

School of the Air A2



Photos courtesy Hay and Alice Springs Schools of the Air.

SPEAKEASY NEWS

L'actualité au cœur des cours d'anglais



Nathan

Australia is an enormous continent. Some Australian children live hundreds of kilometres from a school. If they can't go to school, they can have lessons with the School of the Air.

Before the 1950s, children had to leave their families and go to boarding schools. Or, they received their lessons by post and worked with their parents. Today, with the School of the Air, these children stay home and interact with teachers and other students. The School of the Air also teaches children who can't go to school for medical reasons.

On Air

The isolated rural regions of Australia are called the Outback, or the Bush. In 1946, Miss Adelaide Miethke, a former school inspector, noticed that Outback children used the radio communication service to contact doctors. She had the idea to use the radio system for education. In 1948, the first school lessons were given by radio. It was called School of the Air because when the teachers and students were transmitting on the radio, they were "on air".



Yesterday



Help

boarding school (n) school where pupils study, eat and sleep
former (adj) ex
notice (v) observe

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Today, teachers give lessons by satellite Internet. Teachers in studios use a video camera and an electronic whiteboard. Students can watch and respond in real-time using a web camera. Students can also e-mail teachers, hear their classmates and participate in group discussions, and interact with the whiteboard.

Teachers try to visit students at least once a year. They often have to travel in a small plane. Many schools also organise an annual sports day or carnival so students and their families can meet. From age nine, students can go to a school camp each year and have "normal" lessons in a "normal" school with their classmates. ■



Help

whiteboard or blackboard (n) At the front of a classroom, the teacher writes on the *blackboard* or *whiteboard*.

classmate (n) a student in your class

travel (v) go from one place/town to another by train, plane, bus, car etc.

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Sports Day

The first School of the Air started in Alice Springs, in the centre of the Outback.