

# **Read Write Now!**

## **Student Telephone Survey 2010**

Student comment to interviewer:

*I used to think 'I am a mistake'.*

*Now I think 'I made a mistake, but I'm not a mistake.'*

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# **Read Write Now! Student Telephone Survey 2010**

## ***Introduction***

During November 2010, the student feedback survey was conducted by telephone, targeting students who had been enrolled in the program during 2010.

## ***Methodology***

Initially the student database as at October 2010 was culled, rejecting students with no recorded telephone number or incomplete phone numbers, and those who had specifically requested no phone contact be made. From the remaining database, students were selected at random, though an attempt was made to balance male and female respondents, and to gather data from most regions served by Read Write Now!

Calls were made mostly between 10.00 am and 7.00 pm on weekdays, and throughout the day on Saturdays.

All of those contacted, agreed to discuss their experience with the Read Write Now! program.

A total of 225 connected calls resulted in 79 useable interviews. The interview calls ranged between five minutes and twenty minutes. Contact was made with a small number of ESL students who did not have enough English to conduct an interview.

## **Aims**

The aim of the survey is to rate the satisfaction of a random sample of students enrolled with Read Write Now! during 2010. Secondary aims are to discover what teaching and learning strategies are working well, so that new tutors can be given this information; and where tutoring sessions are being conducted and whether the arrangements are satisfactory.

## The interview

The questionnaire forms **Appendix A**. It seeks to discover

- what special features of the Read Write Now! Program attracted students
- how students found out about Read Write Now in order to gather feedback for marketing purposes
- students' perception of the effectiveness of tutoring
- specific information on what learning activities work well for students, and anything which does not work
- venue for tutoring sessions and student satisfaction with the arrangement (as part of ongoing risk management strategy to move tutoring out of homes)

Based on student responses, the interviewer classified them into four categories:

- no help at all
- a little help
- some help
- a lot of help

Twenty nine participants (37%) spoke English as a second language. In a small number of cases this limited the scope of the interview and it was not possible to ask all the questions. However, these responses were recorded if the respondent was able to give some indication of satisfaction with the program.

The interviewer explained the purpose of the call and emphasised that the discussion was about the program in general, not individual tutors. This seemed to be understood, but naturally participants responded based on their experience with one or more individual tutors.

## Who was interviewed

There were 79 interviews. The following tables show the number of students interviewed according to gender, region and speakers of English as a second language (ESL).

### Participants categorised by gender:

Male	41	52
Female	38	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Participants categorised by region

Region	No. interviewed	Region	No. interviewed
Albany	5	Mandurah	3
Armadale	5	Morley	4
Broome	2	North West Metro	5
Bunbury	5	Perth Central	5
Canning	5	Rockingham	2
City South	5	South East Metro	5
Esperance	2	Stirling	3
Fremantle	5	Swan 1	2
Geraldton	3	Swan 2	5
Joondalup	5	Swan 3	2
Kalgoorlie	1		
			<b>Total 79</b>

### Participants categorised by language group

English as first language	50	63
English as second language	29	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Results

The overwhelming response to the survey was a very high level of satisfaction. The participants once again this year frequently described their tutors in terms of personal attributes before specific teaching skills, suggesting that the personal qualities of the tutor in a one-to-one situation are initially more important. However, the ability to explain and to break down language problems into basic, understandable components was highly valued. As in previous years, several participants mentioned the importance of “going back to the basics”, by which they meant relating sounds to letters, and spelling rules. The majority of participants felt that they had missed out on gaining these skills in earlier education. The patience of the tutors and the necessity of slow paced repetition again came up in many interviews. Many participants emphasised the tutor’s role in encouraging the learner, with comments such as “s/he kept me going” and “gave me confidence”. There were frequent references to the value of the personal relationship with the tutors in overcoming the embarrassment so many students feel about their literacy problems.

### ***Results of survey (quantitative)***

#### **Overall satisfaction rate – how helpful was the tutoring?**

<b>Category</b>	<b>No of students</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A lot of help	66	83.5
Some help	3	3.8
A little help	9	11.4
Not at all helpful	1	1.3
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>

The overall result shows a very high level of satisfaction with the Read Write Now! program, with 83.5% of survey participants reporting in the “Very helpful” category (last survey; 73.6%). The number reporting that the program had only helped a little increased slightly over the previous survey (9 this year and 6 in the previous survey), and this year one felt that it had not been any help at all. Those students who felt they had only been helped a little had all spent less than 6 months in the program – some as little as 1 month. One had been in the program for 6 months but had 3 tutors in that time. Others had only attended intermittently due to work and family pressures. The one student who felt he had not been helped at all was the result of a mismatch between tutor and student, and the coordinator is addressing this.

## Time in program

Participants were asked how long they had been in the Read Write Now! Program.

Time in program	No. of students	%
1-6 months	36	45.6
7-12 months	21	26.6
13-24 months	11	13.9
Other	8	10.1
Not recorded*	3	3.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100</b>

The "Other" category covers participants who had spent some time in the program previously, dropped out and then re-enrolled, so an exact study time was difficult to establish.

\*Either the participants couldn't remember, did not understand the question, or the interviewer didn't get to ask it.

## Special features of RWN

Participants were asked to comment on what attracts them to the program in preference to other learning arrangements. There was a range of responses, but the following four features were mentioned most.

Special features	No. of students	%
Needed help with TAFE course	18	22.8
Flexible meeting time	12	15.2
Free	7	8.9
1:1	5	6.3

This year a large number of students stated that they turned to Read Write Now! for help because they were enrolled in a TAFE course but were struggling to keep up.

The second most mentioned feature, flexible meeting time, was preferred by students who had work commitments which prevented them attending regular classes, eg fly-in-fly-out arrangements, irregular hours of casual work, and shift work. It was also important to carers, and people with young children as they could work around their childcare commitments.

The third most often mentioned feature was the free service. Several participants said they were on a pension or had limited financial resources and the free service gave them access to study that they could not otherwise afford.

Those who nominated one-to-one teaching as a special feature, liked it either because they wanted individual attention for their specific needs, or because they lacked the confidence to attend a formal classroom-based learning arrangement. The reasons for this lack of confidence included age, i.e. being considerably older than classmates, and inability to keep up with classmates. Several participants found that 1:1 tutoring was preferable to TAFE classes, as the tutoring arrangement was more private and there are no distractions.

Several participants commented on the convenience of meeting the tutor locally, or having the tutor come to the student's home. The reasons for preferring this arrangement included students having small children and limited or no access to childcare, mobility problems, and living too far from a TAFE facility.

### Where did you hear about Read Write Now?

Source	No. of students	%
Advertisements	27	34.2
TAFE referral	22	27.8
Friends and family	17	21.5
Community and welfare organisations	8	10

This year advertising has moved up into first place from second last year with 34%; a large increase over the 18.8% last year reporting they had responded to RWN! advertising. TAFE referral comes in second, with the same percentage as last year. Friends and family, and community and welfare organisations held about the same percentages as last year.

### Breakdown of advertising types

	No. of students	% of total participants
Library	11	14
Television	5	6.3
Newspaper	4	5.0
Radio	3	3.8

Libraries have moved up to first place from second last year, with a large increase in the percentage reporting they saw RWN! advertising or gained information from library staff (14% this year, 5.6% last year).

Television advertising response dropped from 9.4% last year to 6.3% this year. (This may be due to the reduced level of advertising by the national Reading Writing Hotline.)

Radio remained the same percentage as last year, beaten into 4<sup>th</sup> place by a resurgence of newspaper advertising, which scored zero last year.

### **What did students request from RWN?**

ESL students said that they needed help to improve either spoken or written English or both. Many wanted help with pronunciation, and help to understand the Australian accent.

Sixty seven percent of respondents said they wanted to learn to read, twenty three percent specified spelling, and six percent wanted help with maths.

### **What helps most in your tutoring?**

Participants were asked to comment on specific aspects of the tutoring that they found helpful. It was difficult to get specific detail on this question – most participants referred to general study areas. Some described specific word games or reading activities. More detail on what individual students liked is presented in the qualitative section of the report.

### **Is there anything about your tutoring sessions that you're not happy with?**

Eleven participants responded to this question with a complaint and seven of those were related to lack of time. These seven were divided between the students bemoaning that they didn't have time to attend tutoring sessions, and those who loved their tutoring sessions and wanted more tutoring time than was available (which counts as a positive rather than a negative!)

The four actual complaints were as follows:

One student stated that he would prefer more structure to his learning program – it was suggested to him that it would be appropriate for him to discuss this with his tutor.

Two students had problems with a shortage of tutors resulting in a lack of continuity of tutoring.

One student complained of a mis-match of expectations between himself and his tutor. This was referred to the relevant coordinator.

See following section for student comments.

### Where does the tutoring take place?

Location	No. of students	%
Library (public or TAFE)	51	63
Student's home	15	19
Tutor's home	8	10

There is a small increase in the percentage of sessions at libraries this year; last year 60% and this year 63%. However, this arrangement is not universally popular as six students said they would prefer to study at home. See the comments section for reasons.

### Are you happy with that arrangement?

	No. of students	%
Yes	73	92.4
No	6	7.6

The dissatisfaction rate has doubled since last year. All those studying in private homes were happy.

## ***Results of survey (qualitative)***

Most of the qualitative results are in the words of the students. Some comments are paraphrased for clarity.

### **Why did you choose Read Write Now! for help?**

- I'm not good at English
- 1:1
- Only ones who helped me. I couldn't go to class - I was too far behind
- RWN helps with the basics
- Better choice
- Didn't know anyone else
- Needed help to get into TAFE course
- Suited me better than a class
- Couldn't cope with TAFE course. Free
- Help with TAFE course. Flexible times around shift work.
- Fit round work
- I'm too old for school
- Needed 1:1 help with TAFE course
- 1:1. flexible so it suits work, it's for adults
- Didn't know of anyone else
- close to home
- No other provision
- Only one I found
- I looked around, and it seemed to be a good thing
- Needed to catch up with TAFE course
- Work
- My wife got me into it
- I want to see how far I can go
- recommended by someone else with a disabled child
- Free. Best people to help
- busy work schedule
- No-one else to help
- Very convenient
- Free. Suits me at the time
- Didn't know about any other organisation
- ESL help with TAFE course
- didn't know of anyone else
- A friend is a tutor
- didn't have much education
- Free - couldn't afford a tutor
- Free. Caring tutors who help you
- I'm not up to TAFE

- Needed to get my brain going
- Help with TAFE course
- Convenient
- Only one I know
- ESL. TAFE teacher cannot help every student
- Free
- Finished TAFE course, wanted more help
- no one else available
- Have a baby so I need to be flexible
- need help with reading course books
- New arrival
- small children so can't get to class
- Health problems so couldn't go to class
- Wanted individual study. Free. Wanted help with nursing course
- I looked for English school but couldn't find.
- I've got kids so can't go to TAFE
- You people are very, very kind

## **Summary**

Several participants felt that they could not attend classes because they would not 'fit in' for various reasons including lack of confidence, age and ability to learn.

Physical disabilities, location, time factors, work and family obligations prevented other students from accessing formal classes. The Read Write Now! program provides flexible meeting times which overcomes these problems.

## **Where did you hear about Read Write Now!?**

- a teacher
- brochure in library
- Centrelink
- College
- employment agency
- found on internet
- Friend
- Friend in TAFE

- Library
- Library staff
- local paper
- Met lady who was part of RWN
- newspaper ad
- Psychologist
- Radio
- School
- Shenton Park rehab centre
- My sister
- TAFE
- TAFE student support
- TV
- TV and radio
- Voluntary Services
- My wife found out about RWN
- Work

## **Summary**

This year advertising was the most mentioned source of referral to Read Write Now!, moving a little ahead of TAFE referrals. The high number of students reporting that they turned to Read Write Now! for support to complete a TAFE course, and the number of TAFE referrals, demonstrates the continuing strong relationship between TAFE and Read Write Now!

Public libraries are also providing a lot of referrals either by personal contact with staff, or by display advertisements. One student mentioned that she had seen someone working with a tutor in the library and had asked the staff how to get involved. Word of mouth appears to be a very strong source of referral. Welfare and service agencies are also working well.

## What did you need help with?

- Assignment writing
- Course books
- ESL - all skills
- ESL speaking
- Grammar, maths
- Help with nursing course
- Listening, speaking, writing
- Maths
- Maths & English
- Pronunciation, grammar
- Reading & writing - want to get back into teaching
- Reading and writing and conversation
- Reading, writing, speaking, grammar, sentences
- Reading, writing & spelling
- Reading, writing, pronunciation
- Reading, writing, spelling, listening
- Reading
- Reading - dyslexic
- Reading & maths
- Reading & spelling
- Reading & understanding questions for my Cert I and II
- Reading & writing
- Reading & writing to help with storemen's course
- Reading comprehension, writing, phonics, sentence structure
- Reading course books
- Reading for work
- Reading writing speaking listening
- Reading, spelling, grammar
- Reading, spelling, writing
- Reading, writing TAFE assignments
- Reading/writing to learn to drive a car
- Relearning language after a stroke
- Speaking
- Speaking and listening
- Spelling
- Spelling & grammar
- Spelling, grammar, punctuation
- Spelling, reading and writing
- Spelling, writing
- Support TAFE course, express ideas on paper

- TAFE course
- Vocabulary, speaking, reading, listening
- Writing
- writing and pronunciation
- writing stories
- Writing, speaking, pronunciation
- Writing, vocabulary, reading

## Summary

The English as a Second Language speakers were in need of help with specific language aspects that they felt were not met in mainstream classes, eg focus on written English. Several native English speakers mentioned a need for practical writing skills, for work or study. However, the greatest demand, at 67% of those surveyed, was for reading in one form or another. This seems to be Read Write Now's core activity. Spelling is also in great demand, especially among native English speakers who missed out on acquiring this skill in school.

## How much has the tutoring helped?

The participants who gave lower ratings had been in the program for a very short time. They also tended to rate the effectiveness in terms of their own participation, rather than the tutoring. For example one said "It helped a bit, I am very slow but I'm getting there.' Others had not been able to attend regularly due to work and family commitments.

## What helps you most?

- I can borrow books and take them home – books with CDs with them have been very helpful. I read as best I can, then play the disc and see where I went wrong or if the word that I read is right.
- Spelling, talking, new words
- Making sentences. Conversation.
- Reading aloud and she corrects me. If I'm stuck on a word we stop and she explains.
- Reading the (text)book and going through the questions to prepare for the test.
- Reading books, doing homework. We talk about books, read aloud then write about it.
- Breaking up words
- Reading to help spelling
- Dictation, reading aloud, crosswords.
- Grammar, pronunciation, practice.

- Dictation. I write out words 3 times. I keep a note book to refer to when I'm writing.
- Spelling out big words
- Homework
- I borrow small books from RWN
- Tutor explained how to sound out words, breaking up words into sections for spelling. The way she explained things made it easier.
- Tutor explains things I don't understand.
- Goes over mathematical formulas, breaks down what it means, makes it easy for me to understand.
- Write a sentence each night
- She has some great resources. She has adapted totally to me.
- 1:1, practical stuff.
- Spelling, writing reports for my job. I need to improve to get ahead. He gives me homework, putting words in sentences, he gives me books.
- Discuss what we did at the weekend, the alphabet, homework.
- Reading, filling in forms
- Reading books and newspapers
- Repetition. Doing similar things to get it into my head. General practice. Comprehension tests, reading articles and answering questions about it.
- Beginners books, for young children. I want to start at the beginning.
- 'Banana Bender' word game. It was really great – I loved it.
- I read newspaper and she teaches me the vocabulary. I ask her about the Australian accent.
- Getting home work done for my TAFE course, and report writing for work.
- Visual – showing me plants and telling me the name (for my TAFE course.)
- Revision, things that relate to me, visualise and sound out words for work. We make up stories about everyday objects. (Tutor) puts letters on foam cups and I have to make words out of them.
- Reinforces practical things like writing my name, repetition.
- Spelling, writing letters, reading newspapers. She helps when I get stuck on big words. I'm starting to read books now. (Hearing an adult make this statement has far more impact than reading this can convey. The sense of pride and achievement in the student's voice is immense.)
- Reading sentences, little books. (Tutor) gets me to write things down. Read maps.
- Reading books aloud
- I read to my tutor and she corrects me. She helps me, explains to me how the system works, telephone bills, simple things that for me were difficult.
- Review and preview, writing, speaking. She gives me tips on speaking in front of a group.
- She's good, I learn from her a lot. I think I need more time with her. She gives me confidence talking to people, conversation and reading.
- Reading, doing emails on the computer
- Crosswords, word puzzles.

- We focus on improving my English. Reading newspapers, novels, I write my diary and she corrects it for me.
- Reading, learning new words
- Spelling, reading comprehension, verbs, nouns and adjectives
- Help with TAFE assignments
- Helps me understand (assignment) questions, how to write essays
- She reads to me. We have conversation and she corrects me. I write letters and essays for homework and she corrects them.
- I read to her and she explains everything. Homework.
- Talking, I explain what I've done during the week. He checks my homework. Vocabulary – get another word and use it in a sentence.
- Using a dictionary
- Spelling, sounding out words, (Tutor) shows me different words from stories – I spell the word then look up the meaning to increase my vocabulary. I enjoy that bit.
- Building on the basics. Being very supportive, sense of humour.
- How to write greeting cards, daily things.
- Reading and conversation
- I learn about structure, and Australian idiom.
- Discuss what I want to learn. She tells me which part I got wrong.
- Breaking down words and putting it all back together again.
- I am happy to learn the new language.
- Reading out loud, reading a text and answering questions
- Writing about holidays, history. Using the computer.
- Word puzzles, using the computer.
- Answering questions, listening to stories, reading books.
- Spelling words out, how words sound, sounds of each letter.
- Reading maps, addresses, Reading and spelling if I don't know the words.
- Conversation
- Writing. We do stuff together.
- General lessons, communicate with friends and family, write letters to politicians, read newspapers and story books.
- Alphabet
- Practical writing
- Gives practice tests
- Remembering the words – practise a lot – repetition.

## Summary

Literacy students liked being shown how to use a dictionary. There was a strong emphasis on learning to spell, and on learning by doing practical tasks such as reading the newspaper, and puzzles and games. Participants particularly appreciated the patience of tutors who were prepared to explain

and correct in small steps, at the student's own pace. Crossword puzzles and word games are very popular, as is computer use.

Reading books came up frequently – most people were happy to read children's books as they saw this as 'starting from the beginning'. However, a couple of people mentioned that they didn't like that, and wanted books more suited to adult interests. The ability to borrow books either from the library or through Read Write Now was popular.

ESL students mostly appreciated the opportunity to practise conversation, as several mentioned that they only speak their first language at home.

Most participants mentioned practice, repetition and clear explanation as key features in helping them to learn.

### **Is there anything about your tutoring sessions that you're not happy with?**

- First tutor didn't last long. Got a second tutor who was not helpful - her attitude - she took 2 weeks off and said she'd get back to me but didn't. (Co-ordinator is looking to rematch next year)
- Got very confused as tutors kept changing
- I'd like more time with her
- More places to contact or meet up
- Need more hours
- Need more structure, would like to follow a logical progression. (Discussed with tutor and changed program).
- No time - I work full time
- Not enough time
- Only 1 hour. More would be better
- Would like more time. Started too high, but I don't like reading kids' books.

### **Summary**

The most frequently mentioned issue was time. Other comments related to problems of continuity with tutors changing frequently. This is clearly not a common problem but is worth noting. Students who expressed dissatisfaction with aspects of their tutoring were encouraged to discuss problems with their tutor, or their co-ordinator. The recurring response was a fear that the tutor would be offended.

## **Where does the tutoring take place? Are you happy with that arrangement?**

Sixty three percent of students are meeting their tutor in public or TAFE libraries. Several students were not happy with that arrangement. Some had tried the library but didn't like it so reverted to studying at home.

One reason the library is disliked is the lack of privacy. However, studying in the library works for many. The following comments illustrate the pro's and con's.

### **Against**

- First we met at the library, but now in my home. There are no distractions at home.
- We met at the library for first few sessions but I felt more comfortable & relaxed in my own home. I could concentrate more. In the library I felt intimidated going somewhere I didn't know.
- We meet at the library. It's OK but I'd prefer to be at home. It costs me money to get to the library. It would be good if we could do it at home.
- The library is OK as long as it's in a private room. If there's other people around I just can't do it - too embarrassed.
- Sometimes it gets a bit noisy - but you have to learn to work in those environments.
- We started at the library but I'm so busy she agreed to come to my house.
- I don't like going to the library – it's a bit out of my way
- We meet at her house. It's perfect. I wouldn't be comfortable in the library. It's not really private. It's bad enough doing this as an adult. As she's giving up her time, it's only fair that I drive to her place.
- I didn't like the library – didn't like reading in front of people, so if people overheard, I was embarrassed.

- We started at the library, but I found it embarrassing with a lot of people around. Now she comes to (student's workplace) after 5.00. We worked it out –it's a nice neutral place. It's quiet; I'm not frightened to say things out loud. Sounding out words is so embarrassing in front of young people at the library, as an older person. I felt stupid.

## **For**

- Access to books and computers and when you have a 4 year old, you can't study at home.
- Its great - near where I live
- I like the library – I can get a dictionary. I use the computer before my tutor arrives. I can send and receive emails now.
- It's good, I can walk there
- The library is good - more peaceful than at home
- In the library there are no distractions like phones ringing or kids running around
- The library is very handy - you can get books and use the computer
- We go to the library – it gets me out of the house, gives me a reason to go out.

Twenty nine percent of those surveyed are studying either in their own home or the tutor's home, or a combination of both, and are very happy with the arrangement.

## **General comments**

The following are comments made by participants in the course of the interviews. They are not in response to specific questions, but offered some vivid insights into the student experience, both positive and negative, which were worth capturing.

- I wanted reading, but the tutor encouraged me to do writing as well. At first I wasn't too keen, but progress was made so now I'm happy.
- In the past I never realised why people read books 'cos I couldn't read myself. It's only recently that I realised that you can get into the book you're reading. I used to think it was kind of stupid – I didn't see the merit in it, but I get it now. I get into the story; I get anxious to get to the next part to find out what happened.
- She comes to my house. I can't go out cos I have small kids.
- I saw someone having a lesson in the library, so I asked the library staff how to do it.
- You people are very very kind
- The program is very helpful. Before, I never had a job, but now I have a job. I can talk – I didn't have the confidence to talk before, now I'm much better. Thank you for the program.
- It helps, but at the end of the day it's really up to me.
- It's a lot better than school, all crammed in. 1:1 is much better.
- She's really good
- It's helped heaps. I wanted to get a skipper's ticket. We read the book and went through the questions, to prepare for the test. I passed – it was important for me cos I wanted to go with my Dad. I didn't want to disappoint him.
- You've got a lot of plusses there – you're doing very well.
- I'm doing a lot more reading than I used to.
- It's very flexible – if either of us can't make it, we change the day.
- It helped a lot – lifted me up. You lose confidence, don't want to go for interviews, don't want to fill in forms – you start to sweat...
- It helped a bit – when you only do it once a week you don't feel much change
- It's great. Not just study English with her, I talk about other things.
- It's better than at school.
- We meet at her house. It's perfect. I wouldn't be comfortable in the library. It's not really private. It's bad enough doing this as an adult. As she's giving up her time, it's only fair that I drive to her place. We alternate days if either of us have got something on.
- I'm very slow. I'm slowly getting there. My memory button's gone down!
- Everybody's so friendly, they helped a lot. Very supportive team. I got my diploma – I passed with 100%! I feel more confident than before. Very, very helpful. I'm impressed – one and a half hours free tuition – what other country would provide this?
- Tutor has become a personal friend. She's a great source of confidence. I am very grateful.

- Excellent tutor, she's marvellous. Very very helpful and so patient.
- (Tutor) helped with basic understanding of maths. Really brought me up to speed with the course I'm doing – really clarified it for me.
- I'm getting a little bit better, slowly
- I wanted to be understood by Australian people. I have a strong accent – I wanted to work on pronunciation – to have my grammar corrected. I needed someone to correct me. She made me aware of the 'th' sound. Everybody's been wonderful. Thank you for everything you are doing. I recommend you. I wish I'd known about you when I arrived in Australia. May be some more advertising?!
- He helped me a lot. The more you study the more you go ahead. I'm so thirsty to learn the English language.
- It's helped heaps. She's a marvellous lady. If I can't understand, she explains. I enjoy it. Sometimes I can't be there because I'm a Mum, so I just ring her and we work it out.
- I don't feel comfortable with a male (tutor) as I'm single. (Female ESL student who stopped after one session for cultural reasons. Awaiting rematch with a female tutor.)
- She's been brilliant. I've come so far, come forward in leaps and bounds.
- It's a very good course and it helped me a lot – thank you
- It helped a great deal. I'm a fitter by trade but now I'm in third year of uni doing an engineering degree. There was no way I'd have even contemplated going back to uni if I hadn't done this.
- It's helped a lot. I'm starting to understand what I read – better than before. She's a very nice lady.
- She is the most lovely, lovely teacher. It's luxury to have someone to teach you to read and write.
- I enjoy very much. She supports me a lot. I'm very happy – I so appreciate her. She taught me the Australian culture – a very good thing to study. We get good relationship, she understands my poor English! I am very happy.
- It only helped a little bit because I'm lazy – I won't read if I don't have to.
- I didn't like the library – didn't like reading in front of people, so if people overheard, I was embarrassed.
- I've never had help. This is the only help I've ever had. It helped a lot - I've passed my TAFE course.
- We go to the library it gets me out of the house, gives me a reason to go out.
- It's helped a fair bit – my writing's got neater. You can read it now!
- We started at the library, but I found it embarrassing with a lot of people around. Now she comes to (student's workplace) after 5.00. We worked it out –it's a nice neutral place. It's quiet; I'm not frightened to say things out

loud. Sounding out words is so embarrassing in front of young people at the library, as an older person. I felt stupid.

- We go to the library – it's good cos there's no distractions like phones ringing or kids running around
- I work shifts so it's easier for me to go to her house. It's very flexible.
- It's helped a lot – I've picked up heaps.
- It's helped hugely!
- It's all good!
  
- I read to my tutor and she corrects me. She helps me, explains to me how the system works, telephone bills, simple things that for me were difficult. She's very good – she always has time for me; she comes to every lesson. Each class I have some achievement, each class I have some benefit. Now I feel comfortable in this country, I feel comfortable in my workplace.
- First we met at the library, but now in my home. There are no distractions at home. Sometimes we go out to the park. She explains the names of trees. I really improve a lot thanks to my tutor.
- It gave me lots of support – helped me finish my diploma. Thank you RWN – I achieved my goal!
- I really appreciate my teacher. Many many people need help from your program. I hope they can all get lessons.
- It's a major help. She showed me a lot of things I didn't know. She gives me confidence. I'm really enjoying it.
- It's fantastic. She's a very kind and experienced lady. She helps me a lot. I really appreciate it. I recommend this program to my friends. It's just perfect. Thanks very much to you guys – I really appreciate everyone who works in this program.
- I think she's good – she's so helpful
- She's good – she explains everything. If I don't get it, she explains again. She's very patient.
- They've helped me so much. I tell all my friends: 'You must join this'. It gave me so much confidence. I can understand, I can read, I can write. It makes me feel that I walk a little bit more tall at work. I only did four years of school. All my life I've been not confident about anything. At work they started to multiskill and it was going above my head. I tried to do a tech course but I found it very difficult so I needed private tuition. It was really embarrassing for me – all my colleagues can work off formulas but I couldn't. I'm a lot more confident and my employer is happy with me. I used to ask my colleagues for help, but it'd embarrassing to do that four times in an eight hour shift. (Tutor) has taken me a long, long way.
- I understand they give their time to help us. I'm very happy.

- I am happy with them – they are very good. Thank you all for the Reading Writing Program.
- I feel confident with her, very comfy with her. She says I'm improving a lot. I'm very happy.
- It was confidential. We discussed about our lives – it made me more comfortable with him.
- It's good, I'm getting there.
- It really helped me. I went to TAFE but that didn't work. I even published a story in your magazine!
- Definitely improved my confidence with maths. I used to think 'I am a mistake'. Now I think 'I made a mistake, but I'm not a mistake'
- It's very good, helping me.
- I'm very happy. I'm improving. I also attend a conversation group at the library – it's very helpful. I really appreciate all the help from RWN and my tutor.
- The group meetings are good, but sometimes I can't attend – I have to look after my son. I always change the time – it's difficult to meet because I'm busy.
- It's really good. She's really patient. I work long hours, so time is a problem. I really appreciate this program.
- I have 2 kids who want me to read stories to them.
- It's a really good system. We discuss what to do next and I give my opinion. It's really helpful.
- I like the library – I can get a dictionary. I use the computer before my tutor arrives. I can send and receive emails now.
- I can fill out passport forms. It's far less embarrassing – good for self esteem.
- I would pay \$5 or \$10 – I would still turn up. At the doctor's surgery I fill my time with word puzzles. I wish I'd known about them 20 years ago. I missed out on a lot of schooling. Your program is wonderful.
- It's a good program – very good. It helped a lot, but my Tutor is very busy so has not tutored for a couple of months.
- Improved my confidence
- I get a lot from it, I'm happy – it's very good.
- I got work so I couldn't go to my tutor's place. Thank you very much for giving me a chance.
- We get a lot of books. My teacher's great. I'm totally happy about it.
- It's slow, but I'm getting there. It's helping a bit, but it's not going to be fast. Everything's going fantastic. She's gorgeous, my teacher.
- We meet at the library. It's OK but I'd prefer to be at home. It costs me money to get to the library. It would be good if we could do it at home.
- It's very good, works nicely. I'm happy with it.

- She's helped heaps – helped me through my apprenticeship – she's been really helpful. She's wonderful. We can be flexible with time. I've recommended this to another guy who's about to start an apprenticeship.
- When I started I couldn't read at all. Now I read at Year Eight level. I have a really good tutor.

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## ***Summary of findings***

### **The questionnaire**

The question “How much has the tutoring helped?” produced varying results. It is a very subjective topic and difficult to quantify. As in past years, students tended to relate the effectiveness to their own input rather than that of the tutor if they felt they had not progressed much. On the other hand most participants enthused with comments such as “helped immensely” and “helped heaps”.

### **The results**

The majority of survey participants were highly enthusiastic about the program.

Participants valued the one-to-one tutoring, the flexibility of time and place and the personal support and friendship of tutors. The program attracts people because it can tailor teaching to the specific needs of learners and deliver the teaching in a way that fits into the learner’s lifestyle and circumstances.

Participants overwhelmingly endorsed the work of the tutors, describing them in extremely positive ways and referring to the great increase in skills and confidence gained as a result.

This year Read Write Now’s advertising effectiveness has improved: it moved up into first place from second last year with 34% of respondents saying they contacted the program as a result of advertising. This is a large increase over the 18.8% last year. Response to television advertising dropped from 9.4% last year to 6.3% this year. Response to newspaper advertisements rose to 5% from zero last year.

## **Appendix A**

### **TELEPHONE STUDENT SURVEY 2010**

#### 2010 STUDENT SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Why did you choose RWN for help?
2. Where did you hear about RWN?
3. What did you need help with?
4. How much has the tutoring helped you?  
(very much, some, a little, not much, not at all)
5. What helps you most in your tutoring? (What is it about your tutoring sessions that works for you?)
6. Is there anything about your tutoring sessions that you're not happy with? (Is there anything you think we can do better?)
7. Where does the tutoring take place? Are you happy with that arrangement?