ETL414 SS 2013 Assignment one – Essay

## Task:

Complete the three minor essay questions below.

1. In Module 2 you created a list of factors that could exclude children and young people from participating in educational settings. Select one of these that interests you:
	1. What are the current ways that this type of exclusion could be dealt with in schools? Mention the types of pedagogies that could be employed; the policies in place; and the curriculum that might address your chosen exclusion both methodologically and pedagogically. If there is nothing related to your chosen exclusion, discuss what should be available in each area. (500 words)
2. Select one strategy OR one policy OR one area of curriculum and briefly analyse how it might promote inclusion for the exclusionary factor you have chosen. (250 words)
3. For the factor of exclusion you have chosen, briefly describe how an iPad might be used to help include children and young people in their educational settings. You will need to:
	1. Research the iPad’s capabilities in relation to your chosen ‘exclusion’. In a few sentences name and describe two capabilities.
	2. Research the apps available for the iPad. In a few sentences, name and describe three apps.
	3. Explain how these apps might be useful in overcoming your particular ‘exclusion’ in a classroom / service centre. (500 words)



 ***Source:*** *Autism Spectrum Disorder*

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Essay Question One

The exclusion factor I have chosen is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), a neurological disorder characterised by impaired social interaction, communication, and repetitive behaviour. Children require direct instruction to learn key social skills. It is difficult for children with Autism to stay on task, which may lead to disruptive behaviours (Johnson 2013). These types of behaviours without intervention and appropriate pedagogy being employed can lead to exclusion.

ASD is dealt with in mainstream schools using accepted pedagogical approaches and often the use of an iPad. It is widely accepted that autistic children need to be treated as ‘normal’ in order to avoid exclusion and to become accepted members of society (Autism Awareness).

The Lyford Model of Classroom Management talks about addressing the range of skills, interests and knowledge in the classroom. One of the simplest and most effective methods is to know the likes, dislikes, interests and skills of each student (both ‘normal’ students and those with ASD). This will influence how the class is organised, how groups are organised and the adjustments of individual needs. Open and effective communication with families and careers will provided further insights (Lyons et al 2011).

The NSW Government provides support for ASD through various agencies including NSW Health, the Department of Family and Community Services, and the Department of Education and Communities (Roth 2013). In March 2012, the NSW Government announced reforms to the provision of support for students with a disability and special needs in public schools. The *Every School, Every Student: Leaning and Support* policy focuses on five areas of activity, including:

* Professional learning for skilled and knowledgeable teachers.
* Support for students with disability in regular classrooms.
* Special schools as centres of expertise.
* Instruments and material to better understand and meet additional learning and support needs.
* Information to support teaching and learning and expert support.

In addition, the Howard Government announced the *Helping Children with Autism* package in October 2007, followed by the Rudd Government announcing a revision of this package commencing in July 2008. One of the elements of this initiative was the provision of professional development of 450 teachers and school staff to support students with ASD (Roth 2013).

In order to address individual needs, the needs of small groups, or at other times the whole class, the most effective way is to look to the curriculum frameworks and learning outcomes to integrate into a classroom management plan (Lyons et al 2011). In NSW outcomes are structures within the frameworks of key learning areas (KLAs). Addressing autism methodologically or systematically and pedagogically can be done by using learning sequences or a series of lessons within a curriculum area by scaffolding the area of learning to achieve the KLA. The pedagogical approach needed is to find ways to address student behaviour, develop an effective classroom community, and instil values and beliefs appropriate for becoming a productive member of Australian society. At the same time it is important to address individual needs, particularly of the autistic child (Lyons et al).

Essay Question Two

The Lyford model (Lyons et al) commends addressing the needs of individuals, small groups and the whole class. The use of iPads in a classroom situation involving a student with ASD can facilitate this approach and provide benefits to the student, teacher and the rest of the class.

Using some of the apps specifically designed for autism (see question three below), the learning of the individual can be addressed and the teacher is able to work with more than one student at a time. This promotes a feeling of no one student being excluded or conversely of being shown favouritism.

Other apps promote behaviours leading to social inclusion including teaching manners and polite phrases, as well as allowing the autistic student to take time out and manage their own stress or anger without impacting on other students or providing an opportunity for the autistic child to be excluded.

The Lyford model (Lyons et al) talks about finding ways to address student behaviour, the iPad provides apps that can help the child with ASD learn appropriate manners and polite conversation helping to develop an effective classroom community and instil appropriate values and beliefs in students. By providing a means for the autistic child to learn at the same pace as the other children and to learn to interact effectively with their classmates, this facilitates the learning of these values and beliefs in the whole class.

This model can be used to integrate the curriculum framework of KLAs in to the classroom management plan ensuring that inclusion is promoted for a child with ASD.

Essay Question Three

1. The iPad has given children with autism have even greater opportunities to progress in their communication, motor, and cognitive skills. The large screen and low weight of the device makes it portable and easy for even quite a small child to carry, and the LCD touchscreen with retina display is visually appealing and lifelike, which particularly captures the attention of autistic children who tend to be drawn to vivid images (Johnson 2013).

As the iPad is a multisensory product, children who have difficulty using a mouse on a computer can use their fingers to touch and drag things and interact in an app. Sliding and tapping motions are much easier than typing or using pens and paper. With more than one autistic child in a class a teacher is able to work with multiple students at the same time. For instance one child may be learning letters and shapes whist another can be learning colour and sound (Johnson 2013).

1. Three available apps:
	1. Manners Social Story and Speech Tool –Uses text and descriptive pictures to explain why and how to be polite (Apple iTunes).
	2. Calm Counter – The screen vocalises “I need a break” when tapped, transitions to a red screen with an angry face and the number ten, then each tap transitions to a calmer face and colour, prompting the user to count backwards from ten followed by a deep breath (Apple iTunes).
	3. My Day with WH Words – A WH question begins with who, what, when, where, why or how. This app allows the ‘asker’ to point to it as they ask or the user to tap the buttons themselves and practice answering (Apple iTunes).
2. These apps would prove to be very useful in overcoming exclusion of autistic children in a classroom / service centre. A child with ASD needs direct instruction in learning polite phrases and learning good manners. The first app can help the child learn these communication skills to increase their ability to be included by the other children (Apple iTunes).

The difficulties with communication and possible exclusion commonly lead to autistic children feeling angry or anxious. Rather than exclude a child to go and have time out, the second app gives the child an ‘out’. He or she is able to calmly open this app and vocalise that they need a break. They are prompted to count backwards and take deep breaths until they are once again calm and can join back in with the group (Apple iTunes).

A mismatch is a common error for people with ASD. This means they answer a question as if a different question had been asked, for example answering a ‘who’ question as a ‘what’ question. The third app allows both the ‘asker’ to reinforce the type of question they are asking, and for the child to tap the buttons and practice answering the different types of WH questions. This improves the child’s ability to communicate and be included by the class (Apple iTunes).

References

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