



## Technology Education: More than child's play

Technology education – teaching students the knowledge and skills to be confident in analysing and solving practical problems – is compulsory in Years 1 to 10. But it can sometimes be a neglected subject, put on the backburner as schools concentrate on areas considered a higher priority or in which teachers have more expertise.

Not so at West Auckland's Green Bay School, where a school-wide challenge for students to design and make their own moveable toys demonstrated how Technology education can be successfully delivered to primary school-aged children.

“Technology's a really cool subject – authentic, hands-on, creative – and the kids love it,” says principal Jude Black. “It delivers a necessary set of skills for the future if we want an enterprising, entrepreneurial, ‘Number 8 fencing wire’ mentality in our population.”

Last year Green Bay staff developed a new unit, “How West Auckland has changed”, which incorporated Technology, Social Studies and English. The goal was to engage students with a relevant, real-life project by having students study toys from the past and compare them with their own.

All students made their own yo-yo, having been encouraged to figure out for themselves how to construct and operate the toy. Older students (Year 5 and 6) then used the experience gained in making their yo-yo to develop moveable toys.

The students researched techniques and material sources and consulted with potential stakeholders – five-year-olds from their “buddy reading” class.

Once the toys were constructed, they were raced in categories of pushed, pulled and wind-ups, which became the basis for a review and evaluation. The unit concluded with a presentation of their work to other classes.

A Year 5/6 teacher says the students were proud of their work, and she was pleased to expose them to the rigours of a long-term, real-life project. “Putting things into context and making it purposeful is the key to Technology.”

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