THE WAY

TERM 4 : FRIDAY 14 DECEMBER 2018



# A VIRTUAL ENGLISH ADVENTURE

You may recall the recent article on the introduction of the fascinating new textual forms of Virtual and Augmented Reality (known together as Extended Reality or XR) in the Year 8 English classroom.

The learning around this innovation was highly anticipated and enthusiastically received by our Year 8 students during Term 4 – a great way to end the year!

Students discovered new ways of thinking about how stories are presented in the virtual world, rather than frame by frame, as in traditional film, on a screen. They discovered an entire new language which enables them to engage in the concepts of virtual world creation. Ideas such as the Swayze effect, audio signposting and sense of presence provide new ways of understanding how this experience (not viewing) can immerse them like no other experience of story.

Some student responses to their first virtual reality experience:

*'I think that it is a new and life-changing innovation'*

*'My first experience with VR was awesome it was better than I could have imagined. It was such a surreal experience it was like I was standing in the middle of a lake and it was scary when the train hit.'*

*'When I was flying I could feel my legs lighten as a response, tricking me. A beautiful albeit terrifying experience that left me dazed, satisfied and craving more.'*

*'A swarm of birds fly right above my head, I reached my hand out to touch them but felt thin air*

Copyright Thomas Hassall Anglican College. All Rights Reserved. 125 Kingsford Smith Ave, Middleton Grange NSW 2171

*but then remembered it was virtual reality. I just couldn't believe how real the experience felt.'*

There were also opportunities for students to use augmented reality – a technology that can enhance real world texts with overlayed digital images, animations and video. Students experimented with creating their own enhanced texts by using the free app, HP Reveal™ and explored ways of enhancing the novels they read and the visual images they see with AR technology readily available with any smartphone.

It was great to see the students using their mobile phones responsibly for new and exciting educational opportunities that they can easily explore at home.

The English faculty at THAC is proud of the success of the introduction of the virtual and augmented reality technologies into the English classroom, not just as an interesting tool, but also a genuine and pioneering connection to the English syllabus. We look forward to utilising the immersive virtual world to enhance the learning in 2019.

Thank you Year 8 and their teachers for their willingness to embrace such a new and exciting learning experience.

**Mrs Vanessa Refalo**
Secondary Teacher - English

Copyright Thomas Hassall Anglican College. All Rights Reserved. 125 Kingsford Smith Ave, Middleton Grange NSW 2171