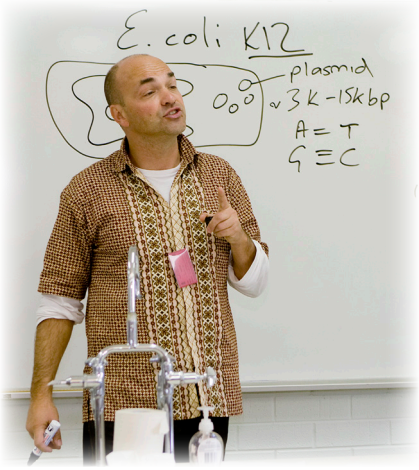
Bringing the lab to the lab

Francis McTernan, John Septimus Roe Community School, Mirrabooka, WA
Gary Cass, University of Western Australia

Gary and Francis have teamed up to bring the exciting science of biotechnology alive for over 200 John Septimus Roe students.



Gary talks biotech

Bringing his enthusiasm and experience of simple DNA techniques built over years of work in the laboratories of the University of WA, Gary visited the school over a two week period to enable the students and teachers to experience first hand some of the advances and applications of this relatively new field.

Francis ensured the students received the full educational benefit of the visit by arranging for Gary to work within the curriculum and usual school timetable.

Demonstrating techniques

Gary covered everything from DNA fingerprinting to genetic engineering using special kits designed for high school use. Students also had an opportunity to participate in a debate about the ethics of genetic engineering.

Gary, Francis and students at work

The visit was such a success that the partners have made plans for future projects around sustainability as well as continuing to explore various aspects of biotechnology.

Gary reported "We had lots of fun and I think the students got a lot out of it. Most of them now are genetic engineers, successfully engineering the bacteria with a fluorescent jellyfish gene."

Examining the results