



August 2025

Newsletter

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Upcoming Events

Members FREE Webinar Series

- **PRIMARY: Creating Curiosity Collections**
 - **PRIMARY: It's not a Fringe Show, but... Tips for creating engaging primary science lessons without losing your mind!**
 - **Unlock AI's transformative power in your school**
- See page 5 for more details.

Term 3 Members Networking and Nibbles

Friday 5 September

See page 5 for more details.

Conceptualising Concepts in Primary Science

Monday 8 September

See page 4 for more details.

SHE Task Workshop (Repeat)

Friday 19 September

See page 4 for more details.

Early Career Teachers Conference

Registration now open. See page 6 for more details.

STEM Conference

Call for workshops now open. See page 3 for more details.



@SASTAInc



@sascienceteachers



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Association member of the Australian Science Teachers Association (ASTA)

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Print Post Publication No. PP 100004158





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Newsletter copy deadlines 2025

(Advertising deadlines one week earlier)

Edition	Deadline
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November	17 October
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Advertising rates & booking form available online at www.sasta.asn.au

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From the President



Hello! Welcome to the August edition of the SASTA Newsletter. Hoping you all had a restful break and are ready to tackle Term 3 with some gusto.

It was so great to see some of you at ConASTA! Even though it was still wet and cold there, it was warmer than

Adelaide, haha. I hope you all came home with a brain full of ideas and things to try, as well as new learnings and insights.

As always, SASTA has another term packed full of professional learning opportunities. These include free webinars for our members and our marking and moderation sessions for senior science. We've also got the Early Career Teachers Conference happening in the October holidays. While it's aimed at Early Career Teachers, I find it's still incredibly relevant to me. There's always new stuff to be learnt! Check out the program on the SASTA website.

If you're more of a person who likes to share professional learning, perhaps you might like to consider presenting a workshop at the STEM Conference, happening in November. SASTA has once again joined up with MASA, DATTA, and EdTechSA to deliver a fun-filled day of STEM.

The Oliphant Science Awards Open Days were, yet again, amazing. Thank you to all the volunteers and ambassadors who helped out over the two days, as well as with bump-in and bump-out. And of course, our volunteer judges. It's not an easy job, especially when there are so many incredible entries. The awards presentation will happen in October.

In September, we've got another networking and nibbles event. It's a great opportunity to connect with our SA science teaching community, chill out, and enjoy a drink on SASTA. You'll also get to hang out with the Office staff, and share any feedback and suggestions you have about SASTA. I hope to see you there!

Stay well,

Dina Matheson





SASTA President

YEARS R-12

STEM CONFERENCE

FRIDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2025
Flinders University, Bedford Park

STEM for a Changing World



Call for Workshops now open

"STEM for a Changing World" explores how educators can equip students with the skills, adaptability, and creativity needed to survive in an ever-evolving world. The conference will be a platform for future-focused learning, integrated practice, and real-world problem-solving through STEM.

This year's conference will offer 60 minute workshops tailored to both primary and secondary educators.

Join us to connect, collaborate, and be inspired by innovative ideas that shape the future of STEM education. Workshops are encouraged from educators across all year levels, including primary settings.

Call for Workshops close on Monday 29 September. For more information visit: www.sasta.asn.au/professional_learning

Professional Learning for Term 3 2025

Marking and Moderation Workshops

Education Development Centre
9.00 am – 3.00 pm

These workshops will provide an opportunity for teachers to discuss assessment and the application of the performance standards to samples of work, as well having invaluable professional input with their own student samples. An opportunity to readjust marking standards prior to final moderation.

Physics

Monday 11 August

Presented by Michael Smith

Psychology

Monday 11 August

Presented by Carolyn Pinchbeck & Emma Beukema

Biology

Friday 15 August

Presented by Anne-Marie Taylor

Nutrition

Monday 18 August

Presented by Lisa Cibich & Anna Kubilius

Chemistry

Friday 22 August

Presented by Alicia Sampson & Jason Greenslade

RIVERLAND: Design & Deconstruct Workshop

Tuesday 9 September | 9:30 AM – 3:00 PM
Berri Regional Secondary College

Presenter: Jason Greenslade, Curriculum Leader Science, Westminster School

This workshop is aimed at people who want to further their skills in setting, assessment and providing feedback on the D&D + practical report task. It will also cover the writing and marking of practical questions for tests and exams as well. There will be time to examine your own student work and participate in some cross-moderation and marking of student work.

Conceptualising Concepts in Primary Science

Monday 8 September | 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Education Development Centre

Presenters: Anthea Ponte & Denise Rule, Department for Education

How do science concepts develop in young minds? How do they build across year levels? And how can teachers design learning that moves beyond facts to deep, transferable understanding?

This practical, curriculum-aligned workshop invites primary educators to shift from topic coverage to conceptual teaching. Using the Australian Curriculum: Science V9 as our anchor, we explore how key scientific ideas evolve over time, how to identify common student misconceptions, and how to design learning that builds conceptual understanding through investigation, reasoning, and reflection.

Together, we'll explore the key ideas in primary science and examine how core concepts progress from Reception to Year 6. Using tools and resources to support rich science learning in diverse and composite classrooms teachers will leave with greater confidence in:

- Recognising and teaching the **big ideas** of science
- Navigating the **conceptual progressions** in the R-6 curriculum
- Anticipating and addressing **common misconceptions**
- Designing learning opportunities that move **beyond facts to connected, transferable ideas**

Upcoming Member Events

Primary Years Webinar: Creating Curiosity Collections

Wednesday, 20 August

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM | Online

Presenter: Alexandra Fowler, Woomera Area School

This webinar explores the value of diverse collections in enriching science education. Participants will learn about building various collection types, including specimens, books, bones, and more, and their role in sparking curiosity and inquiry. Strategies for acquiring items on a budget will be shared, such as self-collecting, student contributions, DIY methods, and cost-effective purchasing.

Primary Years Webinar: It's not a Fringe Show, but... Tips for creating engaging primary science lessons without losing your mind!

Thursday, 28 August

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM | Online

Presenter: Miriam Doull, Unley Primary School

Students often arrive at specialist Science lessons expecting fun and excitement - a bubble show, buckets of slime, sherbet to scoff, volcanoes going kaboom, and geysers of elephant's toothpaste. It's wonderful to see their excitement and interest in doing hands-on science! However, we are typically running this show with no labs, little equipment, and no support to set up and clean up - plus we have a whole curriculum to teach, not just an entertainment schedule to deliver.

Networking and Nibbles

Friday 5 September | 4.30pm - 6.00pm | Brickmakers Arms

Join us for an afternoon of great conversation, connection and refreshments. Whether you're new to SASTA or a long-time member, this is the perfect chance to catch up and expand your professional network.

Enjoy a relaxed atmosphere, tasty snacks and your first drink is on us! We look forward to seeing you there!

Webinar: Unlock AI's transformative power in your school

Wednesday, 10 September

4:00 PM - 5:30 PM | Online

Presenter: Chris Bush, AI for Education Expert

In this webinar, AI expert and Leading Teacher Chris Bush will teach you how to harness ChatGPT and AI for revolutionary results. You'll learn how to use AI for planning, assessment, marking, and more. Join us to discover the power of AI to transform your classroom and school so you can work smarter, not harder.



STAY TUNED TO OUR PLANET

FREE SCIENCE RESOURCES FOR YRS 5-6, 7-9

The free STTOP education program uses fast paced, entertaining short videos to deliver more than 64 resources mapped to the Australian Curriculum and includes Teacher Support materials and worksheets!

www.sttop2030.com/education



Early Career Teachers Conference

Friday, 10 October 2025
Nazareth College, Senior Campus



Program now available!

Are you in your first few years of teaching science? Whether you're a pre-service teacher, a graduate educator, or early in your career, SASTA's Early Career Teachers Conference is designed just for you.

Join us on Friday 10 October at Nazareth College (Senior Campus) for a full day of practical learning, hands-on workshops, and inspiring conversations about teaching science in South Australian schools. The program has been built to support your classroom practice, deepen your curriculum knowledge, and connect you with a community of educators facing the same early career challenges and opportunities.

With sessions designed for R-12 teachers, the 2025 conference features new ideas, tangible strategies, and access to presenters from schools, the tertiary sector, SA Museum, Zoos SA, and other expert organisations. Whether you're after engaging experiments, lab routines, curriculum advice, or classroom-ready pedagogies, there's something for you.

Program Highlights

Transition from Provisional to Full Registration

Get clarity on the registration process and build your confidence in documenting your impact as a teacher. A must-attend for those moving toward full TRB registration.

Wow to Purposeful Learning: Supporting Learners to Move from Watching to Wondering to Working Scientifically

Trial hands-on, low-prep activities that engage students and connect directly to the science curriculum. Ideal for primary and middle years.

Running the Room – How to Manage Behaviour in the Labs

Learn how consistent routines, clear expectations, and teacher presence can transform the lab into a safe, productive space for learning.

Strategies for Metacognitive Thinking

Help students plan, monitor, and evaluate their thinking using classroom-ready strategies drawn from cognitive science and high-impact teaching practices.

What Teachers Said Last Year

We've refined this year's program based on your feedback:

"This was a great PD. I feel enthusiastic about teaching science with some of the ideas shared today."

"The workshops were engaging and applicable. I liked the balance of pedagogy and practical skills."

"Tracker and the AI session were highlights — I feel like I can use those ideas straight away."

Based on this, we've ensured each time slot includes options for primary, middle and senior secondary teachers, and have added new sessions that focus on real-world application, assessment strategies, and inclusive teaching.

Register online now!

Visit: www.sasta.asn.au/professional_learning

Session 1

1.1 Transition from Provisional to Full Registration

Adrian Dilger, Catholic Education SA

1.2 Wow to Purposeful Learning: Supporting Learners to Move from Watching to Wondering to Working Scientifically

Denise Rule and Anthea Ponte, Department for Education

1.3 Running the Room - How to Manage Behaviour in the Labs

Oliwia Derda, Daniel Mawhinney, St Columba College

1.4 Using a Dispositional Teaching Approach to Broaden Student Opportunities for Growth

Abby Macpherson, Seaview High School

Session 2

2.1 Moderating with ACARA 101

Dina Matheson, Specialised Assistance School for Youth

2.2 Low-prep, High-impact: Digital Tools to Engage the Modern Learner (Mathematics and Science focused)

Jakob Roth, Mercedes College

2.3 Tracker Software in Science

Paul Gavini, Modbury High School

2.4 Preparing Students for Online Exams

Sarah Shoobridge, Scotch College, Adelaide

Session 3

3.1 Skills with Chill

Karina Darling, St Mark's College, Port Pirie

3.2 PBL - What Does This Even Mean?

Jarrod Johnson, Pulteney Grammar School

3.3 Tips for increasing engagement and safety in Science

Lara Golding, Marryatville High School

3.4 Agriculture, the ultimate STEM subject

Sue Pratt, AgCommunicators

Session 4

4.1 Running Practical Work Efficiently

Jason Greenslade, Westminster School

4.2 Strategies for Metacognitive Thinking

Renee Rees, Cardijn College

4.3 Dealing with AI in Science

Jarrod Johnson, Pulteney Grammar School

4.4 Learning Outside the Classroom: Making the Most Out of a Visit to the Zoo

Ellie Carless, Zoos South Australia

Session 5

5.1 Teaching Earth's Movements: Tools & Tectonics

Kieran Meaney, SA Museum

5.2 Making Physics simple

Daniel Rabbett, Sacred Heart College

5.3 Outreach inspiration for the Circular Economy

Jo Hendrikx, KESAB environmental solutions

Share-a-thon

An informal setting for multiple presenters to share innovative teaching ideas. Each presenter will share a strategy or tool during a 10-minute presentation and delegates will rotate around the room.

Foundations

Innovative Pedagogies

Tools & Strategies

STEM in Context

2025 Oliphant Science Awards

Student registrations for the 2025 Oliphant Science Awards (OSA) closed on 18 May, with electronic submissions for Citizen Science, Multimedia, Science Writing, Scientific Inquiry, and reports for Programming, Apps & Robotics submitted throughout June.

A total of 37 volunteers judged entries in Citizen Science, Multimedia, Science Writing and Scientific Inquiry, 535 entries in total.

The Programming, Apps & Robotics Judging Day was held on Saturday 26 July at Trinity Gardens School. Students booked appointments to meet with judges and demonstrate their projects in person. Across the day, 68 students met with 14 judges.



SASTA again partnered with Science Alive! to host the onsite competition. It was a busy and rewarding week for staff and volunteers:

- Wednesday – Project delivery day
 - 1,477 onsite projects were delivered.
- Thursday – Onsite and sponsor judging
 - 70 volunteers judged entries in Crystal Investigation, Games, Models & Inventions, Photography and Posters.
 - 42 sponsor prizes were awarded, and photographs were taken of 215 winning entries.



- Friday – STEM Day Out at Science Alive! - 5,494 visitors
- Saturday & Sunday – Public display during Science Alive! - 16,547 visitors

At Open Day, all Models & Inventions entries and winning entries from the other nine categories were on display. iPads and TVs showcased the electronic submissions, providing a fantastic opportunity to celebrate student achievement and share projects with the wider community.



Although students found out if they were prize winners at Open Day, their final placings will be revealed at the upcoming Presentation Ceremony on Friday 17 October. Prize-winning students will receive an invitation via their school coordinator.

The Virtual Open Day will be released in late September, ahead of the Presentation Ceremony. It's a great opportunity to explore the winning entries, recognise students' hard work, and inspire future participants. The past two years of winning entries remain available to view on the Oliphant Science Awards website under the 'About' tab.



We were delighted to again have the Australian Institute of Physics running a Come and Try activity using lasers, and a palaeo-artist joined us at the Mary Anning display to help students draw prehistoric life.



New for 2025

New additions to the SASTA display this year included:

- A hands-on activity from Fossil Rock exploring the Ediacaran biota, giving students the chance to engage with South Australia's ancient past



- An interactive exhibit from the South Australian Museum, where participants dated archaeological and educational items, and explored real fossils, minerals, meteorites and artefacts from ancient cultures

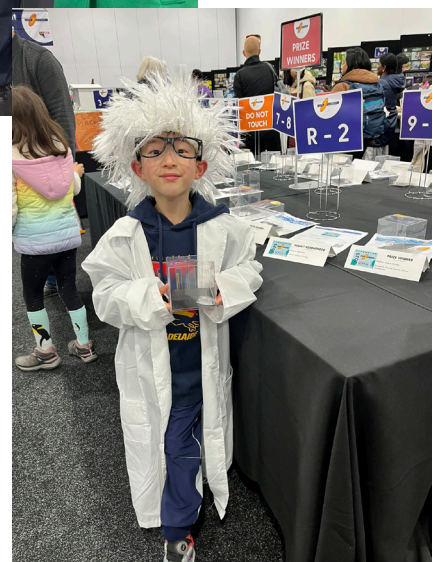
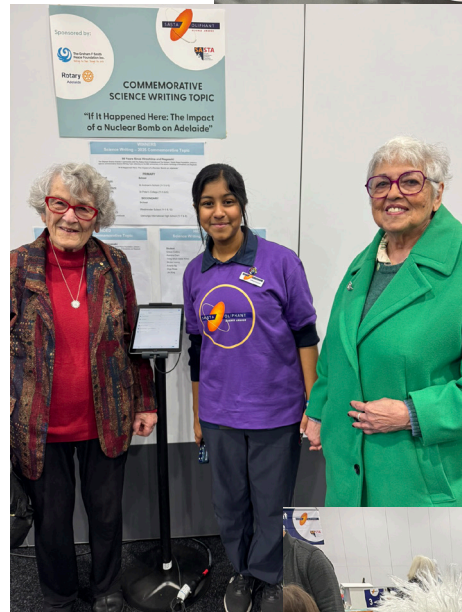
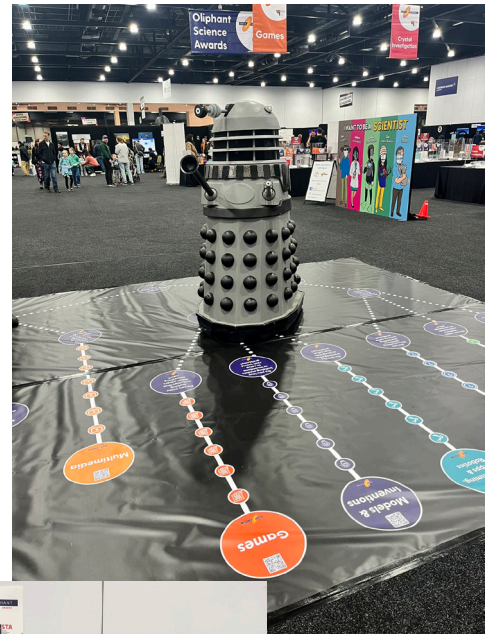
Behind the Scenes

Four SASTA staff supported the event across all six days, walking more than 313,000 steps - approx. 210km!

The Oliphant Science Awards wouldn't be possible without our generous sponsors, dedicated volunteers, school coordinators, judges and committee members.

This year, the SASTA team coordinated over 120 volunteers, supported more than 3,100 entries and answered hundreds of queries from teachers, judges, volunteers and coordinators

We can't wait to celebrate student success at the Presentation Ceremony and look forward to seeing what next year's entrants will create!



Mary Anning Art Prize

The aim of the Mary Anning Art Prize is to have young South Australian artists create an original piece of artwork that tells us something about the prehistoric life of South Australia. It is essential, to be eligible, that the artwork explores an element of South Australia's rich and remarkable prehistoric past, and that the artist lives in South Australia. To explore and illustrate our own past is to better know who we are as South Australians, and to better understand our unique place in the history of life.

While all visual art-forms are eligible, each entry must be presented in the form of a single photograph of the artwork.

What makes a successful entry?

- Scientific accuracy, creativity, and originality
- Art that tells a story, not just a picture or a sculpture

Submissions open on Mary Anning's Birthday - Wednesday 21 May and close on 26 October.



Entry categories:

- Reception to Year 2
- Year 3 to Year 5
- Year 6 to Year 8

Prizes

1st, 2nd & 3rd prizes will be awarded in each year group category.

Full details of the competition can be found on the SASTA website: www.sasta.asn.au

BIOLOGY: LEVELS OF LIFE

Brian LeCornu and Tony Diercks

BIOLOGY: LEVELS OF LIFE - TEXTBOOK

PRINTED VERSION \$64.95 | E-BOOK \$16.00

This textbook provides detailed coverage of all the content (Science Understanding) of the SACE Stage 2 Biology subject outline. It is divided into four topics, with each topic presented in chapters designed to make the material easy to follow. Each chapter concludes with a set of Study Questions. QR codes and hyperlinks connect to videos and scientific articles. The e-book is up-to-date for the 2025 school year. **A COMPLIMENTARY 15 MONTH SUBSCRIPTION TO THE E-BOOK IS AVAILABLE WITH EVERY PRINTED VERSION.**

BIOLOGY: LEVELS OF LIFE - WORKBOOK **PRINTED VERSION \$24.40 | E-BOOK \$9.50**

Written specifically to complement the textbook, the workbook covers all Science Understandings of the Biology subject outline. It can be used in conjunction with the textbook, or on its own as an aid for understanding and revision. By completing answers to the workbook questions, students will develop their knowledge and understanding of biological principles and concepts. In the digital version, students can enter answers on their device (and save them). **A SPECIAL VERSION OF THE E-WORKBOOK THAT INCLUDES SUGGESTED ANSWERS IS AVAILABLE FOR \$49.00.**

BIOLOGY: LEVELS OF LIFE - TEACHING NOTES

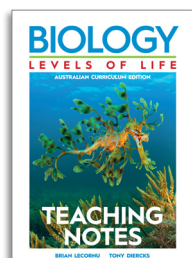
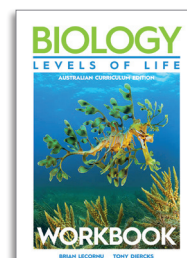
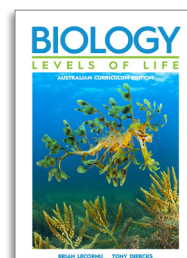
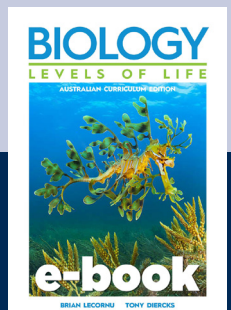
\$120.00 EACH

Teachers will find the Teaching Notes invaluable in ensuring that all Science Understandings are covered for each of the four topics. There are teaching tips throughout, as well as additional information. Answers to Workbook questions will assist teachers in explaining concepts to students. Spiral bound to lie flat on the desk, and printed on high-quality spill-resistant gloss paper.

**BOTH E-BOOKS
UPDATED FOR 2025**

The Biology: Levels of Life Textbook AND Workbook now available as **INTERACTIVE e-books!**

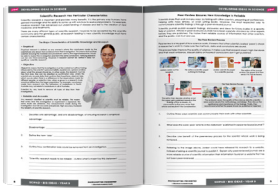
For full details visit the SASTA website.



AUSTRALIA'S MOST INNOVATIVE AND ENGAGING **STUDENT WORKBOOKS** **+ ONLINE LEARNING**

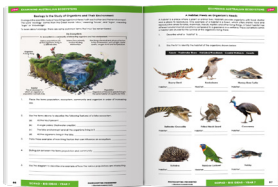


Get both for only **\$29** per student



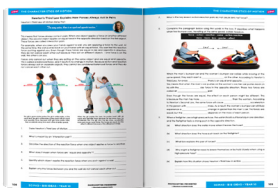
Fully Aligned to Version 9.0 of the Australian Curriculum

- Covers all content descriptions and elaborations.
- Includes Science Understanding, Science as a Human Endeavour, and Inquiry Skills.
- Explicitly linked to curriculum standards to make tracking student progress easy.



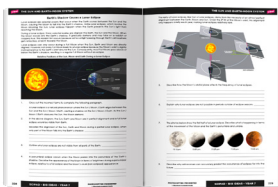
Designed for Australian Classrooms

- Integrates First Nations Australians' knowledge in contextually relevant ways.
- Supports scientific inquiry through real-world Australian contexts, helping students connect science to their environment and communities.



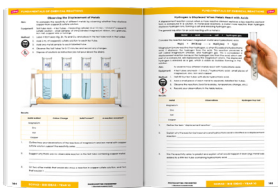
Student-Friendly Organisation

- Clear learning intentions and key words of each topic.
- Key concepts highlighted through diagrams, summaries and glossary support.
- Encourages independent and self-paced learning with well-sequenced content.



Assessment-Ready Tools

- Includes progress checks and end-of-topic review questions.
- Tasks and questions are aligned to curriculum codes for all forms of assessment.
- Helps build NAPLAN-style science literacy and analytical skills.



Strong Focus on Inquiry and Critical Thinking

- Provides hands-on and virtual investigations to support scientific thinking.
- Guides students to consider ethics, cultural protocols, and the role of science in society.
- Develops skills in data collection, analysis and evidence-based argument.



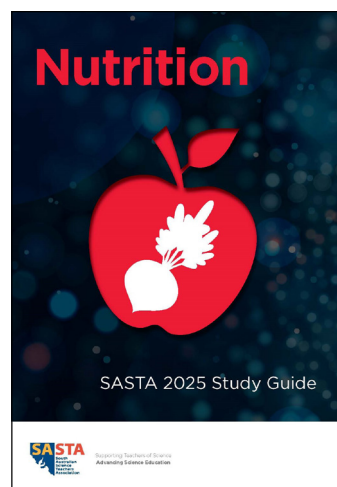
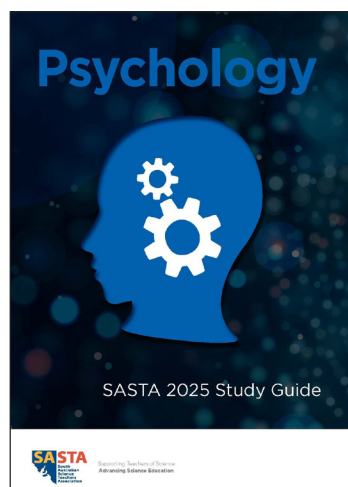
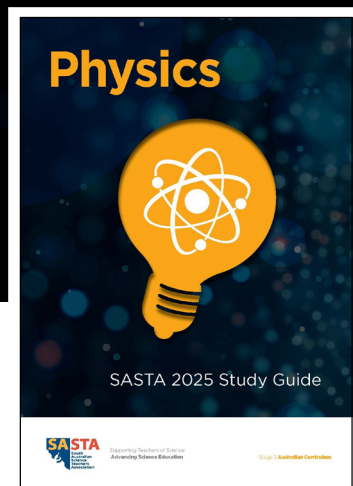
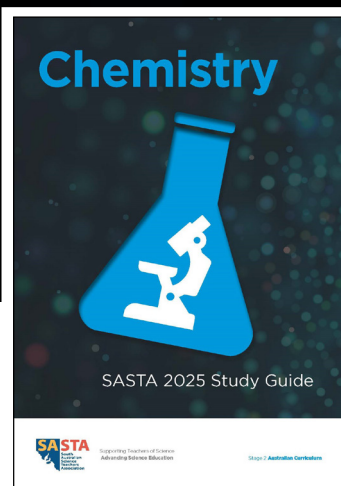
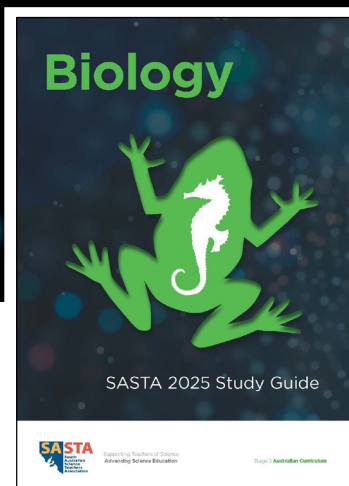
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SASTA 2025 Study Guides



SASTA Study Guides are the perfect companion for students gearing up for their Stage 2 SACE exams. These guides provide a comprehensive range of questions, accompanied by worked solutions covering all topics in the Subject Outline. To keep things fresh and relevant, we update our guides each year with solutions from the previous year's exams and introduce brand new questions to further enhance exam readiness.

\$35 each

plus delivery or orders can be collected from the SASTA office

Available Now!

Available to order at www.sasta.asn.au