



# Education 101: A Study in Fun

CASE CHRONICLES 01  
3P LEARNING

## QUICK LOOK

**Company:** 3P Learning  
**CEO:** Tim Power  
**Website:** [3plearning.com](http://3plearning.com)  
**Headquarters:** Sydney, Australia  
**Founded:** 2004  
**Industry:** eLearning

**Numbers:** 3P Learning has created a community of 4.8 million students in 18,000 schools using its world-leading math, science and literacy resources, and is the number 1 provider of online math resources in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom. 3P Learning listed on the ASX in July 2014, and has turned a AUD\$722,000 investment (USD\$600,000), into a company with a market capitalisation of over \$300 million.



“We had a  
passion for  
education  
not just  
revenue.”

**The 3 Rs—reading and ’riting and ’rithmetic**—don’t typically add up to fun for kids. And for 3P Learning, that spelled p-r-o-b-l-e-m.

As passionate educators, 3P knew that if kids don’t care, they won’t learn. Engage their hearts and you’ll win their minds.

So in 2004, from a humble location above a grocery store in Sydney, Australia, the 3P Learning team set out to overhaul the world’s education system and offer it online. They had a grand idea. A shoestring budget. And a will to make it happen.

Here’s what they did.

## The ABCs (and gaps) of education

The 3P Learning team believes in hands-on learning—for kids and themselves. So they went directly to classrooms to study first-hand the student dynamics and teaching environment.

They quickly identified several important gaps in the classic academic model. It lacked key fundamentals, student inclusion and left many students behind. The team needed to address this. They also decided to aim higher than the standard benchmarks of mastery.

They rolled up their sleeves and reached for their funds. They had roughly \$720,000 AU (\$600,000 US) to get started, but it wouldn’t stretch far. It afforded them a basic platform, which they soon discovered wouldn’t meet their long-term needs. The first server could only handle 2 million users, and their ambitions and success soared higher. This ultimately led to a major switch, which cost them time and heartache.

Technology is at the heart of what they set out to do. Because of this, they decided to build their products on the Microsoft stack.

## Playing for keeps: Increasing retention with fun

To design the learning, 3P aimed for fun. They mixed in the celebration and competitive excitement of sports. Their logic? Sports encompass recognition, admiration, community and achievement. By adding these elements, they could engage the young minds, instill a joy of learning and increase knowledge retention.

3P Learning’s award-winning flagship program is Mathletics, which features games, competition and live online “races” within the classroom and across the world. To keep the students motivated, the program presents rewards and certificates. Recognition includes a daily leader board showing the Top 100



“Necessity is  
always the  
mother of  
invention.”

## WHY MICROSOFT?

3P believes in Microsoft's vision for the future. They are open-minded and leverage Azure as their ultimate tool for flexibility, proven results and agility. With the cloud at the center, Microsoft delivers what 3P needs most.

Students worldwide, and a weekly leader board honoring the Top 50 Classes.

The team also created Spellodrome, Reading Eggs and IntoScience. Spellodrome features interactive games for spelling and literacy. Reading Eggs takes kids from the building blocks of reading to advanced skills. It also offers 2,000 eBooks. IntoScience is a rich 3D environment where all fields of science come to life, complete with animation, exploration and virtual experiments.

For teachers, the gaming methods mean serious business. They receive real-time data, the ability to analyze progress and robust reporting features. No student gets left behind.

### Graduating to a new continent

The fun-for-all learning quickly made a significant difference. It reduced workloads for teachers and provided powerful tools inside and outside of the classroom. Kids were enjoying themselves...and learning more than ever. After expanding locally in Australia, it was time to take on the world.

CEO Tim Power looked for the next opportunity and found it in London, England. He and his team made their move, which proved a pivotal decision for growth. The schools were highly receptive, and the company grew quickly.

### A strategic study buddy

By 2011, 3P Learning had established a solid and successful path. Along the way, it met up with a powerful partner: the United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF).

The partnership fostered new ideas. It allowed 3P Learning to support UNICEF's School-In-A-Box program for students in need. Packed with resources, the kits can provide 80 students with education for an entire year. The boxes are dispatched to emergency disaster relief areas and regions with a poor-to-nonexistent education infrastructure.

UNICEF also began supporting 3P Learning's newest endeavour, the annual World Education Games (WEG). Every second year, millions of students worldwide compete virtually in the WEG. They earn global recognition, including medals.

### The Report Card

In just over a decade, 3P Learning has won hearts and minds all over the world. It's now used by 4.8 million students in 18,000 schools globally.

Additionally, the school-in-a-box kits have provided education to more than 100,000 students who never had access to it before. The joy of learning is in their hands. Literally.

3P Learning achieved this despite a modest beginning, and a setback when their initial server platform stunted their scalability. Answering this hurdle was Microsoft's Azure in not only scaling to the demands but providing flexibility and efficiencies in growth.

They credit their partnership with Microsoft for their ongoing success. Tim Power pledges that where Microsoft goes, they will follow. They attend the Microsoft Worldwide Partner Conference and gain inspiration from the openness that Microsoft brings partners. They also believe that Azure has proven itself the ultimate tool for success with its power, scalability and agility.

So what's next for the unstoppable band of educators? More students, more countries, more learning. All while putting fun at the head of the class.

# ROAD MAP to Success

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## PINPOINTING THE GAPS

3P Learning visits classrooms for an up-close look at how the education system works—or doesn't. They identify gaps in the classic academic model and roadblocks to retention.



## GAME ON

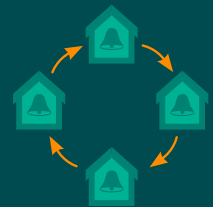
The current education approaches lacked key fundamentals, student inclusion and left many students behind. To address this, 3P sets out to make learning fun, by adding elements of sports and competition to it. They develop Mathletics, Spellodrome, Reading Eggs and IntoScience.

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## A HUMBLE START

Under-capitalized and under-staffed, 3P Learning builds a simple platform. They set out to gain trust and results, school by school. By putting their ideas into motion, they overcome the paralysis of over thinking with fear.



## TRIAL BY ACTION

The team designs and implements their programs. They test the products in trials, student by student. They build on each positive result. Using a hands-on approach allowing meaningful insights and rapid adjustments.

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## GROWTH AND GLOBAL

After impressive success with the startup model, 3P Learning is ready to take their concept global. CEO Tim Power, his family and team move to London. The schools embrace the approaches and 3P Learning grows quickly. They form a key partnership with UNICEF.



## THE WORLD EDUCATION GAMES (WEG)

In addition to the daily learning, 3P now hosts the World Education Games. Each year, students from around the world compete academically for recognition and rewards. This promotes the products and methodologies on a grand scale. The energy, camaraderie, thrill and achievement of sports is now joined with academics. The joy of learning thrives.

6