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Introduction to special Honours feature - JSEEM 2 (1)

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Abstract

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Introduction to special Honours feature

As the 2011 Honours coordinator, I am delighted to introduce the following papers written by three students from the 2011 Honours cohort. These papers represent diverse research topics and present implications for practice by providing recommendations for teachers.

The first paper, by Alyce Shepherd and titled: ‘The case of Drew: An animated social narrative intervention to improve the social skills of a student with a mild intellectual disability (MID)’, reports the findings from one of four cases that comprised her Honours thesis. Alyce’s research examined how a teaching approach where students create their own stop-motion animation about a concept, referred to as ‘slowmation’, can be used to help students who have a mild intellectual disability learn about safe behaviour strategies. Alyce explains how one student, Drew, engaged in the slowmation process of breaking down concepts into steps and then revisiting through the design of a sequence of representations (for example, storyboard, models, photographs and narration). She argues that this process contributed to Drew’s improved understanding of safe behaviour strategies.

The second paper is by Amanda-Rita Gigliotti and is titled: ‘Quality teaching and learning in the educational context: Teacher pedagogy to support learners of a modern digital society’. Amanda summarises the findings of her Honours research that examined whether students in one Year 6 class, in a school that has a one-to-one laptop program, were engaged in higher-order thinking when participating in laptop-based activities during a particular unit of work. Amanda found that higher-order thinking was evident and presents examples using the NSW Professional Teaching Standards and the NSW Quality Teaching Model to illustrate the principles of quality teaching and learning that teachers need to address to ensure their students are able to successfully participate in higher-order thinking and develop technological skills and understandings.

The third paper, written by Lara Sheils, explored the connections four university students made between hard copy and associated visual texts. Titled: ‘Exploring the intertextual and multimodal connections young adults make in their explorations of hard copy and visual texts: Some implications for classroom teachers’, Lara explains how her participants made meaning from these different media forms. One finding was a strong reliance upon cinematic elements and aesthetic features of film to aid the construction of meaning. Lara concludes her paper by providing recommendations for teachers to implement to help their students gain a more in-depth interpretation when studying visual texts.

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