



# THE ORYX

*The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School*

**IMPORTANT**

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## Dates to Remember

### March

- **16:** Extraordinary General Meeting @ 18:00, The Auditorium
- **18:** Independence Day Assembly
- **18:** End of Term 3
- **29:** Term 4 Starts

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

### ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

All parents should have received a very important message from the Chair of the Board of Directors on 12<sup>th</sup> February. It concerned the need to approve new Articles of Association. You will also have read about this in recent issues of The Oryx.

The Articles need to be approved at a special meeting that will be held on **Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> March** at 6pm but if you cannot attend this meeting you can vote in the School Office at any time between 7am and 4pm up to and including Wednesday.

Thank you to those (many!) parents who have already voted. But we still need around thirty more. Please take a minute to pop into the office and do the needful.

(Entertainingly, I've been approaching parents in the car park to ask them to vote and the most common response I've been getting is, "Tomorrow - I promise". Have you been taking lessons from your children?!)

With best wishes  
**Peter MacKenzie**

## PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Parents often ask, "How can I support my child at home?" I have been reflecting on this question and believe the broader question is, "How can I support my child's learning?" The answer is multi-faceted and is more than just helping with homework or providing a tutor. The following suggest ways that parents can and do support their child's learning.



## Teacher Feature

**Swapna Sharma**  
**English IGCSE &**  
**Year 9 Geography**

The dreaded day has arrived. I have to write about myself. It is easy to work on other people's compositions, not one's own. Writing 'about' oneself is even more difficult. Well, okay, yes there is the occasional CV, but not a narrative. Anyway, I'll try:

I am from India - from the northeastern state of Assam to be more specific. I came to southern Africa 20 years ago to join my geologist husband. For 6 and a-half years we worked and stayed in Botswana. Our loving twins (WIS year 12 students) were born in Gaborone. In 2002 July, we visited Namibia for a holiday, our first visit to this country... and next month we relocated. That is what you call love at first sight! Ever since we have considered Windhoek our home.

**Continues on page 3**

**Reading** - encourage your child to read each evening. Read to your child; take turns reading where you read a page and your child reads a page. Model reading, be it the newspaper, a book, blogs, etc., so that your child sees that you value reading.

**Organization** - children who are disorganized at school are often disorganized at home. Help and encourage your child to be organized at home with his/her own belongings. Help your child to remember library or reading books, PE days, homework, etc.

**Independence** - Children are capable of doing far more than we often give them credit to be able to do. Encourage independence in your child with such actions as having your child set out the items needed for school, pack them in his/her book bag and then carry the book bag.

**Question** - Ask your child questions in the frame of the Learner Profile, for example:

- How were you a thinker today? Or How did you show you were a thinker in the mathematics lesson today?)
- How were you caring today?
- In which lesson did you show you were knowledgeable today?
- How have you been a risk-taker in the drama lessons?

**Encourage** - Encourage your child through positive reinforcement. When discussing your child's work, comment on the items or problems that are correct. Focus on what your child is doing well.

**Balance** - Children need time to unwind after the school day. Ensure that your child has a break between getting home from school and starting homework. Also ensure that your child isn't so programmed with after school activities that he/she doesn't have time to play. Play is an important part of learning and making sense of the world.

**Participate** - Attend events, activities, presentations in which your child is participating (Student-led conferences, swim gala, sports day, competitions, productions, etc.). Even though children may act as though their parents presence at events doesn't matter, it really does matter. Your attendance encourages self-confidence and self-esteem and that his/her participation is important and valued.

**Communication** - Keep informed of what's happening in class and in the school by reading the class blog, The Oryx and the D6. If you have concerns about your child, contact your child's teacher. If there are concerns about your child's health or changes that might affect your child's learning, inform your child's teacher.

Thank you for all that you do to support and encourage your children's learning. I look forward to seeing you all at the student-led conferences next week.

Kind regards,  
**Beth Smith**

**Teacher Feature continued**

On the professional side, for majority of my work life I have been an editor and coordinator of document development processes.

I started as an apprentice in the news desk of an English newspaper in Assam at the age of 20. This was even before graduating from university. As soon as I got my degree in English Honours, the organization offered me a permanent job. I learnt a lot on the job and grew as a person and professional. By age 24, I was leading a team of 15 sub-editors/reporters in the newspaper. The experience was invaluable.

When we moved to Botswana I was a bit cautious of practicing journalism. We were foreigners and I did not have in-depth knowledge of the country. Instead, I started a consultancy offering writing and editing services. This part of my career was equally fascinating. There was immense variety in my work - from editing Protocols that were signed by heads of SADC states, to UNDP Human Development reports and producing newsletters for international NGOs.

In Namibia, I was first employed at a printing and publishing company. After two years I left that job to help my husband set up his business. This lasted only a short while (I should known - never work for your spouse!) and gratefully I went back to consulting.

**Continues on page 4**

## Light up my life!

Year 2 demonstrated how light changes the way we see things. They held a mini science fair and explained their experiments and ideas to their parents, Year 1 and Year 6 students. Year 2 were especially excited about the visit from Year 6 as they had been to visit their Energy Exhibition.



*Jan Le Roux*

## YEAR 3

Hi everyone!



My Name is Daniella Prinsloo. I am in Year 3A in Ms Christi's class. Last weekend I was in Swakopmund and went on Tommy's Desert Tours and saw all sorts of creatures like snakes, scorpions and geckos. I held a chameleon and fed it a bug, a bird came and ate a worm out of my hand!

This is me holding a Namib Sand Snake and another picture holding the chameleon. I climbed up and down sand dunes and we had a fun and scary car ride through them too!



**Teacher Feature continued**

As our boys were already studying at WIS at that time, I was aware of the school’s core values. This helped me blend in. Soon after the expiry of my ‘substitution’ contract, WIS had an opening in the English department and I was offered the position. I express my sincere gratitude to Ms. Reiff for believing in me, and my students for their trust, love and affection. Finally, a BIG thank you to all my colleagues for the warm welcome and helping me feel at home from day one.

## Working hard to be a winner

My name is Melvina Nicol-Wilson, and I am currently in Year 6A. I like to cook, learn new things and hang out with my friends.

On the 26th to the 28th of February 2016, I competed in the Namibian championships long course gala. On the last day of the gala, I received two silver medals. One was for 50m backstroke u/10 and one for 50m freestyle u/10.

So far, those are the first medals I have received since I have started competing in swimming galas. To get those medals I have been training hard every day. My coach’s name is Adrian. If it wasn’t for him I would have never gotten those medals, because every training session I go to he always tells me to try my best!

To be honest, training was not really easy. Sometimes I would not want to go, but my grandmother always encourage me to try my best. I hope in the future I will receive more medals and be able to compete against kids from other countries.

**WIS MERCHANDISE**  
The PTA will be selling hats, shirts etc on Thursdays from 13:00 - 13:45 @ the PTA HUT!

Please see information with regards to Student Parent Teacher Conferences on the D6. Conferences will be held on the 15th March (14:00 - 16:00) 16th March (14:00 - 16:00) and the 17th March (16:00 - 20:00).

**NO AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES WILL BE TAKING PLACE NEXT WEEK FROM 14 - 18 MARCH**

**Melvina's quote for achieving success:**  
"Don't give up. Work hard and try your best."

**Namibian Long Course Championships held at Olympia Swimming Pool.**  
**Melvina on the starting block for the freestyle race.**

## SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

We trust that many of you have signed up for the upcoming Student Parent Teacher Conferences. This is an excellent opportunity for parents, teachers and students to sit together and discuss the progress and possible actions that need to be taken in order for the student to make the best possible use of school and their support from home to ensure s/he can perform to the best of her/his ability.

Another class (Year 8B) is on the field trip to Okonjima and will be returning

today, hopefully with a lot of precious memories and a vast new view on conservation and team-work.

In our exam classes, the IBDP and IGCSE students are busy submitting their Internal Assessments (a percentage of each subject in the IBDP, ranging from 20 - 40 percent, is allocated to practicals, orals and portfolios). The Internal Assessments give students the chance to work independently on a specific topic without the examination stress that accompany the written examination. The IGCSE students will start their oral and practical examinations soon. Again, this gives students an opportunity to perform in a more relaxed environment and these practicals and orals again count for a percentage towards the final examination grade.

Parents of examination class children/young adults are urged to take the time to support your child during these weeks/months to give him/her all the assistance needed to be able to perform to the best of their ability. A quiet study space, balanced diet and rest contribute to this and are inherently provided by the home. There further has to be a time for these young adults to switch off and re-energise by taking some time out during the studying weeks.

For students and parents, here are two interesting submissions that might give you an idea or two to ponder about: [Click here.](#)

Kind regards,  
**Maggie Reiff**

## Year 8 Okonjima Trip



Year 8A went to Okonjima on an education and conservation trip last week. For four days and three night, the students worked as teams (clan, coalition, pride and pack), slept in tents, washed dishes, hiked in the morning and evening, went on game drives and swam while simultaneously learning about the nature and life that not only surrounds them but sustains them. The students were close to cheetahs, lions, leopards, vultures, hyena, porcupine, tortoise, giraffe, wild dogs and many antelope as well as birds. The many people at Africat spent time to explain the habitat, the nature, the various trees, and all of the ways we can learn to live sustainably.

Funny stories and memories galore. Here is what the students thought:

I look at nature differently because of what they taught us—Yozika

They showed me that teamwork is important. Animals use teamwork and we should as well. We need each other. If one part of the web breaks, the rest is affected. – Erastus

The time with Africat taught me a lot more about myself and showed others there were many things they didn't know about me. Also, the way they taught us was great because we got to experience it ourselves.–Tanatswa

The Africat people make others aware that it is us humans causing much destruction. Imms was the best



animal tracker! -Diella

I look at animals differently now. Before I saw them as things that hunt and kill in the bush but now I see them as animals who feel pain and have feelings. I will take what I learned and apply it to my lifestyle because I think that in life we have to treat things equally. -Bruna



The park is absolutely stunning and it is even more gorgeous from up the mountain. One of the best parts of the trip was sitting on the mountain seeing the sunset and just appreciating both the natural and slightly artificial beauty. I learnt many new things about trees, animals and most importantly, life. -Amani

This trip helped my class to be better aware of littering, conserving nature and thinking twice. I was surprised to know that humans set up harsh traps to kill animals.—Zaylin

The most kind person in my class is Viktoria, because she helped to get the spiders out of our tent.—Zandrea.

I really enjoyed the game drives and small hikes and wish I could have stayed a bit longer.—Kisha

This trip helped our class in many ways, one is that life can be fun without technology. I hope to volunteer at AfriCat for my IB CAS project. -Victor

It was cool to learn how Martin showed us a plant can turn into a rope. -Loic

This trip helped me with setting of future goals because our cats are going to be extinct and my goal is to try to save these big cats.—Mac

I was mostly worried about scorpions and snakes, but it was not either of those in our tent, it was a spider and we had to wake up Marvin for that!—Michela

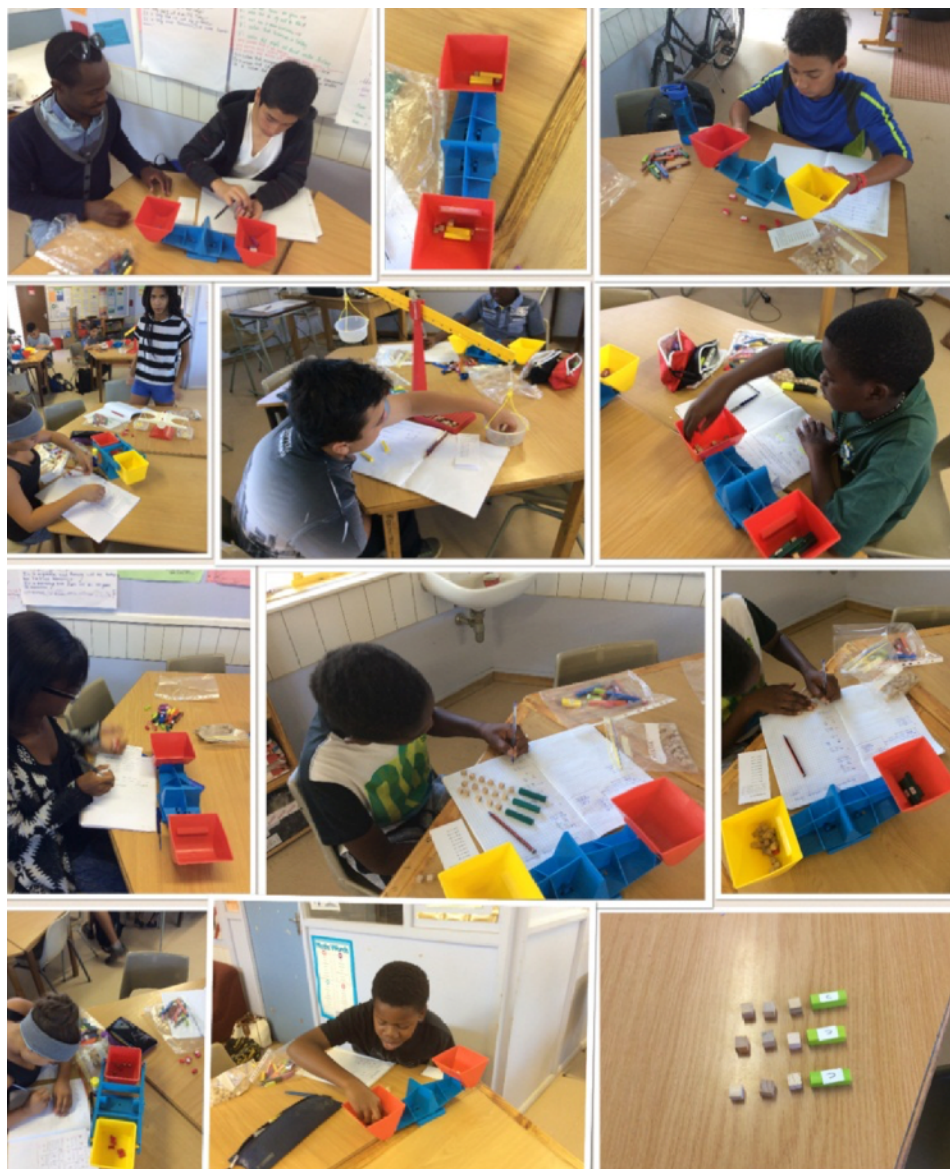


The experience of jumping the pool super early really helped my learning style because I am half penguin and penguins are awesome--Diego

**Year 8A - Tangeni Idhenga**

## Year 8 Solving Equations

Year 8 students have been consolidating their conceptual understanding of solving equations with the use of balancing scales and cuisenaire rods. This helped them to visualise the idea that the equals sign is like the pivot on the scales and they must perform the same operations on both sides of the equations just like they must add or subtract the same items from both sides of the scales to keep them balanced.



*Lian Cohen*

## **ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE [E.A.L.]**

*Submitted by Ms. Judy Judge, E.A.L. Teacher / Consultant*

Learning a new language can be a challenge for anyone at any age, even when it is a conscious choice to learn one. But imagine if learning a new language was not an actual choice, but rather something imposed upon you; something without which you could no longer thrive. And imagine this was in a foreign land you'd been uprooted and brought to (again, not by your own volition) wherein everything and everyone around you were now suddenly unfamiliar, and you understood nothing of what was being said. Add to that, the expectation to perform academically now, in that foreign language you cannot speak, read or write. Where you were once a straight-A student in your homeland, you now come to query 'What's a 'U' grade?' on your report card. And to top all, imagine all of this happens during your teenage years - that most sensitive, self-conscious, hormonal, rebellious period of your life when, by all teenage accounts, 'appearances and social acceptance' are, well, everything. This is the experience, the reality, the

fear, the pressure, the conundrum faced by non-English speaking students, year after year, who arrive new to Namibia and to our esteemed classrooms and pathways at Windhoek International School.

Teaching Secondary level E.A.L. students is no less a tricky affair. Unlike carefree primary level children who can happily learn through singing songs; dancing; playing games; reciting rhymes or numbers or the alphabet; such is not the case with older students. While their English language ability might be at a basic nursery rhyme level, their physical size, age, character and self-image are not. They are often already embarrassed amongst peers, to be receiving this 'special learning support', so, it's a delicate dance to ensure they feel respected and not patronized, as they begin learning simple basics like ABC's and 123's. A further consideration at the secondary level is the need for them to develop literacy skills as quickly as possible. High school subjects are demanding in their content and rely heavily on written responses (both in the classroom and in examination situations). So, while the ability to communicate orally can develop incidentally in or out of the classroom by virtue of immersion in an English speaking environment, the ability to write, conversely cannot. There are rules, and it takes concentrated time and effort to master them.

Having said all that, the students who have passed through the Secondary E.A.L. program at W.I.S., and those who are currently enrolled, never fail to improve or even to impress over time. The rates of learning among students may vary, as do their ultimate results. But, one thing remains constant: Everybody's English improves. These young troopers face up to the many challenges which lie before them upon arrival and do what it takes to overcome. Why? Because they have to. There is no other way. And personally, I think there's a lot to be said for that kind of maturity, courage and determination from a teenaged or pre-teen boy or girl, who has reluctantly been removed from all things safe, social and familiar and thrust into a realm of complete unknowns, alone. Many of us adults would not fare nearly as well in a similar situation.

And so it is, that scores of young internationals have graced the Secondary E.A.L. Office of Room 52 at W.I.S., from various countries around the world: Sweden, Israel, China, Brazil, Angola, Cuba, Libya, Russia, Romania and Nigeria, to name some. And, in that wee room is where all of them find some necessary comfort, respite and support, and more importantly, a sense of possibility and new beginnings. The boys and girls who pass through my doors at the beginning of their foreign land-foreign language experience are not the same young people who exit the program upon reaching the desired level of English proficiency. They enter as timid, tired, confused, frustrated, overwhelmed, non-performing, non-English speaking kids, and leave as confident, competent, happy, communicative, well-adjusted, adolescent achievers, and absolute candidates for obtaining their future English high school certificate or diploma. Best of all, I personally get to witness all of that and be an integral part of the process, year after year, child after child. How utterly awesome is that!

Pictured here are James and Bruce, two current Year 7 students from China who've been studying English at WIS for less than 6 months. They arrived with minimal English abilities (i.e. not able to communicate at all, nor able to read or write anything.) Here, they prepare, then orally present, their respective self-made posters to demonstrate their understanding of new vocabulary and grammatical differences between singular and plural.

***'In My Clothes Shop...'***





James works on his poster creation.



Bruce points out the various clothes items in 'his shop'.



James answers to Bruce's challenge that he has mispronounced a word.

## United States Marine Corps (USMC)

Our Y11 students were paid an unexpected visit from the USMC during their weekly Physical Education lesson. We took a break for our Volleyball and Basketball to participate in what is referred to as 'Combat Ready Training' with a focus on strength and conditioning exercises.

Our students were put through their paces in a series of strength and conditioning exercise that were designed to instill the value of team work and camaraderie and also to give them an intense physical work out.





We are hugely grateful for the the Marine who are stationed here for giving up their time and to give learners a really positive learning experience.

Please looking in next weeks edition of the Oryx for a full program of activities and drills that the students performed.

*Quotes from the Students:*

- *Shalie - Epic and exhilarating team building experience*
- *Sam - Brilliant and a necessary inclusion in the curriculum*
- *Alicia - Already looking forward to next time they visit*
- *Surabi - Now I know for sure that I cant do push-up's, but by next month I will master it!*
- *Princess - Really happy to have survived the session and it gave us great motivation for PE and 'fire in the belly'*
- *Anon - The instructor looked very fine in their uniforms*
- *Princ - Great experience for us all*
- *Hesham - To my surprise I actually enjoyed it*



[USMC Website](#)

**Thomas Jackson-Read**



Join us at the  
PTA Family  
**BRAAI**

16 April

3pm - 6pm



Where: Windhoek International School

Enjoy many activities such as:

**WIS Raffle Draw 2016**

- Jumping castle
- Ball Sports
- Candy floss
- Snow cones
- Pet an SPCA Dog

**\*Cash Bar Available**  
Bring Your Own Food and Picnic supplies









**MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE - Optional Weekly Word Problems - WIS Upper Primary**



Dear IMF Agent,

Welcome to the safe-house.

Each week, there will be a new word problem from the WIS NOWP-LIST (Non Official Word Problem List). If you submit an attempt to solve the word problem, you will receive an IMF Badge in recognition of your service to WIS for attempting to stop Vapor. The Wall of Agents, a record of all IMF Agents, is displayed on the bulletin board on the side of Headquarters (The Office).

Your mission--should you choose to accept it--is to figure out the answer before Vapor. You need to solve the word problem and submit it to your teacher **by noon each Friday** to prevent a "Blue Strike" from Vapor.

As always, should you or any member of your IM Force not **show your work**, the school will disavow all knowledge of your answers. You may receive guidance from any other IMF Agents, including siblings, adults, internet, etc., but you must give them credit on the sheet you submit. This message will self-destruct in 5 seconds.

-WIS Upper Primary School Teachers

This week's problem:

Karim jumps in his Porsche 911 and Zuraida jumps in her Jaguar XJ6 in the same parking lot that has one exit. Karim travels two blocks north, four blocks east, and two blocks south. Zuraida travels two blocks east, two blocks south, two blocks east, and two blocks north. Will Zuraida's car and Karim's car meet at the end of this journey? (To solve this problem, it is advisable to draw a diagram.)



**City of Windhoek**

Vision: To enhance the quality of life of all our people

*City of many faces*



*City of many faces*

**THE JUNIOR COUNCIL  
OF CITY OF WINDHOEK**

PRESENTS TO YOU:

**AN INFORMATION SHARING  
AND EXHIBITION DAY**

Junior Council



Save a Life Today  
**SALT**

**Free stand to sell your goodies**  
**Free stand to exhibit your products**

**Date:** 12 March 2016 @ Zoo park  
**Time:** 9:00 – 13:00

**FREE INFORMATION SESSION FROM DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS**

**Experience local talent from our schools**

Amphitheatre  
**Time:** 13:30 – 17:30  
**Entrance Free**

**Contact:** Zelnadia De Waal      081 470 8688  
 Lastborn Kuritjinga      081 659 8595

**FREEBIES TO GIVE AWAY**

Spend this day with us as we empower the  
 Youth through information sharing and creating entrepreneurs.

**SAVE A LIFE TODAY "SALT"**

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