



THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL



Contents

- From the Director p. 2 - 3
- Primary News p. 4, 6
- Secondary News p. 1 - 2, 5-8

Dates to Remember

May 2018

- **25:** Africa Day - Public Holiday, school closed
- **31:** Reregistration Deadline

June 2018

- **01:** Secondary - Last day of Afternoon Activities
- **08:** Primary - Last day of Afternoon Activities



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16 May - International Day of Living Together in Peace - celebrating our DP students' completion of their school career.

This title seems odd when one reads it, but I thought it to be a good opportunity to reflect on the aims we have when preparing our DP students for life after school.

Wednesday was the **International Day of Living Together in Peace** - a day proclaimed by the UN - *The UN General-Assembly, in its resolution 72/130, declared 16 May the International Day of Living Together in Peace, as a means of regularly mobilizing the efforts of the international community to promote peace, tolerance, inclusion, understanding and solidarity. The Day aims to uphold the desire to live and act together, united in differences and diversity, in order to build a sustainable world of peace, solidarity and harmony.* (<http://www.un.org/en/events/livinginpeace/>)

Today is the last day of examinations of the Year 13 students. They are finally leaving school. Tomorrow WIS will celebrate their school career by bidding farewell to them at the IBDP Dinner.

What are our goals in guiding young people to the end of their school education? Our Mission states that we aim "to develop the full potential of each student in a stimulating environment of academic excellence, cultural diversity and active social responsibility to become internationally minded independent thinkers." Have we managed to reach these goals in the years we spent with these students?

WEEKLY PUZZLER

There were some guesses at the last puzzler, but as they seemed to be done without algebra they were **WRONG** (sorry for all caps, but we are sometimes emotional in our defence of algebra).

Onward to the next puzzler. If it were two hours later, it would be half as long until midnight as it would be if it were an hour later.

What time is it now?
Please send solutions, or any fun and interesting puzzlers to pfarrell@wis.edu.na



There are a few indicators to show us that we did reach our goals to a big extent. Our students have all completed their DP exams in a responsible and mature manner. They have applied to universities in the Netherlands, the UK and Sweden and those who have not yet applied to universities have mostly concrete plans for the next stretch of their journey into adulthood. Looking at their CAS achievements and the diversity of this group of students, we can truly say that they embrace the idea of living together in peace. They are individual all with their own minds and ideas, but they have managed to move through the IBDP and will hopefully treasure this experience in their lives and take advantage of the opportunities they had at WIS to be open-minded, reflective, balanced, caring, inquiring communicators who think about the things they embark on and don't shy away from taking risks at times and still lead a balanced life.

We wish our graduates all the best of the future and hope they stay in touch with WIS and take steps to help make this world a better, more peaceful place to live in.

*Regards,
Maggie Reiff*

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Farewell and Thank You

The IBDP exams started earlier this month when most of us were on holiday and the last exam is today. It marks the conclusion of two years of hard study on the part of our graduating class and their teachers. Of course, it actually marks the end not just of two years but of almost two decades of learning at WIS and elsewhere for these young men and women.

It may indeed be a "conclusion" but it's much more of a beginning than an end. Our graduates can look back with pride but they have even more to look forward to.

We'll be celebrating with them tomorrow night at the annual IBDP Dinner. It will be a proud moment all round.

Meanwhile, back in school...

Content or Concepts?

Here's a question for you.

What happened at the Diet of Worms in 1521?

Is the right answer:

- (a) I don't know but I can look it up on the Internet;
- (b) It was when Martin Luther was summoned by Charles V to explain himself;
- (c) Who cares?

The "right" answer is (b) but I have some sympathy with the other two as well.

The point is that I learned this at school when I was twelve or thirteen. It was probably in a test I sat at some point.

Here are some more.

Chemistry: What is a "mole"?

English: What is a gerund?

Maths: What is an isosceles triangle?

Biology: On a simplified diagram of a flower, label the following parts: pistil; stamen; anther; filament; style, sepal.

Geography: What are the features of the following types of cloud: stratocumulus; altostratus; altocumulus; cirrocumulus?

Physics: What is Boyle's Law?

I could go on. There was a time when you and I could probably answer most of these questions (if only because we'd spent the previous night cramming) but I wonder how many of us could confidently answer them now.

But we learned this stuff. In school.

If you are a pilot or a meteorologist, you must know about clouds and I'm sure you do. If you are a botanist or your hobby is hybridising roses, you obviously know the different parts of a flower. And if you are none of these things but you could still answer all the questions above, good for you! Knowledge is a great thing.

The reality, however, is that most of the "stuff" we learned (if that's the right word) in school, we will forget.

And it doesn't matter.

Have you ever run a marathon? If you have, you will undoubtedly have done hundreds of training runs in the months and even years prior to the marathon. You will have done long runs and short runs, fast runs and slow runs, runs when you felt great and runs when you felt terrible. Looking back, you probably won't remember much or even anything about most of those runs. Each individual run in itself is quite unimportant. Nor does it much matter where you ran. The important thing is that you did lots and lots of runs over a long period and that is what prepared you for the Big One – the marathon.

What children "learn" in school is somewhat analogous to these training runs

Obviously, we want learners to "know" stuff and to remember at least some of it. But very often concepts are more important than content. Being able to identify and label the ten main genera of clouds is impressive but it's a skill most of us manage to get along without. However, knowing that there are different kinds of cloud and that they form at different altitudes and that some bring rain whereas others do not, is something we would expect most people to know. A concept, rather than content.

Of course, it's hard to have a concept without context and that brings us back to content. But much of the content we teach is really just a vehicle for the learning of skills and understanding – making connections, analysing, questioning, comparing and contrasting. The memorising of content (still considered "learning" in some quarters) is a pretty poor relative in that company.

Going back to the Diet of Worms (and countless silly but irresistible jokes), the arcane details of what happened there are of considerable interest to historians and theologians but of negligible interest to the other 99.9% of the world's population.

However, that it was at this time that one of the world's great monotheistic religions split into two, often warring, camps is important to know as the Reformation, for that's what it was, had far-reaching consequences throughout Europe and beyond and continues to influence social policies from Washington to Warsaw.

So, when you ask your child what they learned in school today and they answer with a simple statement or fact, praise them but also ask them what they *really* learned.

Peter MacKenzie

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

During the past three weeks Years 2-6 have been taking the MAP Growth tests. These tests have been administered in the respective homerooms by Ms Avril and Mr Danai, with the homeroom teacher and teacher assistant supporting the process. The tests have been taken on iPads and the students have approached this round of testing with enthusiasm and confidence.

The majority of the testing finished today. We have just a few makeup sessions scheduled for next week for those students who were absent on the day(s) their class was taking the tests. Once all of the students have completed the tests, the teachers will review the results and then the results will be ready to be shared. For those parents who attended a MAP information session earlier this year, the MAP results will be sent to you. For those parents who weren't able to attend a MAP information session earlier this year, there will be another opportunity to attend such a session during the first week of June and receive your child's MAP test results then.



*Regards,
Beth Smith*

WIZART Exhibition

8-9th May 2018



In a newish gallery, filled with selected artworks from the primary school art students, a scenic impression of students' dedication to visual art was exhibited. The StArt Gallery is a lovely well-lit space with concrete and wooden wall displaying areas as well as tables and boxes exhibiting 3D works. The exhibition was opened by Mr Peter MacKenzie, director of WIS. A big thank you to all the parents and staff who visited the **WIZART EXHIBITION** and of course to Gina and Helen (curators) of the StART Gallery.

Ms Genie and Ms Sigrid - PAD (Primary Art Department)



AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES END DATES:
SECONDARY - last day 1 June 2018
PRIMARY - last day 8 June 2018

RUNNING: AN ENDURANCE SPORT

By Dale Gowaseb - Year 12

Running my very first marathon was an experience that speaks to endurance and perseverance. The weekend that just passed I ran my first 10km Marathon in 54 minutes along the road between Swakopmund and Walvisbay. I started training last year September. I started by running a few laps at the Unam Stadium every third morning then it became every second morning then it became every morning for an hour. About 2 months ago I started training with the Windhoek City Runners Club where I would run 5km and 7km every alternating Saturday. I find running is a good stress reliever and has become a part of my daily routine. The hardest part about running I'd say is starting again after you take a break.

In hindsight, on training days what was a challenge was the 5H00 am wake up call to prepare for the weekly Saturday morning long runs out on the Daan Viljoen road with the Windhoek City Runners Club. It took me about three weeks to get used to the early Saturday morning routine especially after an intense week of hard work at school. Running hills can be a killer, but it builds endurance.

The lessons I learnt from my preparation for my first marathon is that running is an endurance sport. You need to endure and persevere in life to achieve your goals.

It takes discipline and hard work to prepare for a marathon, even if it's not a full marathon. Focusing on the goal is a key lesson I learnt.

Lastly, I have learned that endurance through running is not just the ability to bear a hard thing but the ability to turn it into glory. My moment of glory was when I reached the finish line in 54 minutes, finishing my first 10km marathon, which also happened to be Sanlam Namibia's first Coastal Marathon.



WIS Winter Charity Drive

A collaborative School Project

Windhoek International is a school that always makes sure to prioritise giving back to the community. Our privilege should not be taken for granted. This May, all the Student Council representatives, Year 12 CAS students, Young Entrepreneurs (Irwin and Naeem), Year 4 students and a Year 6 exhibition group will be collaborating together to organise a Winter Charity Drive in which clothing, socks and blankets will be collected.

Last Saturday four Year 12 students visited Home of Good Hope, a soup kitchen for children located in Katutura. There we witnessed the struggles faced by these children whose parents cannot afford



them warm clothing or food, all of which the soup kitchen tries to provide. Home of Good Hope acts as more than just a soup kitchen catering to the other needs of the children. As a CAS project and in an effort to contribute to the community, the students decided to help out by collecting items to donate to Home of Good Hope, which would then be distributed by them to the children.

Afua Brantuo, Marcia da Conceição, Stella Nginamundova, Aaditya Pillai.

Dear WIS community,

For the month of May we will be collecting good quality second-hand clothing, new socks and blankets. We would appreciate all members of the School Community helping us with this drive. In collaboration with N/a'an ku sê Conservation Lodge we will be distributing to people in need; the San people in the North, East of Gobabis and Home of Good Hope.

A student-initiated whole school collaboration

Initiated by ALL Student Council Representatives, CAS students, Human Rights (Yr 6 Exhibition group) and Year 4 students.

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED

WHY: TO MAKE SLEEPING BAGS FOR THE WINTER DRIVE

WHERE: OUTSIDE LEARNING SUPPORT

WHEN: MONDAYS 1:45PM TO 2:45PM, TUESDAYS - SECOND BREAK, WEDNESDAY - SECOND BREAK

Kind regards

Young Entrepreneurs (Naeem, Irvine and Eliot Year 5B)



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MUN Conference



In April, a delegation of WIS students and two teachers traveled to Barcelona, Spain to represent the school at the Change the World Model United Conference. Model United Nations (MUN) is an after-school activity at WIS which gives students the opportunity to engage in simulated debate and discussion through the framework of the United Nations. Students are assigned countries and specific issues and are then asked to work together to find common ground in order to pass a diplomatic resolution.

The Change the World conference dealt with a host of international security issues such as the influx of refugees into Europe, North Korea's nuclear programme, the threat from terrorism and reforming drug laws. Our school was well-represented by nine students who tried their best to forge a consensus on some very complicated issues. As we were in Barcelona, the group also got the opportunity to explore and visit this great Spanish city when we weren't busy at work. Overall, the whole experience was an educational one and allowed us to not only represent our school internationally but also develop some insight into another country and culture. We hope to attend another international conference in Johannesburg this coming September. If you are interested in joining MUN, please get in touch with either Mr. Rishchynski or Ms. Rimmington!

Tony Rishchynski

Volcanic Eruptions

The Yr 9 students were working on tectonic plates, earthquakes and volcanoes the past few weeks in Geography. They received a project where they had to inquire into a specific volcano. They were asked to present a powerpoint with the class and also create a realistic replica of the volcano they studied. Here are some photos to share and a very interesting [video](#) from PJ.

Angatha Janse van Rensburg





WINDHOEK INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
MIDDLE YEARS ART PROGRAMME
AFRICA DAY
LANTERN DISPLAY
THURSDAY 24TH MAY 2018 7:00-14:00