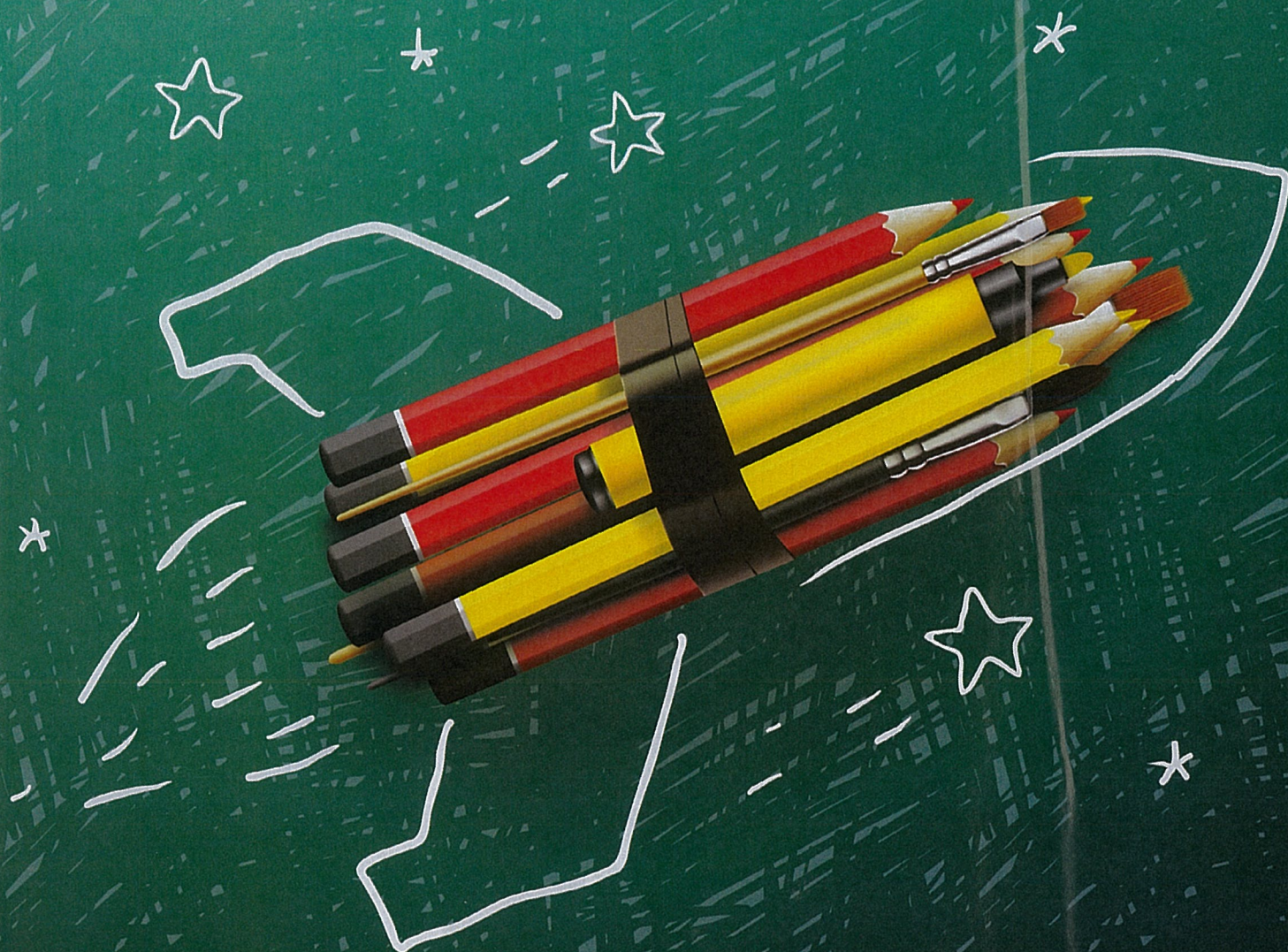


September 2015

Future leaders

A guide to education in Sydney

Manly Daily • North Shore Times • Mosman Daily



CREATIVITY

learning to explore and expand
your children's inner abilities

Creativity is what makes life worth living



Susanna Freymark
Twitter:
@SusannaFreymark

The ability to create, imagine and dream is the most exciting aspect of being human. Creating gives me the "fire in my belly" and makes me feel more alive and uniquely me.

It is no surprise that I believe creativity is central to the education of the whole child.

Creativity is difficult to measure and give an assessment score. Because of this it is undervalued.

I'm not only referring to creativity in terms of the ability to paint, sculpt, draw, write, make films and be artistic. I include the creativity to think, explore and imagine; the kind of creativity that pushes students to try new things, to take risks and to find a way to express their unique selves.

Without creativity we would not have space exploration, new technologies, the smartphone and countless other modern inventions. Without creativity in their learning, children cannot explore the possibilities of who they will become.

My big tip for adults and children is to be more creative. Do nothing. Gaze. Let your mind wander to places usually constrained by tasks and routine. Lie on your back and look at the sky. Run your fingers through the sand on the beach. Recline on a trampoline. Be alone and do not speak.

Creativity needs a vacuum to come forth. Creativity needs less clutter and busy-ness so we can realise the potential within each and every one of us.

Susanna

Creative spaces

Benefits of radical school design 6

When technology adds up

World tunes in to YouTube lessons 10

Writers who inspire

Authors fire up young imaginations 14

Taking chances

Sir Ken Robinson praises risk 18

Sound advice

How music can boost learning 22

Chasing opportunities

Attracting attention pays off 27

Go go gadget

Technology in the classroom 30

Art and soul

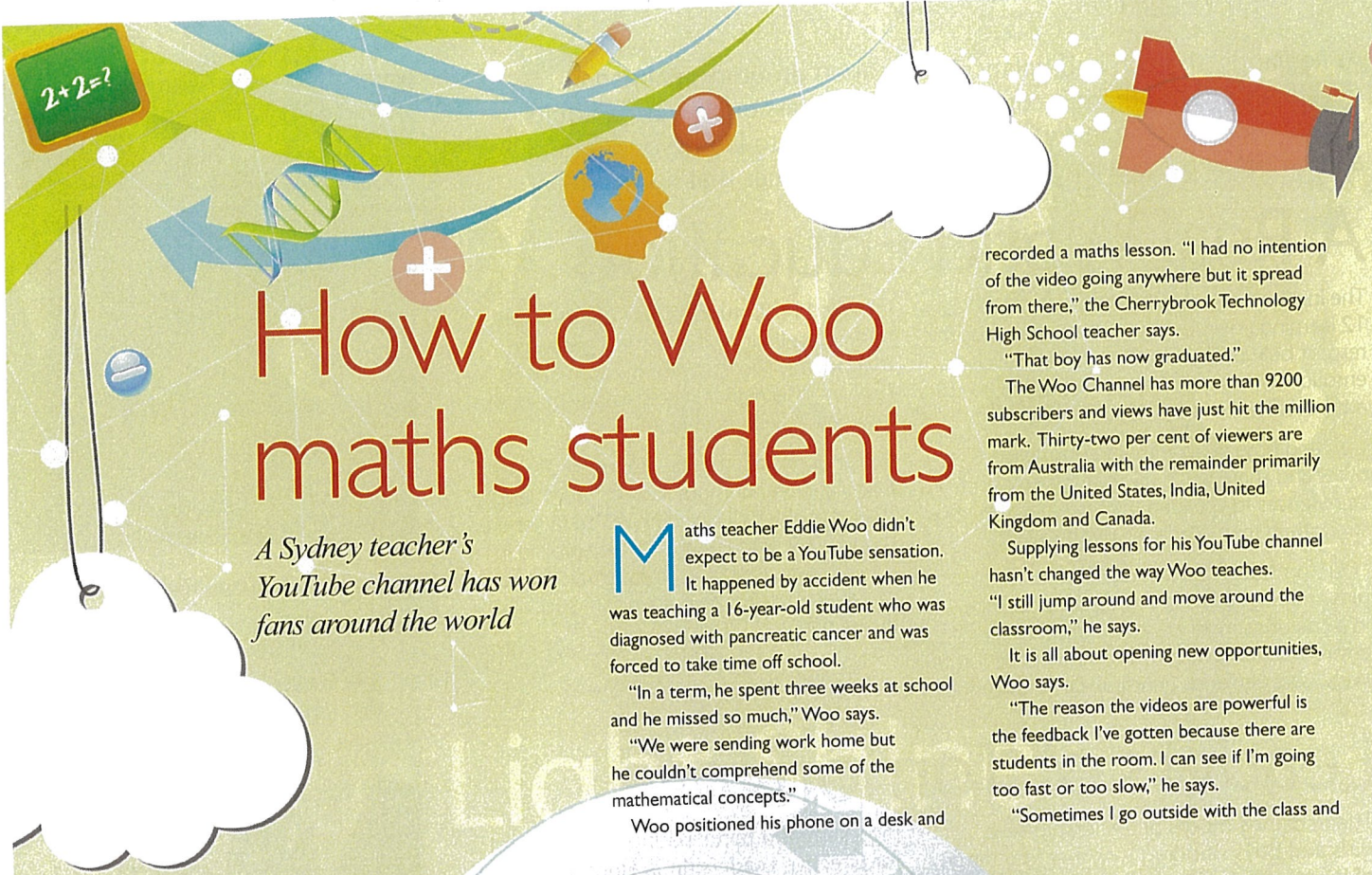
Making visual arts a way of life 32

CREATIVITY

Inventiveness, imagination, innovation, originality, individuality, artistry, expressiveness, inspiration, vision, creative power, resourcefulness, ingenuity.

Editorial: **Susanna Freymark**
Artwork & design: **Mark Nulty**
Editorial production: **Clare Morgan**
Production quality control: **Lee Dunks**
Product manager: **Daniel Lane**

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How to Woo maths students

A Sydney teacher's YouTube channel has won fans around the world

Maths teacher Eddie Woo didn't expect to be a YouTube sensation. It happened by accident when he was teaching a 16-year-old student who was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and was forced to take time off school.

"In a term, he spent three weeks at school and he missed so much," Woo says.

"We were sending work home but he couldn't comprehend some of the mathematical concepts."

Woo positioned his phone on a desk and

recorded a maths lesson. "I had no intention of the video going anywhere but it spread from there," the Cherrybrook Technology High School teacher says.

"That boy has now graduated."

The Woo Channel has more than 9200 subscribers and views have just hit the million mark. Thirty-two per cent of viewers are from Australia with the remainder primarily from the United States, India, United Kingdom and Canada.

Supplying lessons for his YouTube channel hasn't changed the way Woo teaches.

"I still jump around and move around the classroom," he says.

It is all about opening new opportunities, Woo says.

"The reason the videos are powerful is the feedback I've gotten because there are students in the room. I can see if I'm going too fast or too slow," he says.

"Sometimes I go outside with the class and



*"The cure for boredom is curiosity.
There is no cure for curiosity."*

Dorothy Parker

throw tennis balls at students to make them make circles."

He is creative in the content and presentation of his lessons and encourages creativity from his students.

"The way the syllabus is designed doesn't reward creativity in maths, which is a shame," Woo says. He quotes Einstein who said: "The creative principle resides in mathematics."

"For me, ensuring students don't just think of maths as rote memorisation is important," Woo says. "They are not meat calculators."

Woo admits it is difficult to assess creativity in a subject like maths.

"Yet problem solving is creative. I encourage students to take risks and ask the question 'what if?'"

Woo works closely with pre-service teachers at the University of Sydney and his channel has become a way for undergraduates to watch him in action.

"I've inadvertently created a place where you can observe a teacher explaining mathematical concepts," he says. "You can be home in your pyjamas, watching it for 10 minutes. It lowers the barriers of access for pre-service teachers."

Five ways teachers can foster creative thinking with technology

By Paul Hamilton

Why do we teach? For me, it is the moment my students come up with original ideas, innovations, inventions. Simply put, a different way of thinking. How can we utilise technology to foster diverse, creative thinking? Here are a few ideas:

- 1 Allow students to use drawing applications and software to sketch a theory or big idea.
- 2 Mix up routines and applications. Using the same devices and software every time for the same tasks creates a fixed mindset of how we use tools. The beauty about edutech is that we will always find new connections between technology and learning. Empower students to have a say in the learning process.
- 3 Allow students time to reflect. Make use of recording software and mobile devices to create a daily learning journal. Allow students to reflect on questions like "What could I have done differently?" and "What if ...".
- 4 Allow students (and teachers) time to play and learn. The process of being exposed to something new is a great way of realising possibilities are all around us.

5 Use world builders like Minecraft, Eden and Topia in conjunction with the previous four suggestions. Starting with software/games that have a blank canvas encourages us to dream and make visible what is in students' minds through to product. Reflecting on what we build is a powerful self-awareness strategy.

Sometimes we need to remove the technology and give students an opportunity to use tools they wouldn't normally use. It is not about what teachers are comfortable with, it is about students developing skills that will allow them to follow their dreams and passions.

Paul Hamilton is head of learning technologies at Matthew Flinders Anglican College and author of the educational newsletter iPad monthly. To subscribe go to ipadmonthly.com.

