



*Reflection Report on:*

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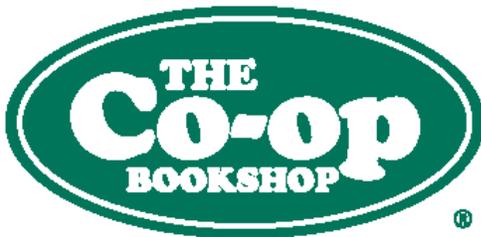
*P*oster

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The 2010 Event is sponsored by:



Education Review

## Annual Poster Lecture Evening (APPLE) Reflection Report

**Dr Frederick Osman**  
**2010 APPLE Convenor**

The Teachers' Guild of New South Wales held its first Annual Poster Presentation Lecture Evening on Monday 26 July 2010 at Santa Sabina College Hall, 90 The Boulevard, Strathfield from from 6.00 to 9.00pm. The purpose of the Annual Poster Presentation Lecture Evening is to:

- Give presenters a chance to present their research work to a learned audience in the friendly environment of a school setting.
- Allow for reflection of the presenters' proposed research and progress achievements.
- Give the presenters the opportunity to liaise with other presenters, students, academics, staff, visitors and past students.

These awards were created to encourage excellence in research work, and all nominees that participated in these awards had an opportunity to compete for the \$1000 Guild Research Award Prize, \$500 COOP Bookshop prize and special certificate that recognises the nominee's high standing.



*Dr Frederick Osman, Kate Clancy, and Fran Fleton*

This new format and approach to presenting current research to peers in education, highlights the positive work being done to ensure education continues to move forward into the future. Each presenter had one poster board (2.1 metres high by 1.2 metres wide) to present their research work. The poster presentation session was designed to be a powerful alternative presentation using stimulating layout and interactive discussion. The presenters were given five minute introductions to "sell" their posters to the audience. The five minute introductions gave a much higher profile to the posters, which was intended to "break the ice" for further discussions during

the poster sessions. I would like to thank our judging panel for their time and dedication in judging the posters:

- Dr Anthony Loughland – University of Sydney
- Dr Lloyd Dawe – Schools Consultant
- Ms Michele Hanwell-Short (Chair of judging panel) – Meriden School

The judges ranked the candidates according to: (1) content and scientific quality, (2) clarity and (3) presentation skills and determined the winners for the following categories:

- ⇒ Guild Research Award Winner: Meera Varadharajan from University of Technology
- ⇒ Highly Commended Award: Ruth Targett from Trinity Grammar School
- ⇒ Encouragement Award: Prue Salter from University of Technology, Sydney

It was wonderful to see so much diversity and such talented educators presenting at APPLE. The Guild would like to acknowledge the wonderful posters from the participants and wish them all the very best for the future. The poster summaries of all the presenters are included below.

I would like to thank our sponsor, the COOP Bookshop and Education Review, for contributing towards the prizes of this event. To Ms Kate Clancy, Santa Sabina College principal we extend our thanks for the opportunity to hold our event at Santa Sabina College Hall.



*Irene Holt, Paul Stenhouse, Alan Harper, Dr Paul White, Janelle Varlow and Dr Frederick Osman*

## Poster 1

### Computer Mediated Learning in a Social Constructivist Environment



**TONY STOJKOVSKI**  
**Meriden School**

For many years, information and communication technology has been introduced into the classroom with a focus on providing better instruction for the learner and assisting teachers in delivering the educational content. Some have argued, however, that pedagogical strategies based on the principles of social constructivism are likely to be more effective than those concerned with information transmission (Salomon, 1993; Palincsar, 2005). Such strategies emphasise the construction of knowledge through social interaction supported by computer technology, termed 'computer mediated communication'. Many studies have examined learning outcomes that result of computer-mediated communication (Du Plessis, et al., 1995; Veerman, et al., 2000; Pear & Crone-Todd, 2001; Scardamalia, et al., 1994; Bronack, et al., 2006), but few have examined environments that involve both on-line and face-to-face oral communication. This study addresses that gap by investigating learning outcomes achieved through the use of a software program that aims to support social construction of knowledge. The program is called the computer-mediated social constructivist environment (CMSCE).

The study collected student work submitted through the CMSCE, recordings of in-class discussions, student feedback about the learning process and the researcher's field notes to provide complementary and confirmatory information. This analysis examined characteristic of the communication stimulated by the environment and the ways in which the CMSCE program supported interactions within the class in order to enhance learning and enable an enriched understanding of the content. The study also examined students' perceptions of the learning environment.

The study found that the CMSCE program provided an opportunity for each individual to learn at different learning rates. It also allowed the teacher to cater the learning tasks to an individual's learning ability and interest. It was evident that the students developed an in-depth knowledge of their content in a way that may have been difficult in a traditional classroom. A key advantage was the flexibility of the learning environment. Using the CMSCE program to submit a series of drafts of their work, enabled students and the teacher to engage in numerous discussions they perhaps would otherwise not be able to do. These discussions helped students collaborate during the lessons and outside of the classroom.

## **Poster 2**

### **Factors that Impact on Motivation in Middle School Students: Choice, Challenge, Interest or Enjoyment. What do students really want?**



**RUTH TARGETT**

**Trinity Grammar School**

Research has suggested that motivation is the key to students learning. In Middle School there is a significant body of research suggesting that student's motivation drops considerably during this period. This research explored how middle school student perceptions of interest, choice, challenge and relevance of classroom activities, affect their engagement in class and their perceived motivation within different groups, i.e. identified gifted and non-gifted students, male and female, year groups and subject; within one school.

A motivation survey was developed by Rogers and Phillips (Targett), (2007) using elements of Gentry and Gable's (2001) *My Class Activities*, Dweck's (2000) *Task choice*, and Rogers's *How Do You Like to Learn* instruments. The instrument used Likert scale responses to statements

regarding choice, challenge, interest and enjoyment, Attitudes to learning and forced choice responses for learning vs achieving good grades and learns again or learns something new; in order to assess different factors affecting student perceptions and motivation. The factors: student perceptions of the level of choice, challenge, interest or enjoyment of a particular task or in a classroom environment, attitudes to learning and attitudes to achievement, were compared across the various groups. The poster will present information about what the data tells us about Middle School motivation in these populations and the contexts, how this data was used to inform the school about the motivation of students and how this understanding was too used to inform the evaluation of instructional methods of teachers. Implications highlighted by these results and the curriculum modification made in response to the data to increase motivation in gifted and non-gifted students will also be presented.

### Poster 3

#### Facilitating Sustainable Change to Models of Support within a Learning Resource Environment



VIVIENNE HAYLE

Mary MacKillop College

The poster presentation will outline the framework for a research project which explores the strategies required for the successful implementation of sustainable change in models of support for students with disabilities (SWDs) and the impact of the change on all significant participants. This is contextualised within a mainstream Catholic High School. A case study methodology conducted as participatory action research (PAR) gives specific attention to strategies supporting the change from in-class support, to a more inclusive and collaborative process for support staff and general educators (GE) to collaborate to develop appropriate support strategies. It is envisioned that the implementation of a PLC model will:

- Promote inclusion through enabling mainstream staff to use support strategies which may then be generalised to benefit more students;
- Increase the independence of SWDs; and
- Allow more time for direct teaching of basic skills which assist in making mainstream curriculum more accessible.

It is also proposed that the PLC model may reduce the dichotomous attitude which exists between support and mainstream staff in many schools. Current perceptions around the concept of inclusion are explored and strategies to support the development of inclusive policies, practices and culture suggested. Effective strategies to encourage collaboration between support and mainstream staff, motivating factors for staff to implement sustainable change, leadership for change and the impact of school culture are also explored. The PAR process in this study involves five cycles each of which will be monitored and reviewed by regular meetings of an Advisory Committee and reported on in a written narrative summary. This will then be distributed to all participants and will advise strategies for forthcoming cycles. Data collection tools include questionnaires, focus group discussions, interviews and observations, personal and reflective journals.

### **Poster 4**

#### **Gifted Gateways**



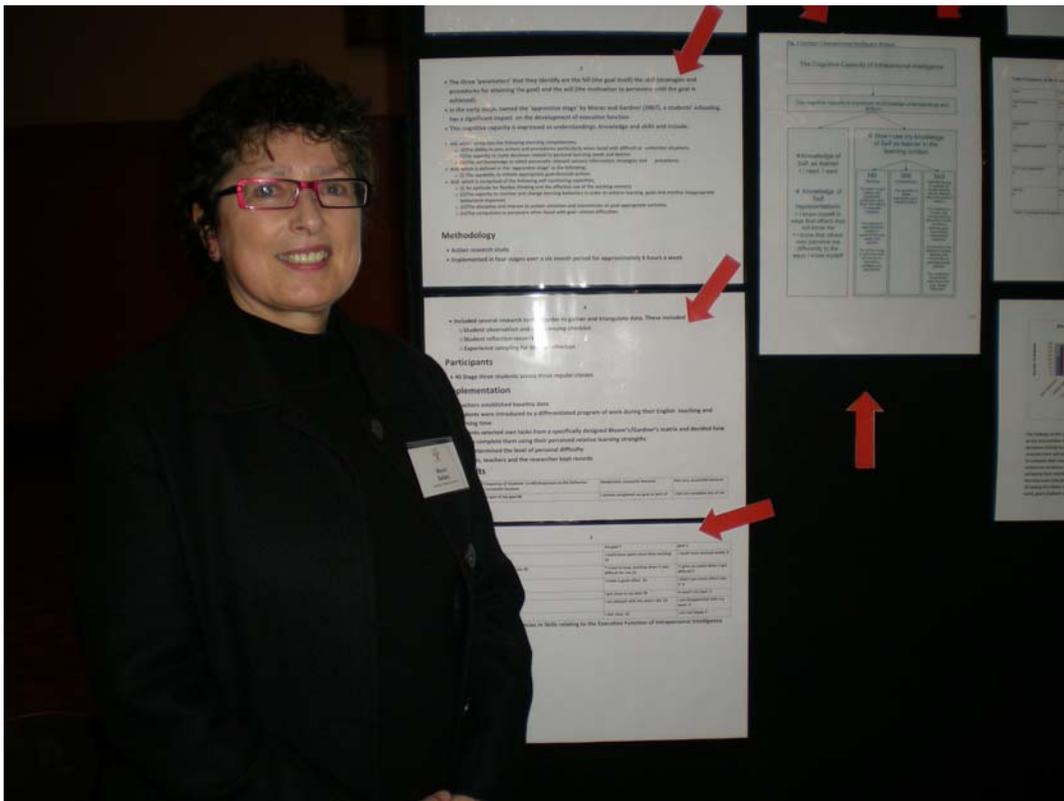
**KYLIE MCKEMMISH**  
**Santa Sabina**

All students, regardless of their academic ability or developmental years, need instruction and guidance in order to develop their knowledge and skills to their full potential. Within any class there are students of varying abilities who are required to learn the same core curriculum.

However, this core curriculum is not suited to all students. It is because of this that the curriculum needs to be differentiated to accommodate for the differing learning style, pace and characteristics of the gifted students as well as the learning impaired. In schools, up to 60% of gifted students are working more than 4 years below their ability level. This means that these students are not being intellectually stimulated; therefore they won't learn how to learn, and develop the study skills they need for further academic learning. Without assistance, differentiated curriculum, or grouping with their intellectual peers, these gifted students are likely to become bored with school, demotivated, disruptive and disrespectful, frustrated or angry. Each student learns and each teacher educates in their own style. Sometimes this can be the same as it is for others, most of the time it is individual to that one person. It is therefore necessary to choose curriculum differentiation methods that suit the varying learning and teaching styles of individuals. The range of methods available for assisting teachers in developing a differentiated curriculum is in this way a benefit, as there are a large number of differentiation methods that allow the teacher to choose parts of various methods to assist in developing a differentiated curriculum that best suits the situation. Not all of the types of curriculum differentiation should be applied at any one time and not all forms of differentiation take excess amounts of time to implement. Most forms of differentiation curriculum can be used in a regular mixed ability classroom or in specialist classes for gifted students. All it takes is a teacher who is willing to give this a go.

### **Poster 5**

#### **The Hill, the Skills and the Will: Developing Students Capacities to Set, Monitor and achieve new Personal Goals**



**MAURA SELLARS**

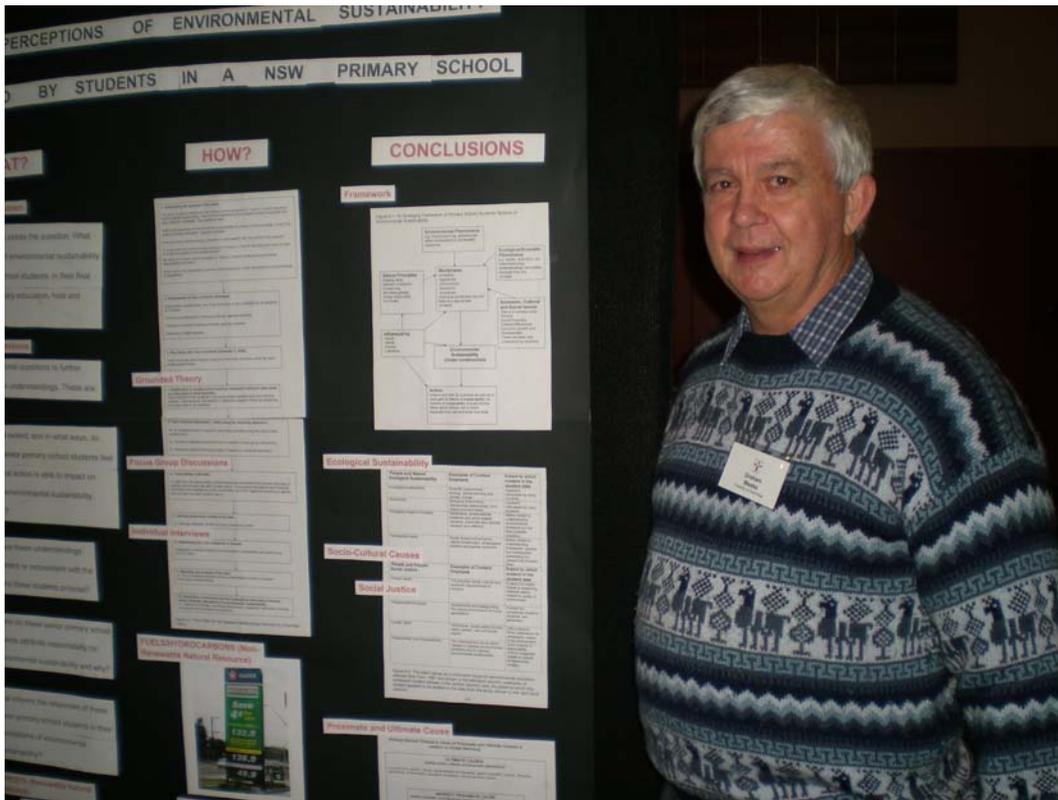
**Australian Catholic University**

This presentation details a study which investigated the capacities of ten to twelve year old students to develop the cognitive of intrapersonal intelligence as defined by Howard Gardner. A group of forty, ten to twelve year old students across three Stage Three New South Wales

classrooms were introduced to an Intervention Program specifically designed to foster their self knowledge as learners and their capacities to use this knowledge to develop the knowledge, skills and understandings collectively known as 'executive function'. The Intervention Program incorporated the theoretical foundations of the Multiple Intelligences perspective of executive function as defined by Moran and Gardner. The students were engaged in self selected learning tasks in the key learning area of English with the intention of helping them to identify their own relative strengths and relative limitations in this curriculum area. The program included a variety of activities and procedures including those that required students to determine their own learning goals, engage in reflective journaling both during the tasks and at the conclusion of the tasks and identify, plan and implement their own learning strategies in order to achieve their learning goals in English. The three participating teachers undertook to provide information related to the students' work habits, on task behaviors, self monitoring strategies, the students' capacities to improve their cognitive strategies when working on their self selected tasks and students' abilities to use these skills, knowledge and understandings to improve their learning outcomes in English. The results presented evidence a considerable improvement in the students' knowledge, skills and understandings identified as 'executive function' classified by Moran and Gardner as the 'hill' the 'will' and the 'skill'; in relation to their self selected learning goals in English and began to take increased responsibility for their own learning in English.

## **Poster 6**

### **What Perceptions of Environmental Sustainability do Senior Primary School Students Hold and Express?**



**GRAHAM WEEKS**

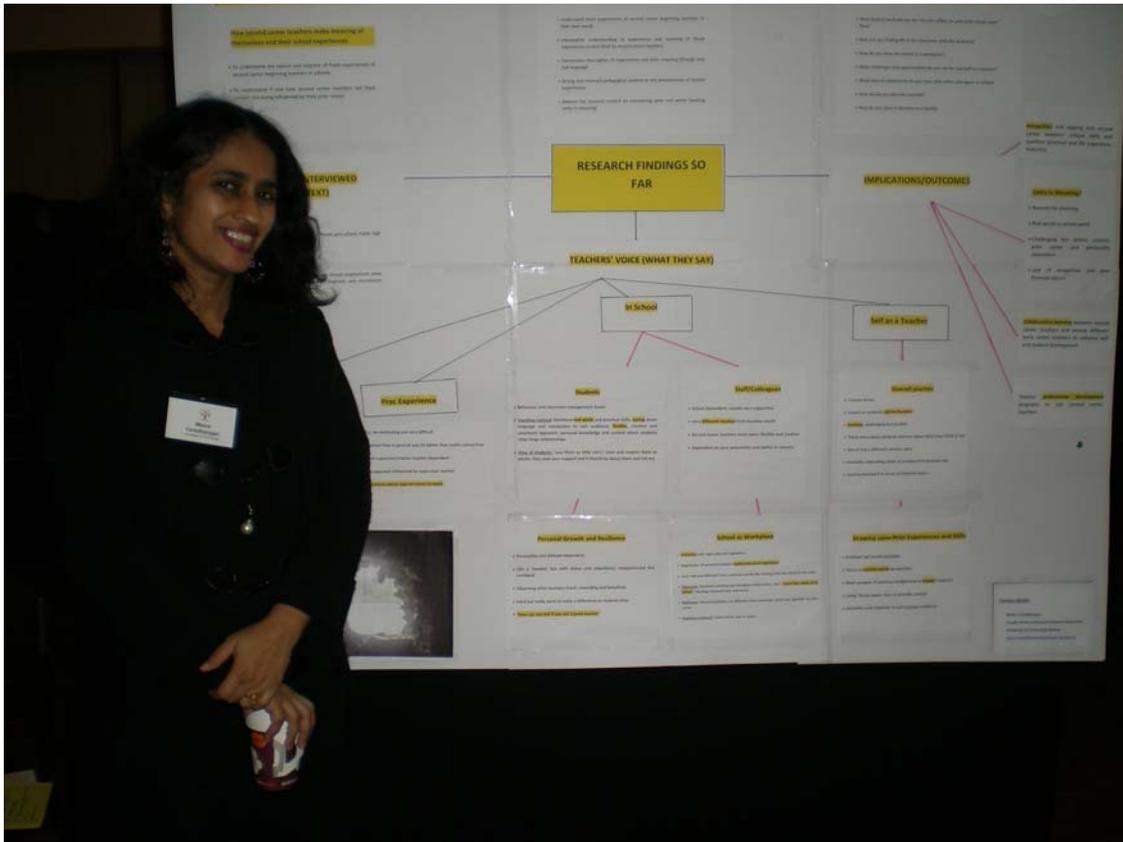
**University of Technology**

The study aims to produce an insight into how young children perceive environmental sustainability and poses the research question: What perceptions of environmental sustainability do senior primary school students hold and express? Existing research indicates that the most significant work in an environmental education in NSW is being done at the primary school level.

However evidence relating to the research question is limited. Therefore it is important to gather and analyse data about these perceptions of primary school students if we are to develop and implement sustainability education curricula that best support the needs of students, is relevant to primary school teaching and learning, and provides insight into appropriate strategies for the professional development of teachers. This study involves students in their final years of primary school education and explores their perceptions of environmental sustainability. It provides insight into how their perceptions are informed and how they may be best nurtured. The data is gathered from primary school students in Years 4, 5 and 6 and their teachers in one NSW primary school. Qualitative methods are used to collect data. These include students responding to three differing types of stimulus material using an open-ended questionnaire, focus group discussions, and individual interviews. The data is gathered using methodology that is influenced by Grounded Theory and analysed with reference to the existing literature. The conclusions report that the students in the study most frequently express notions of sustainability that are underpinned by homocentric views of sustainability; proximate cause and effect scenarios; and proposed actions based on sharing natural resources fairly while maintaining the environmental balance and behaving responsibly. Finally, an emerging framework of primary school students' notions of environmental sustainability is presented and discussed along with the implications for sustainability curricula.

## Poster 7

### Understanding the Experiences of Second Career Teachers in Schools



**MEERA VARADHARAJAN**  
**University of Technology**

Little research has been done about second career beginning teachers and their experiences in school. The research study is about understanding the experiences of second career beginning teachers in schools and the way these experiences are understood and interpreted by the

teachers. A hermeneutic phenomenological approach is used to inform and guide the study. Initial interviews with teacher perspectives reveal how they see themselves bringing in different but interesting perspectives to schools and classroom teaching. While the reason to become a teacher can vary depending on individual circumstances, the teachers interviewed so far all share a deep passion for teaching and 'to make a difference in these young people's lives'. These teachers also saw the importance of providing students with real-life practical examples in concept explanation reflecting the prior background and work life in the corporate environment.

Sharing of personal space, noise and lack of freedom are just some of the ways teachers' used to describe the school and classroom as workplace environments. While the second career teachers interviewed wanted to succeed, they also see teaching as one of many other careers they have had. They also view themselves as a 'newbie' but older with 'status and experience'. The focus of the study is on the thick and meaningful descriptions of stories as told by these teachers and how they make meaning of themselves and their school experiences. The research will have implications for teaching in general and teacher recruitments and retention policies in particular. It will also have implications for teacher education and professional development programs.

## **Poster 8**

### **"Write Wright!" ... The Ring Pencil**



**EARL OWEN**  
**Microsearch Institute**

**WRITING IS GOING OUT OF FASHION?**

Computer keyboards are in! But we live in a world where the PENCIL is the very FIRST IMPLEMENT that Mothers and Teachers give their children, but don't teach them how to use them properly.

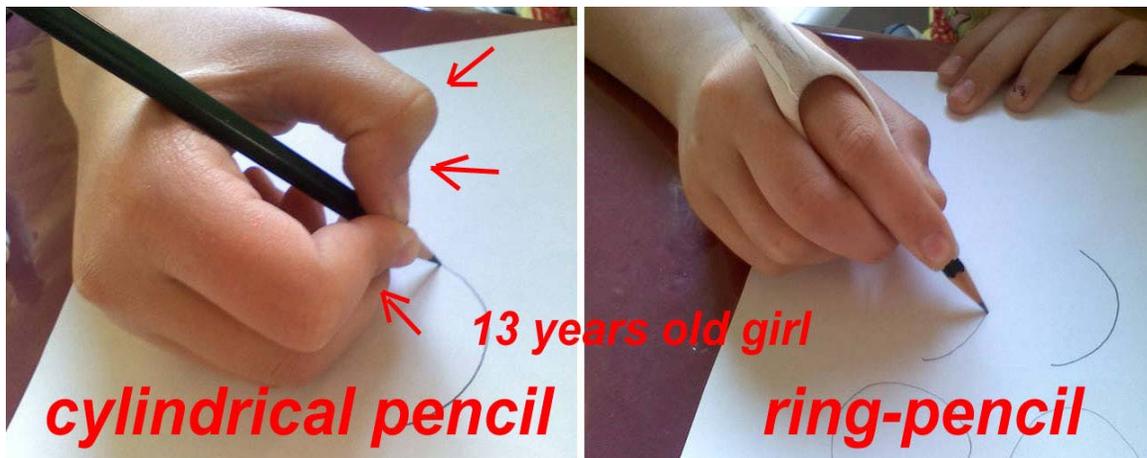
Quickly frankly Teachers do not insist on children holding their pencil the correct anatomical way right at the start of their education. Even if they do, children will hold the pencil the way they want because the normal pencil shape can be held any way at all.

But slip the ring of the Ring Pencil over the index finger of the right or left hand and all children see their new Ring Pencil in the best possible and most comfortable position for effortless drawing and writing. If the child is observed to be having trouble writing, it is nearly always due to incorrect posture or too fixed or too tight a grip. A TIGHT GRIP DEFIES HUMAN ANATOMY AND CAUSES "WHITE KNUCKLE" RIGHT ANGLED THUMB AND PAINFUL WRITING.

You would be amazed how many students sitting for HSC have such poor finger grip and such pain in fingers, hands, wrists, and arms that they get Doctor's Certificates to require assistance in writing their exams, sometimes needing more time, sometimes needing a writer to write for them.

Children with incorrect finger grips on pencils and later on pens are usually reluctant to write lengthily and are poor at drawing.

Children with severe writing problems due to poor finger positioning can be cured by introducing them to their sized Ring Pencil or later the Ring Pen. But why wait? Start your youngest class now on the Ring Pencil. **Write Right from the start!**



## Poster 9

### Examining the ways that Primary Teachers (K-2) use Interactive Whiteboards in Connection with their Literacy based Pedagogical Practices



**KAY PRCEVICH**

**University of Wollongong**

Through government initiatives (such as the Building the Education Revolution Program, discretionary purchases and Connected Classrooms Program), there has been a significant increase in interactive whiteboard (IWB) technology within NSW primary school classrooms. However, it appears that the inclusion of IWB technology into classroom contexts is not always guided by strong pedagogical principles. Given this, it is important to ensure that the use of IWB technology is being converted into purposeful, effective and sustainable practice. The study aims to extend the currently limited understanding of how pedagogy is developing in response to the influx of IWBs in NSW public school classrooms. It aims to do so by building on existing research to work with teachers in order to assist in the development of an appropriate pedagogical framework to design, deliver and guide the decisions made by teachers about K-2 literacy based classroom experiences, in connection with IWB use. Thus, this study will make significant contribution to existing knowledge of the ways K-2 teachers use IWBs in connection with their literacy based pedagogical practices. Such further knowledge will be valuable to NSW government schools, students and teachers educators as they (teacher educators) will be able to draw on this knowledge whilst designing and delivering pedagogically appropriate IWB literacy based learning experiences.

Please note that this is a school-based research project, supported by both the Department of Education and Training – SERAP (2009155) and the University of Wollongong (HE09/385)

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## Poster 10

### Developing Self-regulated Learners: Exploring the Role of Secondary Schools



**PRUE SALTER**

**University of Technology**

Self-regulation is defined by Zimmerman (1986) as the degree that individuals are metacognitively, motivationally and behaviourally active participants in their own learning process. Anecdotal observation that many students lack the necessary expertise to achieve their academic potential is validated in studies in both school and higher education contexts (Weinstein 1988, Wingate 2007). Research on self-regulated learning has revealed evidence of substantial correlation between the use of self-regulated learning strategies and academic achievement (Schunk & Zimmerman 1994).

This study will look at how contemporary Australian secondary schools can foster the development of self-regulated learners in the context of the 21st century learning environment. The aim is to explore what a contemporary framework might look like grounded in both the previous research on self-regulated learning and this new research on the current approaches by schools. Such a framework can then guide policy development for formulating a comprehensive school-wide approach to fostering self-regulated learning and act as a way to bridge the gap between development of self-regulated learners as advocated by the literature, and the reality of implementation within the constraints of the school system.

Through an extensive online survey and a multi-case study approach, this research will examine approaches taken by schools, how technology is affecting these approaches, as well as stakeholders' attitudes, beliefs and experiences of the development of self-regulated learning in contemporary secondary education. Although previous research has focused on defining the

complexity of self-regulated learning, understanding the aspects and characteristics of a self-regulated learner and exploring specific contexts where self-regulated learning can be fostered, this study aims to look at the well-trodden field of self-regulated learning through this fresh, contemporary tri-lens perspective.

It is timely to explore what is happening in schools in the field of self-regulated learning given that the nature of the skills needed for students to achieve their academic potential at school may have changed with modern curriculum changes, new understandings about the learning process, and the advent of the different technologies and greater accessibility to technologies.



### *Collage of Photos during APPLE - 2010*





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