



THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Community,

Welcome to the new year! In speaking with many of you this week, it seems that families have had a lovely holiday - and are holding high expectations for all that 2023 will bring. One thing that became apparent to me during the break is that this new year will bring a seismic change in how Artificial Intelligence impacts how we learn and how we work. If you have not yet signed up for an account with Chatbot then I recommend it: <https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/>

What is ChatGPT and Why are **Some Schools** Banning Its Use on Campus?

Built by OpenAI, the launch of ChatGPT is a bot which launched for public use in late 2022. It has led to the new term "aigerism" because the natural language processor has the power to write passable papers, believable scientific abstracts, fiction stories, bespoke poetry, computer code, and solutions to complex mathematics problems (albeit with [some limitations](#) and [errors](#)). Because ChatGPT generates new text for each prompt, plagiarism checkers such as [Turnitin](#) are not (yet) able to detect the text it produces. What's more, ChatGPT utilises previous texts when producing new answers and is growing exponentially stronger as more people utilise its services.

Why is WIS Excitedly Finding Ways to Use ChatGPT as a Resource to Improve Learning?

WIS teachers have begun a discussion about how this leap forward in Artificial Intelligence will impact our approach to teaching and assessment. This [prompt guide for teachers](#) helps us think through how ChatGPT will help us set high expectations, generate powerful teaching resources, create rubrics and feedback tools, and generate assessment tasks. Our Learning Enrichment Department has been asking questions like, "what assistive technology supports students with dyslexia", and have found that the responses are helpful to meet the needs of specific students. Our MYP Coordinator Adrian von Wrede-Jervis has issued a request to the International Baccalaureate for a white paper and review of assessment and rubrics which take into account this new assistive technology.

The visual arts are also impacted by this leap forward in artificial intelligence. [DALL-E2](#) is a new AI system which creates original images and art from a natural text description. Here are three original images that Dall-E produced when I typed in "An impressionist painting of the Namibian flag being wrapped around a teacher who has just received a gold medal for her compassionate approach to teaching":



PARENT INFORMATION PORTAL
Click here for more information

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Dates to Remember 2023

- **24 January**
School Photos Make-up day for absent students
- **25 January**
AGM
- **26 January**
Parent Coffee Morning
- **26 January**
Parent Workshop
- **1 February**
IBDP Parent coffee morning



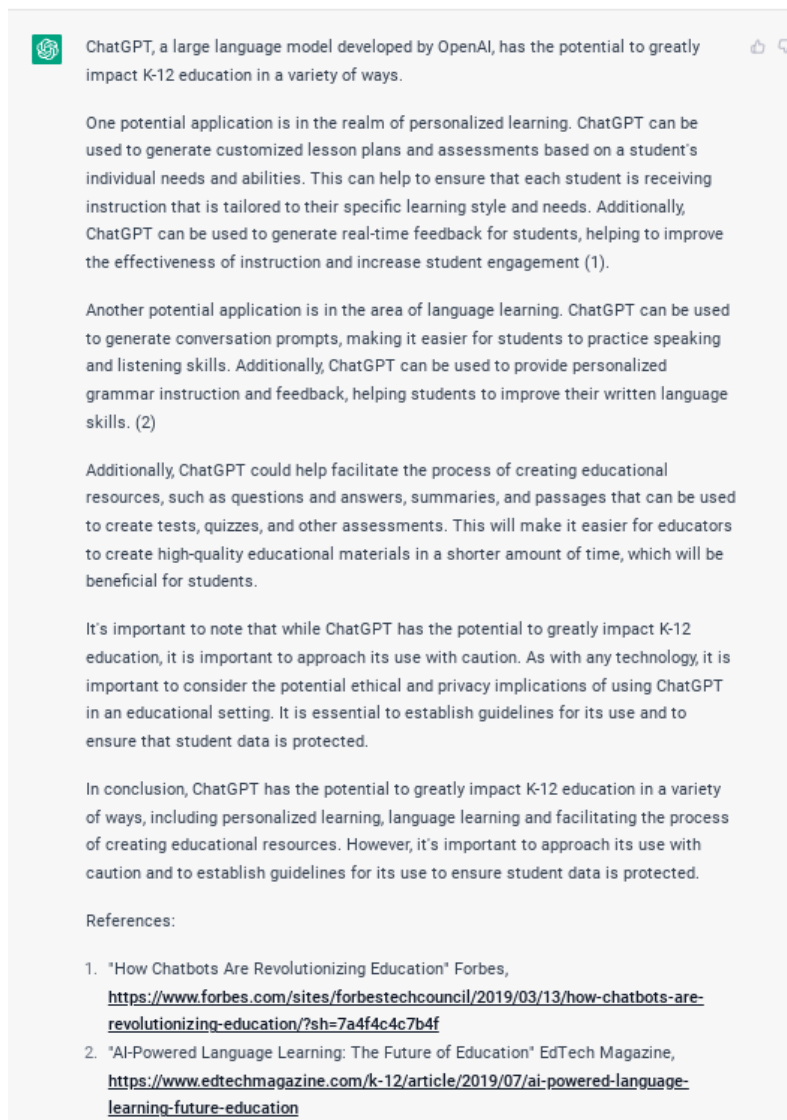
With GoogleDocs and [visible thinking](#) strategies, we have technology and tools in place to require students to show evidence of their thought process by tracking drafts. It is clear that we will need to adapt our writing assignments, modify homework, emphasise in-class writing assignments, modify our academic honesty policy, utilise [AI generated text detectors](#), and tweak our [syllabus rubrics and assignments](#) in a way that asks students to personalise their work, emphasising human, interpersonal, entrepreneurial, and [creative qualities](#) which a bot will not be able to replicate.

How will AI impact primary and secondary education over the long term?

With bots creating more intellectual work at a much faster pace, we may need to begin considering how our curriculum will place continued emphasis on foundational reading/writing as well as increased focus on interpersonal skills, wellness, creativity, and physical dexterity. It will be a very long time before AI has an impact on physical tasks such as artisan craftsmanship, interpersonal communication, medical practice, gardening and farming, and [artistic performance](#). We will need to begin conversations about the ethics of AI, and incorporate AI into our [WIS Digital Citizenship Requirement](#).

Sincerely,
Ethan

P.S. The text above took me about over an hour to write and research. Below is what my chatbot produced in 30 seconds when I entered: *"Explain in 400 words how ChatGPT will impact k-12 education. Include in-text citation and a bibliography."* It's a brave new world!



ChatGPT, a large language model developed by OpenAI, has the potential to greatly impact K-12 education in a variety of ways.

One potential application is in the realm of personalized learning. ChatGPT can be used to generate customized lesson plans and assessments based on a student's individual needs and abilities. This can help to ensure that each student is receiving instruction that is tailored to their specific learning style and needs. Additionally, ChatGPT can be used to generate real-time feedback for students, helping to improve the effectiveness of instruction and increase student engagement (1).

Another potential application is in the area of language learning. ChatGPT can be used to generate conversation prompts, making it easier for students to practice speaking and listening skills. Additionally, ChatGPT can be used to provide personalized grammar instruction and feedback, helping students to improve their written language skills. (2)

Additionally, ChatGPT could help facilitate the process of creating educational resources, such as questions and answers, summaries, and passages that can be used to create tests, quizzes, and other assessments. This will make it easier for educators to create high-quality educational materials in a shorter amount of time, which will be beneficial for students.

It's important to note that while ChatGPT has the potential to greatly impact K-12 education, it is important to approach its use with caution. As with any technology, it is important to consider the potential ethical and privacy implications of using ChatGPT in an educational setting. It is essential to establish guidelines for its use and to ensure that student data is protected.

In conclusion, ChatGPT has the potential to greatly impact K-12 education in a variety of ways, including personalized learning, language learning and facilitating the process of creating educational resources. However, it's important to approach its use with caution and to establish guidelines for its use to ensure student data is protected.

References:

1. "How Chatbots Are Revolutionizing Education" Forbes, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2019/03/13/how-chatbots-are-revolutionizing-education/?sh=7a4f4c4c7b4f>
2. "AI-Powered Language Learning: The Future of Education" EdTech Magazine, <https://www.edtechmagazine.com/k-12/article/2019/07/ai-powered-language-learning-future-education>

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to another exciting semester. Visiting classrooms this week, I can assure you that our teachers and students are all back with renewed energy and a passion for teaching and learning!



The teaching profession is one that continuously evaluates methods and approaches that impact learning. One of our major focus areas in the Primary that we as educators are collectively learning about at WIS is **literacy**. Over our break, I took the opportunity to read up on the science of reading. The science of reading is a vast body of scientific research that demonstrates the best methods of teaching children to read. It draws on numerous scientific disciplines including developmental psychology, educational psychology, neuroscience, linguistics and more. As we continue to focus on literacy at WIS, I want to share with you the fundamental building blocks of reading success. These are the essential skills that every child must master to become a proficient reader:

- Phonemic awareness: the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate the individual sounds in words.
- Phonics: the ability to use the sounds and letters of a language to read words.
- Vocabulary: the knowledge of words and their meanings.
- Comprehension: the ability to understand and make meaning from text.
- Fluency: the ability to read smoothly and with expression.

To help your child develop these skills, you can incorporate activities that focus on phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. For example, you can help your child develop phonemic awareness by challenging them to break down individual words into their component sounds. To build phonics skills, you can introduce activities such as singing songs or playing treasure hunts to find letters. To expand your child's vocabulary, you can read them books and discuss new words. To improve comprehension, you can ask your child questions about the stories they read and to build fluency. If you would like more detailed information I am linking [Put Reading First](#) from the National Institute of Literacy in the US. Also worth listening to is this Podcast [Sold a Story](#) about the reasons behind the literacy crisis in the US.

In relation to our focus on literacy, we have been doing some deliberate thinking about the effect of screen time on reading development and on other important skills for which the Primary years of a child's schooling are crucial. Although the research is mixed, a substantial amount of research points towards screen time having an effect on social skills, impulse control (taking away from activities that promote impulse control), managing emotions and importantly reading development and reading for enjoyment (which is one of the biggest indicators of academic success). Many top schools are looking at recent educational and developmental research, and are [making the decision](#) to scale back on screen time. This is why we have made the decision, starting from the 2023/2-24 school year, that one-to-one devices will no longer be required for students in Grade 4. We hope that this will be a step in the right direction to help our students develop a love for reading and improve their literacy skills. A letter has been sent out to all parents about this.

As always, we appreciate your support and look forward to working together to provide your child with the best education possible.

Warm regards,
Marcelle van Leenen

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Welcome to the new year and our continued partnership in education



I want to wish all our members of the WIS community a good start to the new year. May 2023 be filled with positive and engaging interactions between the different parties involved in our school community.

During the past months it has been evident - almost more than ever before - how critical the partnership between the school and home is in order to ensure that we are able to educate responsible, ethical and independent young people. More than ever, does education need to rely on integrity, honesty and fundamental values of humanity to ensure we raise young people who will be able to make a positive impact on our society and the world as a whole.



With increased social media focus and the realisation that we cannot control the way our children use technology and social media, the emphasis needs to be on their own strength of character and values. It will only be possible for our children to flourish and grow in a healthy manner, if they can take responsibility for their own well being - physically, emotionally, socially and academically. This is a huge task we as educators - parents and school alike - are facing and need to reflect upon and manage.



It is critical that the education of children is not left to the school alone. Childrens' homes are the first and most important foundation where their values and character is built and formed. If parents are not available to guide their children's growth and development, if children are not supported in their exploration of social interactions both physically and electronically, then they cannot be expected to make good choices in their lives. It is our collective responsibility as educators - parents and school - to work together to support the same values and guide with similar expectations.

We will be having parent information evenings again to have conversations about topics that are relevant to us all in the education of our children. More about this in next week's Oryx.

Today we had an assembly about student agency and choices explaining what the expectations are of the new initiatives. [HERE](#) is the presentation. I would appreciate feedback and also participation in filling in the form about our Friday afternoon session so that we can find a name that is appropriate for the aim for this session.

A new AI feature, released by [OpenAI](#), has shook the educational world in the past months. ChatGPT is bound to fundamentally change who we teach and how we use technology in our learning. It is critical for our young generation - in order to be able to use this new fantastic tool responsibly, that their values of honesty, respect, integrity and humility are strongly embedded in their character. We all need to work together to enable this to happen. As mentioned in an article released by Stanford University - [Stanford Faculty Weigh in on ChatGPT Shake Up in Education](#) - the final thought shared is what AI should be about: *"As a first step, we need to seriously examine how generative AI is changing how different fields and disciplines do their work and what ideas students need to develop to both build and use AI for humans rather than in place of humans."* (Victor Lee) This shows how it becomes increasingly important for individuals to take charge of their lives and their learning without having to be forced and controlled into making the right choices.

Regards,
Maggie Reiff



Car Security Stickers
Please collect your 2022 - 2023
windscreen sticker at the Office!



English and Poetry Continue ...

We are currently working on Poetry in Grade 7 and the students were familiarised with one of Robert Frost's most famous poems 'The Road Not Taken'. After a discussion and realising that this poem is an allegory and actually means the speaker is faced with difficult life decisions, the students were tasked to write a descriptive paragraph of a time they were faced with making a difficult decision. They then had to pair themselves up with someone, read their partner's descriptive piece, and create a poem that depicts the partner's decision. I honestly think the students did a great job at turning someone else's writing into a poem. Please enjoy some of the work our grade 7RS class completed.

My difficult decision - Candice Rey

I once had a difficult decision where I had to choose whether I wanted my religion to change or lose a friend forever!

I chose to lose a friend forever, which I think was the worst possible decision I had ever made! I could have kept a friend for a small price but at the time changing my religion didn't make me, me!

And now I wish I had gone back in time to choose the right decision.

Maybe right now I would be happy or maybe right now I would have a friend! But here I am writing about the most difficult decision of my life and it became the worst one of my life because I lost the one thing I loved in my life, the one thing that made me feel at home, the one thing that stopped me from hating myself, and I lost it because of a stupid decision! And now I know I made a bad decision, here I am all alone because of some stupid

religion that caused my friends to go down the drain! This religion has caused my friend to move on to someone she used to tell me she hated! She is with someone who used to annoy her, she thought that she followed her everywhere. Yet here we are, I am alone and she has a friend that she used to hate, she is doing all the things we used to do, would she have done that with me if I had chosen another decision? Would we still be best friends? Unfortunately, I will never know that.

Eternal flame - Jessica Damon

In the start, I had a friend
We had a connection like no other
But something shifted
Which made her bothered
A religion or a lost love
One of the above

I choose myself
For not having a religion is me
So my friend went off and let me be

Wrong or right I said up at night
Wondering you see
I feel I made a wrong
But I did it for me

If I changed?
I would never have known
If she still would have felt at home.

Now my friendship went down a drain
And I may never forget this piercing pain

Wrong or right I think again
I don't know
But it's driving me insane
There is no cure for this burning flame

My difficult decision - Jaden Russel

I had to make a hard decision by choosing if I should stay in America or not. I wanted to, but at the same time not. I wanted to be with my mom, sisters, grandparents, and other family members, but I wanted to be with my dad because I could travel the world and be here today. I said my goodbyes and went, I kinda wish I could go back, but the past is the past. We look to the future. And it was a good decision because I have new friends now and meet new people.

Time will tell - Mea van Zyl

Should I think twice?
Or should I think wise
Should I stay or should I go
I will never know

Leave my home
Then I'll be alone
I felt the pressure
Which choice will turn into a treasure

Home is America

House is Africa
A chance to travel the world
Not just another word

The decision was mine
It's all a matter of time
I chose Africa
And left America

My difficult decision - Rigby Johnson

When Covid-19 came to Namibia my dad wanted to homeschool me. I wasn't sure though. I knew I would lose all my friends and wouldn't have a playground. How long would it be until I would go to school again? An upside would be that I could learn on my own level and spend more time with my dad. In the end, I chose to homeschool. It was the right decision.

Homeschooled - Tomas Andresen Serra

A deadly virus came along with a big pandemic
Splitting me from my friends and from playgrounds
But brought me closer to my parents and brother
I knew it would be a while before I could see my friends

But it also meant that learning would be at my level
And I would be safer from this COVID-19
For better or worse I accepted my dad's choice
It felt right to do it and so, I got homeschooled

DP Coffee Morning

Seven WIS parents of Grade 11 or 12 students gathered for a super DP Parent Information Coffee Meeting in the Eagles' Nest which included a discussion on:

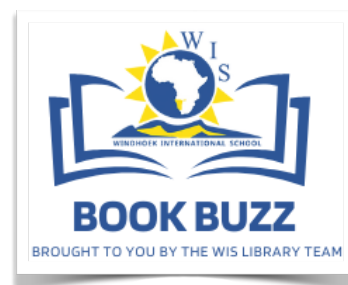
1. Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS) - how it complements the academic rigor so well; how it requires learners to consistently contribute over 18 months; how it requires only reflections on the WIS CAS e-platform - ManageBac.
2. Coursework - its 25%-33% contribution to each WIS IBDP course; and how the [Grade 12 deadlines](#) document lists the various coursework due dates.
3. The February 2023 Grade 12 mock exams & May 2023 end-of-Grade 11 exams - where the on-going study over many months reveals itself.
4. How does the IBDP prepare students for university?(Independence, critical thinking, taking responsibility, time management - all the ATL skills)
5. Questions and answers - on the 24/12 points score required to achieve the full diploma qualification but there cannot be a '2' mark on an HL.



Rick Fitzpatrick, DP Coordinator

Book Buzz

What new books will you read this year? I hope you'll read them all but for time-sake, here are three of the most anticipated books.

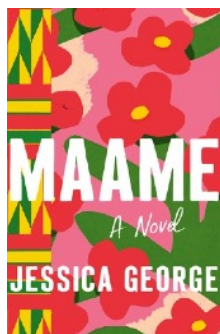


[Spare](#)

[Prince Harry](#)

It was one of the most searing images of the twentieth century: two young boys, two princes, walking behind their mother's coffin as the world watched in sorrow - and horror. As Diana, Princess of Wales, was laid to rest, billions wondered what the princes must be thinking and feeling - and how their lives would play out from that point on. For Harry, this is that story at last.

With its raw, unflinching honesty, *Spare* is a landmark publication full of insight, revelation, self-examination, and hard-won wisdom about the eternal power of love over grief.



[Maame](#)

[Jessica George](#)

Maame (ma-meh) has many meanings in Twi but in my case, it means woman.

It's fair to say that Maddie's life in London is far from rewarding. With a mother who spends most of her time in Ghana (yet still somehow manages to be overbearing), Maddie is the primary caretaker for her father, who suffers from advanced stage Parkinson's. At work, her boss is a nightmare and Maddie is tired of always being the only Black person in every meeting.

When her mum returns from her latest trip to Ghana, Maddie leaps at the chance to get out of the family home and finally start living. A self-acknowledged late bloomer, she's ready to experience some important "firsts": She finds a flat share, says yes to after-work drinks, pushes for more recognition in her career, and throws herself into the bewildering world of internet dating. But it's not long before tragedy strikes, forcing Maddie to face the true nature of her unconventional family, and the perils--and rewards--of putting her heart on the line.

Smart, funny, and deeply affecting, *Maame* deals with the themes of our time with humor and poignancy: from familial duty and racism, to female pleasure, the complexity of love, and the life-saving power of friendship. Most important, it explores what it feels like to be torn between two homes and cultures—and it celebrates finally being able to find where you belong.



[Yellowface](#)

[R.F. Kuang](#)

What's the harm in a pseudonym? Authors June Hayward and Athena Liu were supposed to be twin rising stars: same year at Yale, same debut year in publishing. But Athena's a cross-genre literary darling, and June didn't even get a paperback release.

So when June witnesses Athena's death in a freak accident, she acts on impulse: she steals Athena's just-finished masterpiece, an experimental novel about the unsung contributions of Chinese labourers to the British and French war efforts during World War I.

So what if June edits Athena's novel and sends it to her agent as her own work? So what if she lets her new publisher rebrand her as Juniper Song--complete with an ambiguously ethnic author photo? Doesn't this piece of history deserve to be told, whoever the teller? That's what June claims, and the *New York Times* bestseller list seems to agree.

But June can't get away from Athena's shadow, and emerging evidence threatens to bring June's (stolen) success down around her. As June races to protect her secret, she discovers exactly how far she will go to keep what she thinks she deserves.

With its totally immersive first-person voice, *Yellowface* takes on questions of diversity, racism, and cultural appropriation not only in the publishing industry but the persistent erasure of Asian-American voices and history by Western white society.

In other news, will you help us celebrate African American History Month by volunteering as a storyteller or book reader? Let us know by emailing jwashington@wis.edu.na or mneftali@wis.edu.na

Also If you'd like to suggest a book for our library collection, you can do so by visiting this link [BOOK SUGGESTION FORM](#).

PLEASE NOTE:

Tuesday, 7 FEBRUARY 2023

Inter House competition, Affies Park, Wanderers Club

- **FOR GRADES 1-9 & 11, SCHOOL IS NOT IN SESSION ON THIS DAY.**
- **GRADES 10 & 12 WILL HAVE CLASS AS NORMALLY SCHEDULED ON WIS CAMPUS.**
- **FOR EARLY YEARS, SCHOOL CONTINUES AS SCHEDULED ON WIS CAMPUS.**

Parents are invited to attend if they wish.

Staff not teaching Grade 10, 12, or Early Years will also be supervising.

All students are required to compete and participate in the competition.

WIS FISH EAGLE BONANZA

25 FEBRUARY 2023

**TIME : 07:00 TILL LATE
VENUE : MONTE-CHRISTO RIVERSIDE CAMPING**

WHAT TO EXPECT: **BIG PRIZES TO BE WON
VARIOUS STALLS FOR YOU TO SUPPORT
NO FOOD & DRINKS ALLOWED IN PARK
ALL FOOD & DRINKS TO BE BOUGHT FROM STALLS
PROCEEDS IN AID OF FUNDRAISING FOR SCHOOL
PRICE GIVING & DINNER
DINNER @ N\$150 P/PERSON
AUCTION IN AID FOR SCHOOL SPORT**

**FISH COMPETITION FEE : ADULT - N\$100-00
CHILD - N\$50-00**

CLOSING DATE FOR ENTERIES :15 FEB

**PARK FEE : @ N\$ 100 P/ADULT
@ N\$ 50 P/CHILD
(UNDER 12)**

**PARK AVAILABILITIES: CAMPSITES AVAILABLE @ N\$ 200 P/ADULT
@ N\$ 100 P/CHILD**

SHOULD YOU MAKE USE OF THE CAMP SITES, PARK FEES ARE FOR FREE

**CLOTHING: FISHING SHIRTS & BUFFS
TO BE ORDERED FROM HESTER
DEADLINE FOR ORDERS & PAYMENT : 03 FEB 2023**

SUPPORTED BY:



FOR ANY ADDITIONAL ENQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT HESTER @ 081 462 4572

WINDHOEK INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

INTERNATIONAL DAY

SAVE THE DATE!

11 MARCH 2023

14:00 - 18:30



SWATCH THIS SPACE FOR MORE INFO SOON!

Private Bag 16007, Pioneers Park, Windhoek | Schepmann Street, Pioneers Park EXT. 1, Windhoek

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