



Eco-boffin on science of living

DUNG was on young minds last week. That, as well as waste, the geeky scientist from The Simpsons, engineering claims in mascara advertising, and cow burps.

Dripstone Middle School students in Year 7 were captivated by their visitor, the un-geeky eco scientist and TV identity Tanya Ha.

Ha — who popped in as part of a nationwide National Science Week tour — is a sustainable living advocate who appeared in SBS show Eco House Challenge as a coach to help move families into an eco-friendly way of living.

She spoke to her curious audience about sustainable living.

And she also explained how, even if people weren't planning on becoming scientists, science could help them understand the world.

"It's not all that geek stuff that we get scared of," she said.

"My two aims today were to talk about the environment and put a face in front of them that's an alternative to the science stereotype."

Lachlan Hand, 12, said Ha's talk was "really fun and really interesting".

"I didn't know most of that stuff — I got a lot out of it," he said.

"The most interesting thing was about the cows and the methane.

"I didn't know they produced more methane out of their mouths than their bums."

Teacher Maxine Flett said the talk was fantastic for her students, who are taking part in Power and Water's virtual energy audit.

"You can do it on the computer — they'll look at how much energy they're using around the home, how much they use on entertainment," she said. "Then they'll modify power usage by switching off the TV or not leaving the computer on standby."

— ALYSSA BETTS



UP FRONT: Tanya Ha lectures to Dripstone school students



HELPING HAND: Environmentalist Tanya Ha with Dripstone Middle School Year 7 students Lachlan Hand and Paula Wilkinson. Pictures: STUART WALMSLEY