class
Good Morning!

Simon
How are we today?

Various Students
Good.

Simon
Now can anyone tell me what they think we’re doing today?

Student
Crusades.

Simon
What are the Crusades?

Simon Baker
As a starting teacher, what I worry about is, you know, obviously making mistakes. Behaviour management.

Simon
It’s like being back in Jerusalem. Really hot.

Simon Baker
Is what I’m teaching them really going to help them in life?

Simon
Armour, thick heavy armour.

Simon Baker
I don’t want to let them down.

Tracy Warner. Coordinator, Health and PE, SACE, Kapunda High School
The Early Careers Mentoring Program enables you to ask any type of question that you feel you need to ask without feeling that you’re being judged.
Simon Baker
The most important thing I found at the early stage of my career is other people.

Simon
European arms and armour...

Simon Baker
I was paired up with Tracy Warner from Kapunda High School, who’s been fantastic.

Simon
...to have ventilation.

Tracy Warner
I haven’t seen Simon before in the class.

Simon
Now, how long to you reckon it might have taken?

Tracy Warner
He’s explained to me how he likes to be in the class. I wouldn’t have been surprised if a horse had come in with him.

Simon Baker
I like to take Casual Day to extreme levels.

Ian Tooley. Principal, Nuriootpa High School
I like to see a lot of student teachers come through. I like to see us investing in early career teachers.

Simon
Back then, how do you think you got food?

Ian Tooley
I think we’ve all been there before, and we’ve known what it’s like when someone’s taken you under their wing, and has given you a hand, and we’ve also seen it where people have been left to struggle.

Simon
What else? Ok? Now...as always technology seems to not be wanting to cooperate with me today. So, I’m going to map out where they went from.

Simon Baker
My passion is inspiring kids for the love of history.

Simon
Because there’s a civil war happening in this area. Begins with “D”.
Simon Baker
I studied as an archaeologist, worked as an archaeologist for a little bit. I’ve also spent several years in aviation.

Simon
Damascus.

Tracy Warner
I think these days with early career teachers a lot of the feedback is actually, it’s around what they perceive.

Simon
So, if you were coming down from Europe, heading to the Holy Lands...

Tracy Warner
This lesson is a bit of a journey for you, how do you reckon you just travelled that? And then being able to pick up on maybe a couple of things you would advise on.

Simon
If you’ve got heavy armour on, you fall out, then what?

Various Students
You drown.

Simon
You drown. Okay thanks very much for today guys.

Simon to Tracy
So, how do you think I went?

Tracy to Simon
I’d actually like to turn that around a bit, Simon. How did you enjoy that lesson?

Simon
Put me on the spot. I had a lot of fun, but to be honest, the technology let me down today. But I was really happy with the discussion, so I sort of let it take over.

Tracy Warner
The students respond really well and he holds their engagement for quite a lengthily time with his props that he brings in. I thought that was a really good thing to do. Where at first maybe I thought, “Oh, I don’t know if I’d do that myself,” I sort of thought, “Well, actually that’s worked for him and that’s worked really quite well.”
I think you asked a lot of questions that were reflection questions for them to be able to just throw their answer forward to you, and they really enjoyed doing that. On reflection yourself there, what might you do just a little bit differently to ensure that the kids have still got some of that extra visual, information?

Simon
Just having something to look at while I’m talking, because my map was a little bit disjointed, it would have really helped them I think. Are there any other ideas that you think I could incorporate into sort of “winging it” if you will.

Ian Tooley
I think it works best when the mentee is in control, rather than you serving up your agenda. I think it works better when they see in you that there’s perhaps someone who’s had experience, got some wisdom and you’ve got something to share.

Tracy
If maybe in your previous lessons one of the things you could have done was maybe, develop a map together. “Get out that map we did. It’s not working on here, maybe we bring that one out. Let’s go over some of the things.” Engage a little bit with their hands as well as their listening. Their listening skills were excellent today. I thought they did a really good job. And they seemed to really want to....

Simon Baker
Over the short time of the program, the experience I gained was invaluable. I took on the role of Acting Year 10 Manager, and due to Tracy’s extensive experience being a leader in a school site I credit her for helping me win my position.

Tracy
Well that’s a good outcome.

Ian Tooley
The impression you make from day one is definitely going to get into the head of the principal.

Simon to Giles Bartram (Mentor Teacher)
I also planned to use a computer simulation.

Ian Tooley
Simon’s a good case. He came to us needing to do a practicum and very quickly the feedback was coming from his mentors that, “This is a good one.”

Simon
Cross mark it with me?

Giles
Yeah, that’d be good.
Ian Tooley  
Just his hunger to learn.

Simon  
Why were we successful, why weren’t we successful?

Ian Tooley  
If you’re mindful of that when you come in as a pre-service teacher, but also if you’ve got the goods, you’re going to be spotted. With the right nurturing environment, Simon’s testimony to how that can grow and he’s on his way.

Jacqueline Stratfold, Principal, Tanunda Primary School  
It’s important to look beyond your room. The day to day stuff of teaching is huge and it’s very easy to get focused on how much you’ve got in your class to do. But the important part, particularly the fact that you get extra funding for your first year, non-instruction time, is that you actually go out and see what’s happening.

Teacher at DECD Graduate to Proficient Workshop  
With the Standards, we’ve looked at it a little bit in staff meetings, and I feel that coming today will just help me understand what I need to do to help my students to the best of my abilities.

Kiah Robertson-Wood, Reception/Year 1 Teacher, Tanunda Primary School  
It was, “Here you go. Here’s this. This person is for this year level, this person is for this year level, go and ask them. I was like, “Ok!”

Kylie Bussenschutt, Year 7 Teacher, Tanunda Primary School  
I think the feedback is crucial.

Sam Harding, Tanunda Primary School  
I guess, dealing with the parents.

Kylie Bussenschutt, Tanunda Primary School  
It’s about taking risks.

Sabrina De Silva, Reception Teacher, Tanunda Primary School  
There’s class room time and then there’s the admin.

Kylie Bussenschutt  
Not only build networks within their own school but to branch out to other schools. I was involved this year as a mentor. Also I’ve been working alongside some of the early career teachers within our school.

Kylie  
So what have you found difficult and challenging as early career teachers?

Sabrina
Sometimes there are things that you don’t know to ask about. There are things that you need to be responsible for but you don’t necessarily know to ask. That’s where a mentor has been really beneficial to me because they can say, “This is coming up.”

**Kylie Bussenschutt**
It’s important that they have the right induction processes, not just be given a handbook.

**Kiah**
With so many staffing changes this year, it was very interesting to go, “Ok. Well, who do I need to ask this question?” I kind of buddied up to Sabrina because we were so close together. I asked her, “What do I need to do? Where do I go for this?” She’s like, “It’s Ok!”

**Kylie**
At the beginning of the year it can be overwhelming, providing you with lots and lots of information is overwhelming and I think you learn as you go.

**Sabrina**
Yeah.

**Kiah**
Yeah, I certainly did.

**Kylie Bussenschutt**
I think it’s really important that line managers or leaders or mentors meet with early career teachers as often as possible.

**Jacqueline Stratfold**
One meeting we just had where it was a discussion on what they’d all learnt recently.

**Rachael Haaren, Tanunda Unit Teacher**
Go to the ConnectED to show how to actually apply for positions.

**Jacqueline Stratfold**
The Early Careers Teacher conference that was happening...

**Teacher**
Graduate to Proficient, and e-portfolios was another thing.

**Jacqueline Stratfold**
So, it actually networked all their networks.

**Sabrina**
Learn different strategies that they use for behaviour management that I found very beneficial while teaching.
Rachael
I observed five classes ranging from severe disabilities to mild. I was also fortunate enough to have another teacher mentor me in another body changing lesson. It was fantastic.

*Reception Student to Sabrina*
Are soggy.

*Sabrina to student*
Soggy, very good.

*Kylie to class*
Your task is to write a revolting recipe.

Jacqueline Stratfold
Developing as a teacher is life long career.

*Kylie to students*
With these guided reading books, each of you takes a lead role.

Jacqueline Stratfold
In your first few months as a teacher just take on a few concentrated things that you’re going to focus on and do those well.

Sabrina De Silva
Everybody is very busy so unless you have a mentor that you can go to check with you’re running on your own a little bit.

*Kylie Bussenschutt*
There’s so much out there for them, to be able to give advice to those early career teachers is really important.

Ian Tooley
I probably thought I was okay at the time, but I was as green as they come.

*Simon*
So, hammers were a natural weapon on the battlefield during this time.

Ian Tooley
Someone spotted that and wrapped up some support, and I remember that in my experience and that drives me to want to be part of helping our early career teachers have a great start in their teaching.

*Student*
They were the most feared fighting force in the whole Crusades.
Simon
Excellent!

Simon
So far, so good. Yeah, I’m loving it.