



PARENT INFORMATION PORTAL
Click here for more information

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THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

FROM THE DIRECTOR

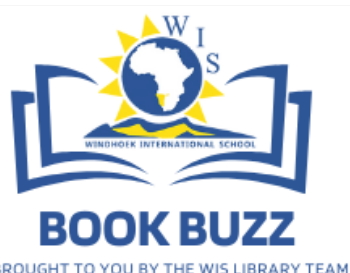
Dear WIS Community,

Whenever I make classroom visits and observations I gain new understandings not just about learning - but also about life!

For just one example, this week I visited JP Bruwer's Design Class and as students completed the "Tug of Truth" learning protocol I learned not just how to justify one's opinions but also how to refine and change one's thinking. As this [article from the Harvard Business Review](#) puts it, the hormone of oxycontin is activated by genuine human connection, whereas the hormones of adrenaline and dopamine are activated by winning an argument. The MYP Design Cycle gives students the framework and disposition to start with empathy, design a solution, and then-with humility and reflection-refine one's position when faced with new evidence.



WIS BOOK BUZZ



Did you know that as much as 95% of the words a child knows is also found in their parents' vocabulary?

Even so, the vocabulary size of a 4 year old is an accurate predictor of educational outcomes at age sixteen. A broad vocabulary ultimately boosts social skills, motivation, achievement and confidence through childhood and into adulthood. Your input as a parent to your child's vocabulary is crucial.

Books can be the best resources to build, improve and expand your child's vocabulary. Here are three highly recommended books:

1. [504 Absolutely Essential Words](#) by Murray Bromberg, Julius Liebb, and Arthur Traiger
2. [Build Your Vocabulary Skills: A Quick and Easy Method](#) by John LaCarna
3. [Word Power Made Easy](#) by Norman Lewis

**** We're still looking for gently loved furniture to stock our Secondary Library reading corner. If you have a rug, coffee table or artwork to donate, we'd cherish your items.**

For questions and inquiries, please email us at jwashington@wis.edu.na and mneftali@wis.edu.na

I also learned that the very cool Anycubic Vyper 3D Printer the school received this week is already saving us money by printing replacement parts that we would otherwise have needed to purchase from overseas.

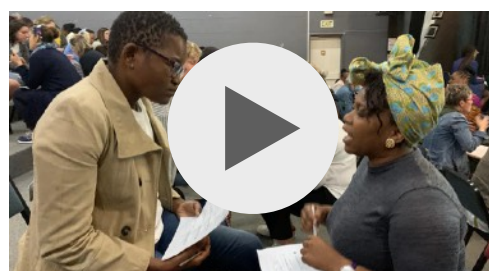
On Monday, teachers and educational assistants from across the school came together to launch our professional learning communities and to share our favourite teaching strategies with one another. Our teaching toolkit comes largely from the following lists ...

[Teaching Tools from Adaptive Schools](#)

[Teaching Tools from Common Ground Collaborative](#)

[Teaching Strategies from Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#)

(Some of our parents and alumni may find these useful when leading meetings or workshops as well!).



We know from [John Hattie's meta analyses](#) that the largest school-wide effect size on student learning is "Collective Teacher Efficacy". At the end of this week's learner conferences and MAP testing, we will have a clear understanding of our students. With the right toolkits and support systems increasingly in place, we can be increasingly confident that our school is a place where every student is included, challenged, supported, and experiencing success.

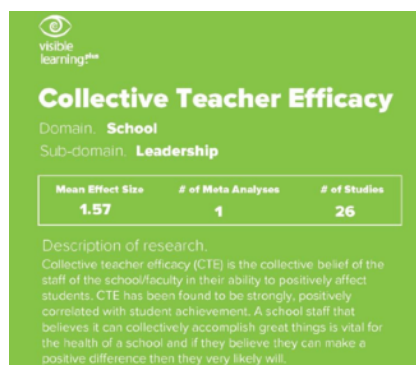
Happy Spring!
Ethan Van Drunen

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Dear WIS Community,

Many thanks for attending the Learner Portrait of my Child Conferences this week- I have had some very good feedback about the value of these conferences. I hope these will be the start of a mutually beneficial and productive parent-teacher relationship that will help your child learn.

I also appreciate the turn-out at our How We Learn at WIS Parent Workshop yesterday morning. I am attaching both the [SeeSaw](#) and [Introduction to the PYP](#) slides. Also find below the dates for upcoming workshops. As a learning community, we really value your attendance!



Thursday 29th September	Language and Literacy in the PYP
Thursday 27th October	Maths in the PYP and ways to support at home
Thursday 24th November	Thursday Assessment and MAP Growth at WIS Primary
Thursday 26th of January	The Early Years and Reggio Emilia, Play-based learning
Thursday 23rd February	IB PYP Exhibition Parent information Workshop
Thursday 30th March	Supporting neurodiverse learners
Thursday 27th April	Multilingual Learners: learning in English, supporting the home language and family language strategies
Thursday 1st June	Digital Citizenship

My contribution to this week's Oryx is a short one, as I would like to allow you time to read our Maths Coordinator's Elsa Swanepoel's excellent article (below) on how we teach Maths at WIS. Enjoy!

**Warm regards,
Marcelle van Leenen**

Mathematics in the Primary School

"All students deserve an opportunity to understand the power and beauty of mathematics." *Principles and standards for school mathematics National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM 2000)*



Research tells us that the more involved parents are in their children's learning the more likely children are to achieve the goals they are working towards (Cairney, 2000; Desforjes & Abouchaar, 2003; Melhuish et al., 2008). As educators, we realise that in order for parents to become more involved it is important for them to understand the 'how and what' their child is learning in a specific discipline. In this article, we hope to give a brief overview of the 'how and what' your child will be learning in Mathematics.

At WIS our curriculum is developed within the framework of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB-PYP). This PYP framework determines 'how we teach', focusing on helping students think critically and take responsibility for their own learning through an inquiry-led approach. As an IB school, we then further develop our curriculum based on the IB framework.

For specific Grade Level Benchmarks, WIS uses the [Australian National Curriculum \(ACARA\)](#) to inform teachers what students need to know by the end of each grade level. The ACARA benchmarks determine 'what we teach' and provide us with a framework to plan and develop learning engagements across all disciplines.

To further assist Primary Homeroom teachers in teaching Mathematics, we use a resource called [SFUSD Math](#). This resource helps teachers map out the Math concepts that need to be taught throughout the year into achievable units. With careful planning, teachers ensure that all the ACARA benchmarks for Mathematics are covered in these units and that our students experience the scope of mathematics for their grade by the end of the school year.

The SFUSD Math units are also designed in such a way that concepts are revisited throughout the school year, aiming to produce a deeper, more conceptual understanding. For this reason, you will be receiving SFUSD Family Letters per Math Unit. These letters aim to provide parents with an overview of what their child will be learning in Math during the specific unit and how they can best assist at home.

By the end of each unit, students will do a Summative Assessment Task, giving them the opportunity to apply their understanding through authentic activities. Following the Summative Assessment Task, a Rubric will be sent home (via SeeSaw) to provide a picture of your child's understanding of the skills and concepts taught in the specific unit. Please discuss the rubric with your child and give feedback on SeeSaw. The primary purpose of the rubric is to provide specific feedback and give students, teachers, and parents an indication of what they need to continue to work on.

For more information on Math in the PYP and in particular how you can support your child at home please join us for our Parent Workshop on the 27th of October.

Should you have any questions or concerns about Mathematics in Primary School, please feel free to contact me at eswanepoel@wis.edu.na

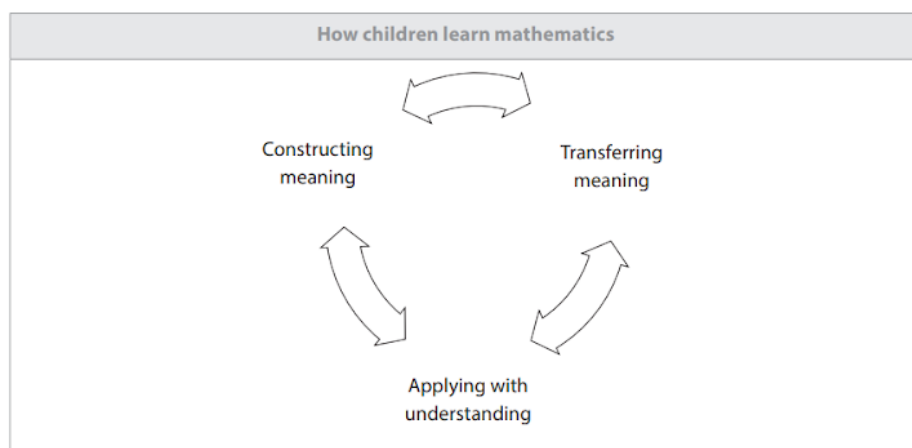


Figure 1

[PYP Mathematics \(IBO, 2009\)](#)

'Guided inquiry is the main approach to learning and teaching mathematics in the PYP. The PYP represents an approach to teaching that is broad and inclusive in that it provides a context within which a wide variety of teaching strategies and styles can be accommodated, provided that they are driven by a spirit of inquiry and a clear sense of purpose.' [\(IBO, 2009\)](#)

Elsa Swanepoel - Primary Math Coordinator

Peace Pals - Primary Art

Students from WIS have been invited to collaborate with Peace Pals International and were asked to create posters under the theme **"May peace prevail on earth"** for an online art exhibition.



In art lessons, we took this opportunity to think about peace. What does peace mean to us individually? What does it mean to have peace in a country? How can we express "peace" visually? All students worked very hard for two weeks on their peace posters. In the end, thirty-six students from Grade 1 to 5 were selected to submit their work. These students will receive a certificate of participation.

The winners of this international art exhibition will be announced on the United Nations' (UN) Universal Children's Day on the 20th of November 2022. Good Luck to all our participants!

If you like to find out more please go to this website: <https://www.worldpeace.org/>. Here is a small taste of the amazing artworks students created, **click on the image below to enlarge it.**



Mandy Liedke - PYP art teacher

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Spring, the start of the academic year - a time for new beginnings!

In Namibia, spring is not something clearly visible to everyone, especially if you are new to the country. If you pay attention, though, in the past week, you will have seen the thorn bushes starting to flower. The atmosphere seems more gentle, it is getting warmer and when we get to school, it is lighter and the birds are awake already.



I want to compare this with the start of the new academic year. At the start of the year, when we return to school, a lot seems “the same”. But the atmosphere in school in the first weeks was clearly celebrating a new beginning. Students moved to a new class, they might have new teachers and there are new students in many classes. It is great to experience the positivity of our students, the approach many of our students take to “owning” their learning and the open and positive interactions I witness when I visit classrooms. A positive learning environment contributes to open and sincere relationships between students and teachers, but also between students and their peers.

This is one of the things we celebrate here at WIS and something special in education: enabling students to be themselves, challenge themselves and question in the right way, because they feel supported and safe in school and at home. My walks around campus, and through classrooms during lessons are always filled with conversations that show that our students are confident and eloquent in expressing themselves.

In our parents information evening last night, we also had the opportunity for open and informative conversations with parents. The relationships we have with each other - students-parents-school - enable our young people to grow up in an environment where they feel that they are heard and valued.



I want to wish the Senior Student Council all the best for the Spring Kick Off event this evening. Together with Ms. Swapna, Mr. Johan and Ms. Carola, they have organised an event that celebrates the start of the new year and the start of spring.

**Regards,
Maggie Reiff**

Our thoughts on the school fence

As most of you know, the school's fence has been shown to be woefully ineffective and unknown thieves have entered the school.

Recently, there have been three break-ins at WIS during which many TVs have been stolen, this was due to a lack of proper security. Gratifyingly, the school has been making major efforts in order to upgrade the security. We would also like to thank the US Department of State Office of Overseas Schools for making a very generous grant of an amount of N\$5 578 555.44 (US\$338800) in order to greatly increase perimeter security. These upgrades will include completely removing the current fence and replacing it with palisade fencing, similar to that of the presidential house. Some suggestions we have for the upgrades would be to have silent alarms on the fences and doors, in-class security cameras, and door magnets.

We think that converting the fence to an electric fence would be costly but it would also keep the school safe from would-be thieves. However, as the school received such a generous grant, it may be possible. We think the school was quite unsafe when there were multiple break-ins, and the mugging of one of our own teachers made

us doubt the school security. We strongly believe that the generous donation from the United States embassy will help a lot in making sure that our school remains a safe and secure place for both students and teachers.

This week the school has begun the revamping of the fence, and they have added security posts and have started to upgrade the fence. They will be making it palisade fencing which cannot be cut and is difficult to climb.

In conclusion, the school security is definitely improving due to the school's efforts and so our students, parents and teachers can feel assured that their safety and security is the school's highest priority and will be ensured.

We hope everybody stays safe.

-Ishaan, Adam, Rishabh and Panduleni (Grade 9 ATL class)

WIS Fish Eagles Netball Soar in 2022!



Photo credit: Magano Neri

The WIS Under14 Girls Team started out underdogs and proved to themselves that together they can accomplish more than they ever thought possible! Out of a total of nine schools WIS made it to the final four playoffs - which consisted of WIS, Centaurus, Windhoek High School and Windhoek High School. The WIS Fish Eagles won five out of eight games during the Khomas Regional Netball League and in August finished the season in fourth place with a total of 10 points.

In the 2021-22 Season, only one WIS Netball Team was participating competitively. This year, we have seven teams ranging from under seven to under 18, with five teams competing in the league and some friendlies as well. Who knows how high they will fly in the 2022-23 season!



LOST & FOUND

Please claim your child(ren)'s lost items from our **Lost & Found at Reception.**

Items left unclaimed by the end of next week (**Friday, 9 September**) will be donated for a good cause.



WELCOME
SPRING

HAVE A GREAT WEEKEND!



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Stage **Tanya Turipamwe**

Stage **Felicia Riegel**

Costume **Twapewa Amutenya**

Choir **Michael Tuhafeni**

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Anja Panitz Marketing **Gloria Nehoya**

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SIEMENS

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Who can benefit from Therapeutic horse riding?

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Mutt-Strutt



MUTTS and **PUREBREDS** alike are invited to our dog walk to celebrate our canine companions!

The SPCA Windhoek is excited to participate in a national dog-walk day taking place with your SPCAs nationwide.

3 September 2022

TIME: 1st sign-in from 07:30; 1st walk @ 08:00

2nd sign-in from 08:30; 2nd walk @ 09:00

PLACE: Eagles Restaurant | Avis Damm

ENTRY FEE: N\$100

WALK REGISTRATION!

Opens **1 August** and closes **2 September** @17:30 at the SPCA Windhoek.

PET-CENTRIC MARKET

Do you have some pet related products that you wish to sell?

The pet-centric market will be open until 11h00!

VENDORS PRE-REGISTRATION:
N\$100/vendor fee



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:

First 60 registrants get a goodie bag sponsored by Hill's and Bravecto!



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DON'T HAVE A DOG?

Come anyway and walk one of the SPCA dogs
(PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED)

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