**RESEARCH PROJECT B**

**EXTERNAL ASSESSEMENT**

**ASSESSMENT TYPE 3: EVALUATION**

“What is the long term future for the survival of the Southern Hairy Nosed Wombat and what can we do to ensure they survive?”

**Summary of research question and research outcomes**

I decided on my research question after I had seen several wombats that had been run over on the road between my home and school. I noticed that most were near the local National Park. I interviewed experts in the field of conservation, as well as local farmers. I tried to gauge what fellow students thought. My thinking changed from being totally in support of the wombat to thinking there were more sides to the argument. I still couldn’t stop the feeling that we needed to save the wombat for the future.

My key finding is that wombat conservation is making a difference but it is hard to convince everyone that it is important, especially farmers because it could affect their livelihood. My outcome is a short article for the school newsletter, and a report of all of my research to back it up.

**Word count 149**

**Evaluation 1**

Six main research processes are listed. Considered evaluation of their purpose in the research process is evident. An evaluation of the usefulness of each resource is made.

**The research processes**

I used the following processes:

* background reading to help clarify my thinking and the topic
* an interview with experts for information and direction
* fieldwork for first-hand experience
* attending a workshop to explore issues
* a survey of students to explore perceptions
* interviews with farmer to explore issues.

**Evaluation 2**

Some complexity is evident in the evaluation of decisions made. The challenge of including multiple viewpoints was in response to information gained at the workshop. Personal growth is also recognised.

The processes that worked best for me were the interviews and the fieldwork. I was able to

explore the ideas and follow up issues with experts. I got many ideas about what needed to

be done to conserve the habitat and to work with farmers to help save the wombats. I used

the ideas I got from experts when I spoke to farmers and when I wrote up my findings. The

least successful was the survey. Only two people took it really seriously. The workshop made

me see that there are other viewpoints about the issues. It made me realise that I needed

to include all sides of the argument in my research if I was to present a holistic view, so I

had to include the farmers in my research. I think I became more tolerant of other views,

but still believed in saving the wombat.

**Evaluation of research processes and decisions made in response challenges**

**Evaluation 1**

This section illustrates considered evaluation of the research processes used. Indicated are the processes with a summation of their value to the ongoing research and of the information gathered. This can be seen in phrases like; “I got a general overview”, “..more specific information..”, “…very important ..gave me access to ..”, “..showed me ..problems..” and “..good insights..”.

Firstly, I investigated what the current thinking is about this issue to find out if the Southern

Hairy Nosed Wombat is considered to be endangered and if so, what can be done. I mainly

used published material, books, magazines and websites to do this. I initially found it hard

to find up to date and specific references about the wombat in the school library. By

approaching the librarian, I was able to locate a general text, “*Endangered Australian*

*Animals*” by Mal Greene. I gained a general overview of why some animals are considered

endangered. I then used magazines and websites and found more specific information about

the Southern Hairy Nosed Wombat. Some were more useful than others because they

contained details I needed and ideas to follow up for further research. The National Parks

website had information about our local park and I found that they were doing work on the wombats. I got their contacts from this. One article, “*The Southern Hairy Nosed Wombat:*

*Can we take it into the future*?” in Endangered Animals Monthly, by Prof. D Freeman and

Dr. D. H\_\_\_\_ gave me very clear information about a programme in my local area and led

me to contact Dr. D.H\_\_\_\_. This process gave me a better understanding of the issues so

that I felt more confident in organising questions for my next process of approaching two

experts and in devising other research processes.

My next step was to contact ‘experts’ in the field of wombat research to gain a deeper

insight to the issues and processes in wombat conservation. My first, and perhaps most

important interview, was with Dr. D. H\_\_\_\_\_\_, a researcher from a local South Australian

university. This interview was important because it gave me access to the latest thinking

and the latest research. She had been working on conversation for more than 20 years.

**Evaluation 2**

Some complexity in the evaluation of decisions made in response to challenges is evident. Opportunities for further research are recognised. Both are followed up and it is easy to follow the evolution of the research pathway. This is well illustrated in the recount of what happened at the meeting.

She was able to answer many of my questions about what is happening to these animals

and, their current numbers, and how we can save them.

I approached the ranger at the local National Park, “Ranger W”, and was able to do some

fieldwork. I spent a day in the park following him around to see what he does to save the

animals. This was useful as it showed me what problems the animals were having and

what is being done in this park. It was really informative and gave me some good insights

into the role of the National Parks in working with endangered species. I thought it would

be a nice job to be a Park Ranger.

I attended a workshop about the Southern Hairy Nosed Wombat run by Dr. J. H\_\_\_\_\_. I

got a good idea of what was happening in the local area. The workshop was attended by

a variety of people, including some farmers who were very worried about the wombats

effect on their farmland. There was a lengthy discussion about this. Most people were in

favour of working with the farmers to find a solution. One person became really radical and

said we should let the wombats run wild wherever they wanted. The farmers were divided.

One said that all the wombats should be shot and that it was ruining their profits. Before the

meeting I thought that the wombats should be saved no matter what, that we should

accommodate them. But listening to the farmers I had to rethink what I thought. It raised

the question of how we can work together to make a solution to save them. It made me

realise that I had to talk to some people with a different viewpoint. So I decided to survey

some students and to interview some famers.

I devised the survey to find out what 10 students at my school, aged 15-19, thought

about the issues of conserving wombats. I also wanted to find out if they really cared

about the issue. This was partially successful, because I found out only about half knew anything

**Evaluation 1**

Considered evaluation is evident in comments about the complexity and the level of usefulness of the information.

It can be seen in comments about the interview with Farmer Y.

about the issues and why the wombats were endangered. It was very obvious that some

people didn’t care and had no idea about the problems. Three people said that they cared

and two of them really seemed to know what they were talking about.

I wondered how I could let them know that this is a very important issue. That’s when I came

up with the idea of writing an article for the school newsletter. Maybe I could let the school

know about why it is important to save them and because it was local, some of the farmers

might read it.

**Evaluation 2**

Detail is given of responses to challenges. This is illustrated in the interview with Farmer A and the improvements in the questions and outcome.

I then found three local farmers to interview. It took a while organise a time to meet. I had

to make phone calls and a couple were not willing to help and were abrupt. But with my

father’s help I managed to get three interviews. Two I had to do by email because we could

not find a suitable time to talk face to face. My first email to “farmer Y” was not very successful because the farmer couldn’t understand my questions, and his answers weren’t very good.

They were just yes and no. So I talked to my teacher and he helped me to design a better range of open ended questions. When I sent off the next questions, I got a better response from “farmer A”. My best interview was with “farmer F”. I was a bit nervous about talking to “farmer F” face to face, because I was strongly in favour with the wombat and thought that he might be very against them. But he was good. He really was trying to save them and was working with the National Parks “Ranger W” to try different ways. I realised that the issue is much more complex than I first thought. How do we balance conservation issues with using the land for production?

**E3 Evaluation**

The middle section ends with a question which is quite insightful in evaluating the research findings. This question is followed up in the article.

**Evaluation of the quality of my research outcome**

My final product in in two forms: a 206 word article for the school newsletter with a

photo of me and a wombat. It was backed up by an extensive written report covering my key findings.

**Evaluation 3**

The evaluation of the quality has elements of considered and of satisfactory review, in the explanation of the selection of product type, the attempt at balanced reporting and its importance in clarifying thinking. Feedback was not in depth, but positive.

I became more convinced during my research process that we had to save the Southern

Hairy Nosed Wombat for future generations. But as I continued my research, I discovered that

other people had different views. We had to convince these people to find a solution to work

for the wombat, as well as for ourselves**.** This is what I wanted to write about and I think that

I was successful because of feedback from a number of people.

After discussions with my teacher about my initial draft about who is my audience and what I

was trying to say in the article, I produced what I thought was a good article that explained

why it is important to save the wombat. I tried some emotive writing in it and I also showed

how the farmers could get along with the wombats. I included the local National Park

Office for them to follow up. The longer written report helped me to sort out my thinking and extract the most important points for the article.

I was really happy with my final product. I got good feedback from a few of my friends and

some teachers, who wanted to know why I did it. I sent a copy to the “Ranger W” and Dr. J.

H\_\_\_\_\_. They both said they liked it and the ranger asked if I would like to do more field work.

Mum and dad and my gran thought it was good that I was published in the newsletter. Gran

said she was really proud I did it.

**Word count 1485**

**Additional comments**

This is a B response.

**Evaluation**

Overall considered evaluation of research processes and product is evident. There is recognition of how processes used affected the quality of the findings. As well, the importance of the outcome in assisting clarification of thinking is noted. There is some complexity in evaluating decisions made in response to challenges and opportunities. In particular this is illustrated in the discussions of how the level of success of research processes influenced subsequent steps.

**Synthesis 3**

The report is mostly clear and coherent, observing written conventions, is fluent and generally easy to follow.

**Performance Standards for Stage 2 Research Project B**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | ***Planning*** | ***Development*** | ***Synthesis*** | ***Evaluation*** |
|  | Assessment Type 1: Folio | | Assessment Type 2:  Research Outcome  Assessment Type 3: Evaluation | |
| **A** | P1 Thorough consideration and refinement of a research question.  P2 Thorough planning of research processes that are highly appropriate to the research question. | D1 Thorough and highly resourceful development of the research.  D2 In-depth analysis of information and exploration of ideas to develop the research.  D3 Highly effective development of knowledge and skills specific to the research question.  D4 Thorough and informed understanding and development of one or more capabilities. | S1 Insightful synthesis of knowledge, skills, and ideas to produce a resolution to the research question.  S2 Insightful and thorough substantiation of key findings relevant to the research outcome.  S3 Clear and coherent expression of ideas. | E1 Insightful evaluation of the research processes used, specific to the research question.  E2 Critical evaluation of decisions made in response to challenges and/or opportunities specific to the research processes used.  E3 Insightful evaluation of the quality of the research outcome |
| **B** | P1 Consideration and some refinement of a research question.  P2 Considered planning of research processes that are appropriate to the research question. | D1 Considered and mostly resourceful development of the research.  D2 Some complexity in analysis of information and exploration of ideas to develop the research.  D3 Effective development of knowledge and skills specific to the research question.  D4 Informed understanding and development of one or more capabilities. | S1 Considered synthesis of knowledge, skills, and ideas to produce a resolution to the research question.  S2 Substantiation of most key findings relevant to the research outcome.  S3 Mostly clear and coherent expression of ideas. | E1 Considered evaluation of the research processes used, specific to the research question.  E2 Some complexity in evaluation of decisions made in response to challenges and/or opportunities specific to the research processes used.  E3 Considered evaluation of the quality of the research outcome |
| **C** | P1 Some consideration of a research question, but little evidence of refinement.  P2 Satisfactory planning of research processes that are appropriate to the research question. | D1 Satisfactory development of the research.  D2 Satisfactory analysis of information and exploration of ideas to develop the research.  D3 Satisfactory development of knowledge and skills specific to the research question.  D4 Satisfactory understanding and development of one or more capabilities. | S1 Satisfactory synthesis of knowledge, skills, and ideas to produce a resolution to the research question.  S2 Substantiation of some key findings relevant to the research outcome.  S3 Generally clear expression of ideas. | E1 Recount with some evaluation of the research processes used.  E2 Some evaluation, with mostly description of decisions made in response to challenges and/or opportunities specific to the research processes used.  E3 Satisfactory evaluation of the quality of the research outcome |
| **D** | P1 Basic consideration and identification of a broad research question.  P2 Partial planning of research processes that may be appropriate to the research question. | D1 Development of some aspects of the research.  D2 Collection rather than analysis of information, with some superficial description of an idea to develop the research.  D3 Superficial development of some knowledge and skills specific to the research question.  D4 Basic understanding and development of one or more capabilities | S1 Basic use of information and ideas to produce a resolution to the research question.  S2 Basic explanation of ideas related to the research outcome.  S3 Basic expression of ideas. | E1 Superficial description of the research processes used.  E2 Basic description of decisions made in response to challenges and/or opportunities specific to the research processes used.  E3 Superficial evaluation of the quality of the research outcome |
| **E** | P1 Attempted consideration and identification of an area for research.  P2 Attempted planning of an aspect of the research process. | D1 Attempted development of an aspect of the research.  D2 Attempted collection of basic information, with some partial description of an idea.  D3 Attempted development of one or more skills that may be related to the research question.  D4 Attempted understanding and development of one or more capabilities. | S1 Attempted use of an idea to produce a resolution to the research question.  S2 Limited explanation of an idea or an aspect of the research outcome.  S3 Attempted expression of ideas. | E1 Attempted description of the research process used.  E2 Attempted description of decisions made in response to a challenge and/or opportunity specific to the research processes used.  E3 Attempted evaluation of the quality of the research outcome |