THE WAY

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WORDMANIA CHAMPS

Students have used gaming to increase their literacy and it has paid off.

Students have used gaming to increase their literacy and it has paid off, with Thomas Hassall topping the leaderboard in Australia and New Zealand's biggest school literacy competition.

The College's Year 9 students placed second in Word Mania, an online literacy education program for Years 1 to 9 through LiteracyPlanet. The annual competition is based on a digital word-buildinng exercise that challenges students to create as many words from a board of 15 randomly generated letters. And, time is ticking. They have only three minutes!

More than 400,000 students from 3000 schools participated this year and spent the equivalent of 30 years worth of extra time practising literacy skills over just a few weeks. They built mroe than 126 million worlds across 5.3 million games.

On the surface it seems like a fun computer game, but underneath, Word Mania is a complex exercise that involves a number of literacy skills. These include phonics, word families, rhyming and root words, prefixes and suffixes, spelling, vocabulary, word recognition and word knowledge.

Over the course of the competition, Thomas Hassall's student results improved. A students average game score increased by 27% and, in the Year 9 group specifically, their average game score increased by 91%. The average number of correct words per game increased by 52%.

LiteracyPlanet chief executive Adam McArthur congratulated our students on their achievement.

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"Word building is a complex literacy skill, and with thousands of schools in two countries vying for the top spot in each year level, the College's Year 9 students deserve to be proud of their efforts," he said.

The College’s prizes include a trophy and vouchers for school resources.

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