TECH TALK FOR PRINCIPALS

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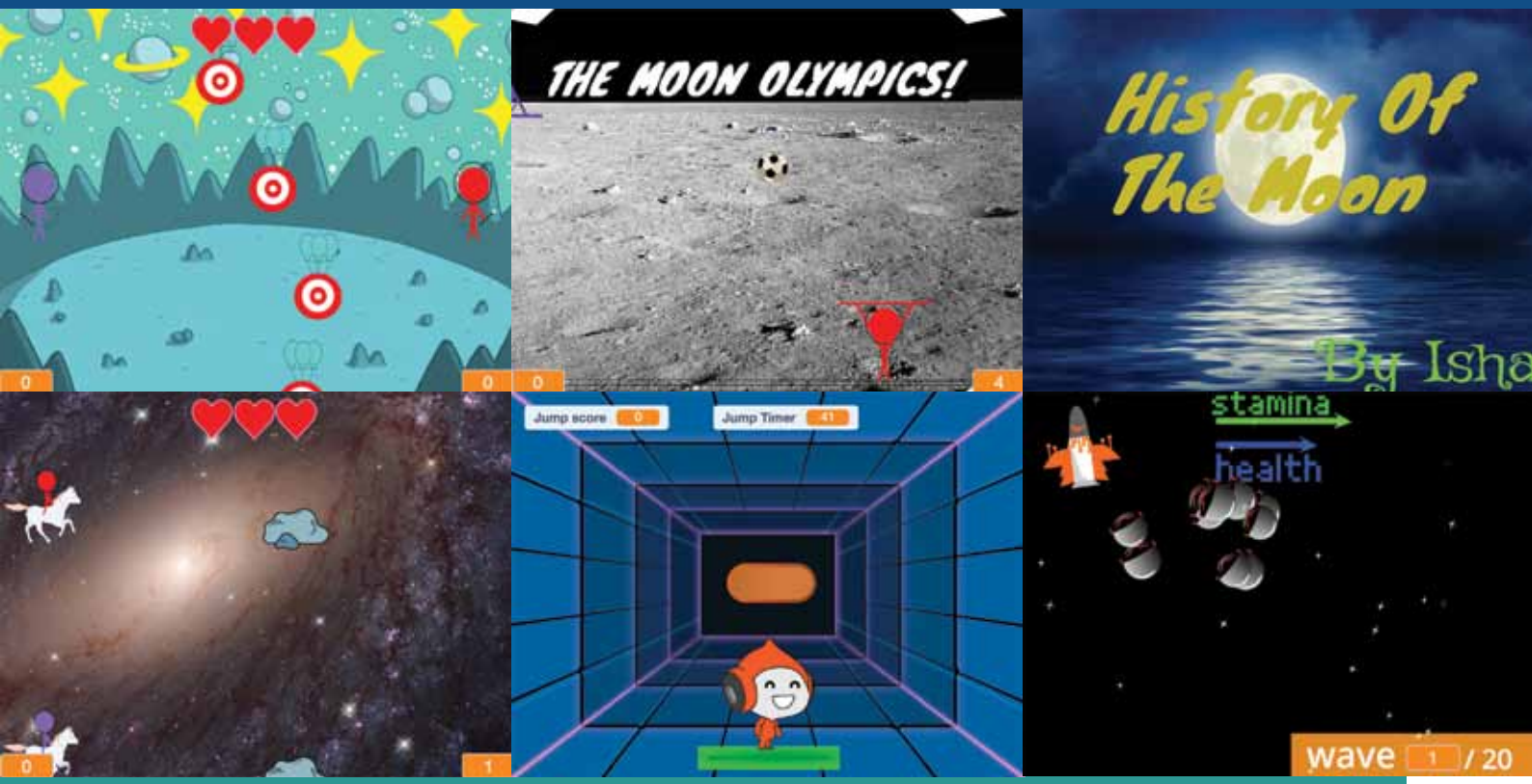

4 Tips to Introducing a Strong Digital Technologies Program Into Your School

Does this sound familiar? Four common barriers to implementing an effective Digital Technologies program

Digital technologies and the skill of coding now form an integral part of primary school curriculum in Australia. This is widely recognised as a must, however the implementation of an effective program often poses a challenge.

Many schools are struggling with:

1 Finding suitably qualified and experienced teachers

Australian teachers already have numerous demands on their time and the level of professional development required for digital technologies education can be daunting.

2 Rolling out a program to ALL students in your school

Ask yourself - is your ICT teacher able to teach your whole school? We often see programs that focus only on a few school years or students who have a natural interest in coding or robotics.

3 Deciphering the curriculum and developing appropriate lesson plans

A digital literacy curriculum can be wide, varied and fraught with complexity and sometimes your teaching staff may not even be sure where to start.

4 Hardware and internet issues

We know funding is always a challenge and having a computer lab that is up-to-date is often a luxury.

So, what does a good Digital Technologies program look like?

1 ALL students within your school need to be taught ICT courses that deliver subject matter in a meaningful, engaging way that ensures students can put their learnings into a real world context.

ALL students within your school should be part of an effective digital technologies program that ensures courses are not only aligned with standardised curriculum, but that they have a pathway to learning success, with real key learning outcome strategies for real world use.

2 The course should complement other subjects and not just teach digital technologies in isolation.

Efficiency and time is so valuable in both teachers' and students' work day so it's important that integrated subject matter is brought into lessons. ICT lessons can, when well constructed, incorporate many mathematical, science, creative arts and design elements that help meet curriculum requirements. They can also help to develop a variety of skills such as communication, teamwork, problem solving, creativity and critical thinking.

3 The ICT subject must be taught at a core skills level and not software-specific program learning that is quickly outdated.

With ICT lessons, it's very easy to fall into the trap of 'teaching for today'. Many courses simply teach software-specific content like a popular spreadsheet or word processing application. It is also important that we don't just teach to improve technology related outcomes. With technology evolving so rapidly, many of these tools are superseded or are vastly different over time. It's important that ICT lessons teach digital technologies at a fundamental level of engagement and understanding. In this way, students can adapt and apply their knowledge to any new developments.

4 The hardware being used needs to actually translate to better education and workplace use.

One of the most difficult aspects to accommodate is hardware use. With technology evolving so quickly, the economic cost of keeping hardware (and fast, reliable internet access) up to date is very difficult. If children are learning on outdated hardware, how will this impact their further education and job skills? Only recently schools were scrambling to ensure that enough computers were in place for their students. Where possible, we need to ensure students are given access to modern equipment to ensure their skills are not outdated by the time they complete their ICT education.

How can we help?

ScopeIT Education's popular in-school digital technologies courses enable students to explore and learn robotics, electronics, 3D printing, coding, apps, websites and digital safety. We specialise in bringing an exciting, hands-on classroom learning experience to equip students with vital digital technologies skills. We'll even bring state of the art hardware and internet to ensure maximum learning time with real outcomes.

A course pathway can be developed in consultation with leading teachers in your school to make sure that the digital technologies curriculum is met with deep integration of other subjects.

Over 200 schools across Australia already have access to our programs with over 15,000 students every week participating in our courses. We welcome you to book a time to discuss how ScopeIT Education can help at your school.

What are our students creating?

Coinciding with National Science Week, our recent Tech Tournament was designed to encourage students to use their imaginations with creative design and digital technologies skills. The annual coding competition showcases entries with loops, conditionals, variables, broadcasting and a whole range of digital technologies knowledge in a fun way as students test their skills learnt with ScopeIT Education.

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