

# T4L Kids Magazine

By Yvette Poshoglian and Sandy Phillips

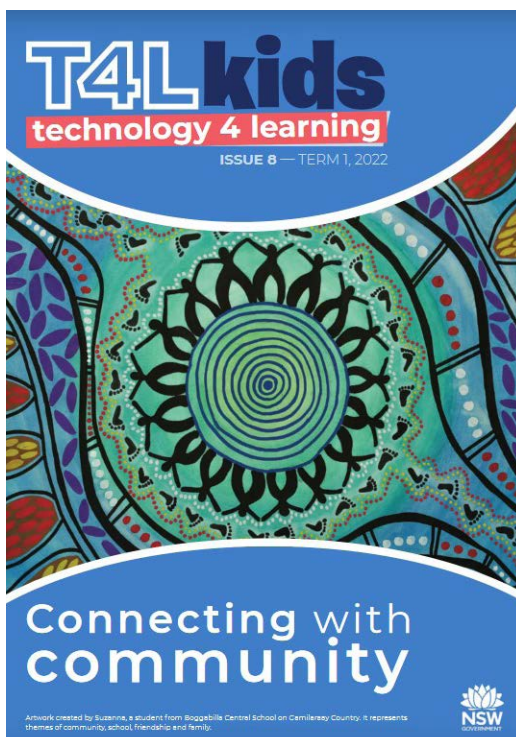
## Snapshot

Yvette Poshoglian and Sandy Phillips describe a wonderful resource, the T4L Kids Magazine, developed quickly to help supplement the constraints of online learning but now proving a useful curriculum linked, enrichment tool for our return to the classroom.



The last two years have been tough, but not without some positive aspects. We laughed along with the memes and videos of parents dealing in their own ways with 'Learning at Home', yet out of these grew an understanding and appreciation of the work, skills, and dedication of schools.

Technology kept us connected and entertained during lockdown. It also allowed us to professionally connect with colleagues and students and bring us together for learning. In the 'new normal' SLAV is asking us all to reflect and share our successes and consider What should we keep? What we want to leave behind? What worked? What can we build upon? For this article we are looking at the T4L Kids Magazine.



This resource came from the Technology 4 Learning (T4L) Team in the NSW Education Department. It was put together at rapid speed, targeting Years 5-8 students. We have now published edition no. 8 and the feedback tells us it has evolved into an essential resource to support independent student work or depending on the school's need, part of a hybrid model of learning online.

Looking at the initial purpose during the pandemic the desire was to help in a practical way. In the mad rush, teachers were time poor, and some were new to working in online spaces. We planned to create practical resources that could be given to students to get them working straight away with meaningful challenges that supported students to be creative and have a voice in their learning.

Designed with deliberate online and offline activities, we were mindful that students may not have access to a device, nor did we want them to be online all day. Design thinking was at the heart of every magazine with open challenges for students to work on wherever they were and whenever they could.

Aware that some of the technologies may be new for some teachers (they were often new to us too) we create short sharp getting started films embedded in each edition.

Like the Victorian curriculum, the NSW curriculum is different to the Australian curriculum, yet both have strong links in English, Digital Technologies, Design Thinking and ICT integration. We knew teachers would still be required to assess and report to parents, so we complemented each issue with a comprehensive set of teachers' notes linked to curriculum.

All activities were curriculum linked and could provide evidence of learning for teachers to assess and report upon.

Each edition of T4L Kids:

- sets student goals around a design thinking process and an inquiry learning model
- can be used as an independent resource, face to face teaching or hybrid learning
- comes with comprehensive teachers' notes
- is embedded with challenges and supports students to build technology skills
- Issues are freely available to all learners and do not sit behind a firewall

Some school libraries uploaded each edition into ClickView; others simply shared the link with their teachers and students directly.

## Focus on student voice in 2022

After positive responses from both teacher and students the T4L Kids magazine will continue to evolve and in 2022 there is a strong focus on linking students with their community to overcome some of the social and physical roadblocks that occurred during the lockdowns.

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Each magazine had a call to action for students to develop their design thinking, creative and problem-solving skills and is written in a voice for learners. Our reflection around what we build upon is to structure our challenges to give students a change to strengthen their voice and to use the technologies available to present that voice to authentic audiences.

Issue 8 of the magazine, with the theme 'Connecting with Community' was released in Term 1 2022 and challenges students to create a digital Acknowledgement of Country for their school

community. We encouraged students to connect with local Elders and think about their Land and make their acknowledgement both personal, and presented in a respectful way.

One observation throughout the pandemic was that people and organisations were starting to create Acknowledgments of Country in media for others. Be it Australian Crime Podcasts or Zoom sessions, people were acknowledging their 'Place or Lands'. Sometimes these can sound scripted or rote, so we encouraged students to consider the purpose of the acknowledgement, think about their place and use their words to express a heartfelt acknowledgement.

With award-winning Gunai author, poet and teacher Kirli Saunders as their guide, students are inspired to produce a recording, an animation or even an audio file to share their thoughts and words with their community. One of our teachers, Aimee Phillips, also shares how an acknowledgement makes her feel as an indigenous person with a wonderful account of her teacher Aunty Mae Robinson.

The learning is reflective, literacy focussed with a connection to the production of media. The access to and non-appropriation of Indigenous Art is also presented in the magazine. Students are encouraged to connect with local indigenous artists and create their own photos or designs in their own style including using graphic filters for mood and effect.

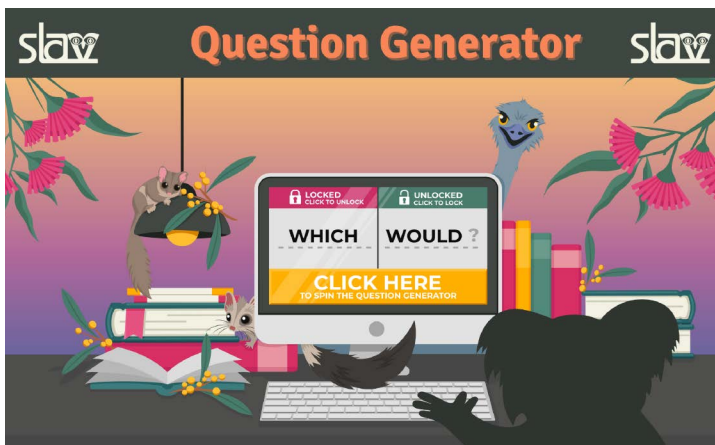
## Planning for Issue 9 – Student Voice is underway

We are planning for students to explore how they can share their ideas and voices to enact positive change in their community against the backdrop of the federal election. Students will explore how to use tech to engage and survey their peer community and create platforms to share ideas and enact change. They will also explore how to develop a safe online school community by creating an online code of conduct, bringing students into the design of school expectations and policy – adding their voice.

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## Links to resources

- [Technology 4 Learning website](#)
- [T4L Kids magazine for students](#)
- [magazine.T4L for teachers](#)
- [Issue 8 – T4L Kids Connecting with community](#)



[The SLAV Question Generator](#) has been used in multiple magazine editions. Its intuitive design requires no instructions for the user.

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**Sandy Phillips** has taught in Melbourne's western suburbs, managed the DET Vic Digital Content, Communities, Games and Apps challenges and eSafety Policy Programs and was UNESCO ASP Australian coordinator. She currently works with the NSW DoE STEM.T4L Project.