

Thomas Hassall Anglican College

Location: Sydney, NSW

Type: Co-educational independent school

Year levels: Prep to Year 12

LiteracyPlanet usage: Years 7 to 9



Supporting differentiation in a modern learning environment



“ One particularly useful feature is that each student can work to better their own performance while completing discrete differentiated learning activities individually selected by their teacher. ”

Julie Smythe
English teacher
Co-ordinator - Learning Support

Thomas Hassall Anglican College aims to equip students to make a positive contribution to their world. It is a learning community in which teachers and parents work in partnership to advance students' learning and growth.

Why did the school choose LiteracyPlanet?

Founded in 2000, Thomas Hassall Anglican College's facilities are spacious, modern and well equipped, and the school is committed to a process of continuous review for improvement, innovation and effectiveness.

The College seeks to help students develop the technological skills required to thrive in modern society and to be digitally literate, as well as to become responsible digital citizens. A variety of online platforms and apps are used to enrich the learning environment, and all Senior students bring their own device.

English teachers had been looking for a "one-stop literacy-shop" platform that would support their teaching programs, as well as engage students and boost their skills in spelling, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, comprehension and writing.

They first became aware of LiteracyPlanet when one of the school's Learning Support teachers, Brian Cavanagh, recommended it. He had observed a dramatic improvement in his own son's literacy skills as a result of using the program at home.

How the school uses LiteracyPlanet

The College uses LiteracyPlanet in many different settings. In English, teachers use the work bundles such as those for NAPLAN, and a variety of exercises to reinforce teaching in a range of ability classes, both for standard and extension skills. They regularly set LiteracyPlanet tasks for homework, which students enjoy completing at home.

In other Key Learning Areas teachers use customisable LiteracyPlanet exercises to help students learn key terminology.

In Learning Support sessions it is used to reinforce reading accuracy, reading rate and comprehension skills, and as a popular reward activity. Teachers have also seen the benefits of being able to involve parents, who encourage and assist their children in using LiteracyPlanet at home.

Students find LiteracyPlanet a lot of fun and easy to use. They say it helps them to get a lot of work done quickly, and particularly enjoy the friendly competition, fast-paced graphics, instant feedback, and being able to work self-guided. "My students especially love the 'choose your own adventure' feel of the program," says English teacher Julianne Chavura.

Julie Smythe, English teacher and co-ordinator for Learning Support in the Senior School, says at first the students couldn't believe it was a serious learning activity: "They were surprised they could do it at home and it counted as homework. Combining entertainment and learning is a real bonus!"

“ We have measured excellent improvement. ”

- Julie Smythe

Teachers appreciate the exercise bundles, how simple it is to track students' progress, and being able to easily differentiate. "One particularly useful feature is that each student can work to better their own performance while completing discrete differentiated learning activities individually selected by their teacher," says Mrs Smythe.

Adds English teacher Lauren Johnson: "It is refreshing to see students who are usually disengaged become enthused about a program that helps with their reading and writing".

According to Mrs Smythe the benefits of using LiteracyPlanet are clear: "We have measured excellent improvement in spelling and reading competency, with the most dramatic gains being made by students who are using the program in class, in reading groups and at home.

"Students who were once struggling to spell basic vocabulary have improved dramatically in both their skills and self confidence.

"Literacy is a 'hot topic' now that all students must reach higher minimum standards to be awarded a Higher School Certificate. LiteracyPlanet assists students, teachers and families with achieving these goals."

“ It is refreshing to see students who are usually disengaged become enthused about a program that helps with their reading and writing. ”

Lauren Johnson
English teacher



The College's students were among 400,000 from 3,000 schools in Australia and New Zealand to compete in LiteracyPlanet's Word Mania 2017 competition. Year 9 students, pictured left, improved their scores by 91% over the course of the competition and placed second overall.

Connect with us: www.literacyplanet.com | info@literacyplanet.com