



Contents

- From the Director p. 1
- Primary News p. 1 - 4
- Secondary News p. 4 - 9
- Other News p. 10 - 11



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THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Priorities

The phrase 'New Normal' has become very familiar to us all over recent weeks. I actually saw somewhere a reference to the 'New Abnormal' and whoever wrote it had a point.

And if things are abnormal then so must be our responses.

The work we are setting your children to do at home is important. But still more important is their mental and emotional wellbeing and, indeed, yours.

So please put your health and that of your family first. If children miss this or that assignment, it probably doesn't matter. They can catch up content later. We are all under stress. There's no point in making things more stressful than they need to be.

There will be time enough after the lockdown to make up lost ground. The priority now is emerging from the current crisis still strong.

Stay safe.

Peter MacKenzie

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Remote Learning Check-In Conferences

Yesterday, a letter was sent to Primary School parents about the upcoming remote learning check-in conferences. These conferences will be an opportunity for parents and children to meet together with the homeroom teacher and specialist teachers via Google Meet or Zoom to have a conversation about the remote learning, the Learner Profile and ATL skills the children have shown. Included in the letter was the following link to sign up for the conference as well as to answer some questions in preparation for the conference: [Remote Learning Check-in Conference Sign-Up](#).

Mother's Day

Since Sunday is Mother's Day, I'll take this opportunity to thank all of the mothers (as well as the fathers and guardians) who have been supporting the Primary students during this process of remote learning. Your support is appreciated. Have a happy Mother's Day and may Sunday be a day of feeling special and celebrated.

Remote Learning Assemblies

Each week we are creating a remote learning assembly video where we include a presentation or two about work that classes or individuals have done, recognition of birthdays, Learner Profile nominations, as well as welcoming any new students and saying goodbye to students who are leaving. While it's not the same as being

together in the auditorium, it allows us to continue with our assembly traditions and being together remotely.

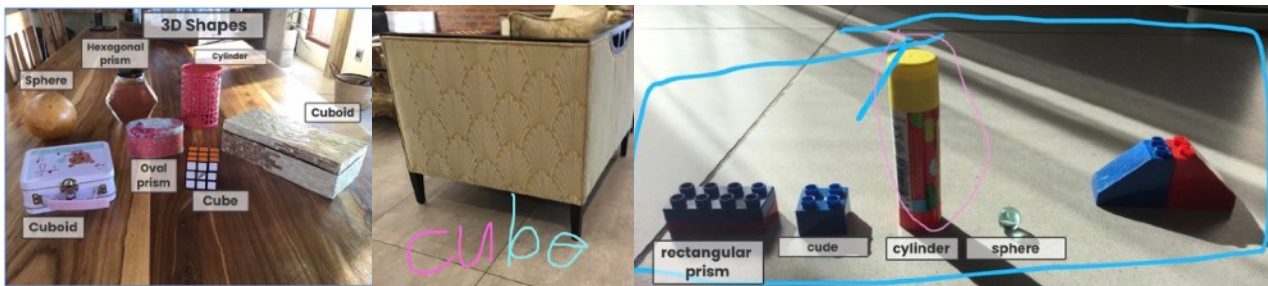
Here's the link for this [week's remote learning assembly](#).

In addition, here's a link to the [Grade 2 video dancing](#) to the song, "Twist Your Frown Upside Down" song. (It was too long to fit in the assembly video).

Regards,
Beth Smith

Grade 1 doing 3D Shapes

Grade 1 students have become 3D Shape Detectives!



Check out some of the shapes discovered by Maria, Jonathan, Elaina and Ezra. Look at the photos and click on this [link](#). How many can you find in your homes?

Ms. Debbie & Ms. Jan

PRIMARY ART

- GRADE 3s DESIGNED AND MADE THEIR OWN FACE MASKS for protection from CV. Click link to view their photos: [Grade 3 Face Mask Designs](#)
- WHAT DOES A CORONA VIRUS LOOK LIKE? GRADE 4 Created a Corona Virus to show us! WELL DONE!

Step 1: I wrapped a newspaper around a ball and taped it.

Step 2: I scrunched up newspapers to make balls and put them on sticks.

Step 3: I painted the ball and the small balls.

Step 4: I poked the small balls into the big ball.



LEFT:
Gizelle's colourful construction of a corona virus.



Cosmea and Mum with mask and the construction of a corona virus



Suhami's construction of a corona virus.

Shaheed's construction of a corona virus

Marketing WIS on Flipgrid

I am responsible for 22 students ranging in age from 5 to 11 and am the EAL teacher for Primary at WIS. That's English as an Additional Language. I'm really missing the physical interaction with my students and colleagues. Connection matters!

How has this experience benefited you as a teacher?

As a teacher, I have had to adapt and be flexible in acquiring new skills very quickly. This is no time for a traditional approach. I have become a facilitator of learning, exploring new spaces to design, meet, consult, and chat. I find I do more with less. Organisation is key as is discipline, routine, and consistency. Distraction is an enemy as are competing priorities and impulses at home. The need for fresh air, to move, get active, catch up on news, concerns considering and contemplating the well being of self and others.

I definitely think very carefully about what I teach and target lessons and goals that are realistic and measurable in the home environment. I have to consider the kind of support my students receive at home as English is not their mother tongue. Often parents have less expertise in the language of instruction and technology than their child. As a result, my classes are geared to support parents as well as students. It's online collaborative learning for everyone on board.

How has this experience benefited your students and what have they learned?

Evidence of learning and feedback is thin on the ground. Time will tell. Despite this, I believe that my students have had a lot of time to reflect and self-manage their own learning. They have free will and are able to make independent choices by selecting and deciding what it is that they are interested in learning more about and the individual effort and time that is put into it.

The ongoing challenge is for teaching and learning to be relevant, fun, and engaging and to include a blend of text, listening, reading, speaking, and writing that captures and sustains their attention and fuels the desire to learn more.

It's a reuse of existing approaches, known methods, and resources already in place. Like Seesaw, Edmodo, email, WhatsApp, Google classroom, Google Hangouts, Zoom, and Flipgrid.

PS. I used 'voice to typing' and had to make very few adjustments!

Kathleen Britz, Primary EAL teacher

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Teacher Appreciation Week - what do parents say?

We constantly reflect on what we do and how we do things. But, without the feedback from our stakeholders, we will not be able to take into consideration all the different perspectives that necessarily exist in our diverse community.

In the past weeks, we have had some feedback from parents and students about our approach to remote learning. It is interesting to see the different perceptions in our community about what remote learning should and could look like. I therefore want to use this opportunity to invite constructive and practical suggestions from our stakeholders that concur with current educational thinking and fits out school's Vision, Mission and Definition of Learning:

Our vision for the School

We aspire to be a World Class International School that provides an internationally accredited curriculum, high-quality facilities, and a diverse staff to prepare independent, inquiring and self-motivated citizens of the world.

Mission Statement

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.

WIS Definition of Learning

Learning at WIS is a journey of inquiring, discovering, and experimenting while developing understanding and acquiring new knowledge, skills and concepts. In the process the learner constructs meaning by making connections and applying these in daily life situations. The learner realises individual potential through continued reflection and exploration. The learning environment is multi-sensory, collaborative, enjoyable and encourages international-mindedness.

Your feedback is always sought and welcome to help us do as best a job as possible. Please feel free to send us your feedback.

Why connect this to Teacher Appreciation Week (4 - 8 May)?

I think our teachers have done a commendable effort and put a huge amount of energy into transitioning to remote learning. This process was not something that we had time to thoroughly prepare for and still, we have made great progress in the way we do things. I want to thank our teachers for this and know

**PRAISE
MAKES YOU
FEEL GOOD
CRITIQUE
MAKES YOU
BETTER**

POSITIVE AWESOME
WELCOMING ENGAGING
ENTHUSIASTIC
CARING HELPFUL
MOTIVATIONAL ENCOURAGING
SUPPORTIVE EXCITING PERSONAL
ENCOURAGING EASY TO TALK TO
FRIENDLY 
IMAGINATIVE

that many students and parents have realised through this experience in their own homes that our jobs are quite different to what the perception "out there" sometimes is of teachers' roles and responsibilities. Which of these apply to your teachers/your child's teachers?

I look forward to your feedback: mreiff@wis.edu.na

**Regards,
Maggie Reiff**

Grade 7 Fables

The Grade 7s are currently busy exploring and inquiring into fables. The students were tasked to write their own fable, using animals as characters, and to show a clear moral to the story. This is what some of our students came up with... and as Aesop did say "The level of our success is limited only by our imagination and no act of kindness, however small, is ever wasted."

Angie Janse van Rensburg

The greedy farmer

Long ago, a beautiful baby elephant was born in a forest. He was white in colour. All the elephants in the forest came to bless it. Soon he grew up. He was often sad to see that elephants his age were selfish, greedy, and cruel. Getting dismayed by all this he decided to leave the herd. He settled in a faraway forest and began to live a peaceful life, helping other animals. Soon he had many friends. One day a farmer got lost in the forest and he heard a noise, it was the white elephant. When he saw the white elephant he was filled with terror and started running, the elephant said: "Don't run, I won't hurt you." He stopped, then told him he was hungry and thirsty so the elephant took him to his home and then let him stay for one night after which he went home. One day in the market he asked a shopkeeper about the price of a piece "200" said the shopkeeper. "200, that's outrageous," said the farmer. The shopkeeper said that it was made of the tusk of a living elephant. The farmer thought that if he cut the tusks of the white elephant he would become rich. So the next day he went and said to the white elephant "I am in great debt can I cut your tusks". The elephant let the farmer cut his tusks. While going back the earth opened into two and then it swallowed the farmer with a voice that said: "those who hurt others for their own good are their own doom".

By Nipun Bisht Grade 7JM

The tree and the grass

Once upon a time, in a big forest, there was a huge tree. His trunk stood like a tower, and his roots were buried miles deep. But he was very kind. He gave shade to the little grass below, protecting them from the scorching sun; he allowed birds to make nests on him, while he enjoyed their beautiful songs. All the creatures in the forest like him.

Except for one. He is the little grass, growing under the ancient tree. He boasts to his friends that one day, he will grow as tall and mighty as the ancient tree. But, deep in his heart, he knew that his dream will never come true, for he is a grass, and grasses don't grow tall. So he envied the tree, the fire of hatred buried deep in his heart. But, there is nothing he can do.

Soon, one creature that the old tree had never seen through all his years - humans -arrived. They cut down trees, one by one, and their machines slowly moved into the heart of the forest. At last, they reached the might tree, and they decided to cut him down. Huge machines hummed as the saw sank deep into his ankles. Finally, with a final groan, he fell.

All the animals and plants in the forest are very sad, except for the small grass. He is very happy. Now, he can stand in the sun, not forever in the shadow of the great tree. He stretched his leaves to embrace the sun.

But, sadly, his dream wasn't long. Without the tree's protection, his nimble leaves can't resist the strong sunlight. Slowly and slowly, the water in him is drained out and his leaves start to roll. Then they turned yellow, falling off

one by one. At last, without one leaf left, he died.

Tiancheng He Grade 7JM

The butterfly and the bee

One day a butterfly was close to a valley filled with heathers. But the butterfly wasn't alone; there were thousands of bees around him, so the butterfly flew as fast as he could to get the best flower. But then as the butterfly arrived there were already five bees around the flower. So he flew to the next one and next one but everywhere were five to ten bees already in a flower. As the butterfly looked around he found one open flower.

He was racing to the heather but there was a small bee trying to feed himself. And so the bee invited the butterfly for a small lunch. From then on, the butterfly was always welcome to join any of the bees at any of the flowers.

Tolou Wolf Grade 7JM

A Siberian Tiger & Wolf

A Siberian tiger sitting next to a little goat that was just killed, and took a bite, this is of course not enough for him, but he still finished it. A wolf with its grey coat that's equipped for the cold weather hiding behind an oak tree.

The wolf mocked the tiger "Why would he mind that tiny thing?", he continued following the tiger from one prey to another. He had chances to kill the goat and ox before the tiger did, because he had better sight, from one prey to another the wolf said: "That's not enough for me, that's not."

The sun began to set, it's dark. The only visible aspect was the wolf's eyes, something more than just its gazes, it was starving. While the tiger was full and satisfied.

... Don't neglect any fragments that benefits, once it's put together, it will be enough, don't be greedy...

Nijia Yang Grade 7LC

The cheeky little squirrel

Once in a small garden, there was the wise old turtle named Squirtle, the five frogs who shared the pond with the 7 ducks, the squirrels living in the trees everything was peaceful, and everyone living in harmony. Until a cheeky squirrel named Jenobi, he would always cause trouble for the other animals in the garden, messing up other people's houses, stealing their food, and keeping everyone up in the middle of the night. So one night the other animals got tired of Jenobi's pranks, so in the night while he was sleeping the frogs ate all his fireflies, the other squirrels took his nuts and hid them in their houses, and the ducks made noise so he couldn't sleep. Jenobi realised what he had done wrong, he then apologised to everyone in the garden. Then they lived in perfect harmony.

Alweendo Iyambo Grade 7LC

The unbeatable cheetah and the leopard

Once upon a time, there was a cheetah named Keaton and a leopard named Zabú who was like a brother to Keaton, but Keaton was always a faster runner than Zabú. They lived in a huge community of animals, where Keaton was the fastest runner. Keaton won every race he ran, but Zabú was always among the slowest, considering the fact he started running 2 years after everyone else. As the years went by, Zabú started climbing up on the list and closing the gap between him and Keaton. Zabú then started coming in second and so the competition started to get harder, and so Keaton started to remember when his dad told him "there will always be someone faster and better than you, and when that happens all you can do is try your best", but Keaton got angry and told himself he can't be beaten. One day Keaton, Zabú, and the rest of the really good runners heard about an international running tournament, so they traveled there. Keaton had never seen such fast runners. He remembered how hard he had been training and thought that no one would ever beat him. He finished the competition, with tremendous improvements in time but he still placed second to Zabú.

Kgosi Hekandjo Grade 7LC

Grade 10 English

The grade 10 English class had to write a story about an object that has some importance to their family. It was a two week project and some wonderful stories came to light. This is one of them and was written by **Ransom Atud**.

Important object story

"War will always lead to peace, and peace will always lead to war." By Ransome I

" Even the ageless Timber tree will lay down flat one day. " By Atud Serah

The Fang Necklace of Peace

Dad made it clear that when speaking of my village the word 'soil' should never be omitted, as that is where we originate from, not the name given to it. He says the word 'soil' is very important when naming where you come from, when speaking of your ancestors. The word honours your ancestors and remains true as to where your origins lay.

I have spent most of my childhood in my village of origin. I learned principles and discipline there. I learned life is not fair there. I learned money doesn't feed a man there. I learned "don't give another man a job you can't do by yourself," there, an ideology both my grandfather and father share. My grandfather has always been known as a great man, the man who knew it all and did it all. He was a well-respected man, a man who followed many rules, "rules make a boy a man, and a girl a woman". "He cited this at any chance he got", my grandmother would tell me as we discussed in those chilly evenings under the kind and huge timber tree, below a night sky full of light, a sky full of souls, hope, love, life, a sky full of stars. "Your grandfather was a great man", that's all I hear from anyone past the age of fifty, from anyone that knew him, from the people who grew up with him. My grandfather is known by everyone as a warrior that lived and died a warrior.

"A warrior is expected to kill a beast and bring it back to the king of the soil", a quote my Grandmother told me several years ago when she still lived; the time I spoke to her of my aspirations to become a soldier in the modern world. She said men who aspired to be warriors had to prove their strength. They had to prove worthy "not only to the king of the soil but the soil itself, the people".

My grandmother spoke of things I never quite understood at such an age, things I might never understand. There are times I wonder if she expected me to grasp her then aged expressions, her thoughts, grief and even regrets. My grandmother told me everything, things she perhaps knew I did not understand, a boy too young to know, much less understand. I did not understand the concepts and ideas she conveyed, but I understood her words of grief or rejoice, whichever she felt, I did it with her. I vividly recall our conversations, our private sessions behind her finely aged house, under the imposing timber tree, which served as shade even in times of rain. She loved the rain. Most people her age don't, she did. It was her favourite time to go under the tree that "lived through her generation, and knows her ancestors", another quote she would cite looking straight up at the aged tree with prideful eyes as we walked towards the tree's ginormous existence. "I am the first son of her first son. The family sun."

The necklace has been in our family for more than seven decades. Its first owner was my grandfather, Atud Chick Ransom, who asked that I, Atud Abicham Ransom II, be the one to own it after he falls eternally asleep, reuniting with his ancestors. I was born on the same day my grandfather died. He gave me the name Ransom the day before I was born, which means 'one for another' and Abicham, which means 'heartless warrior'. My grandfather was a 'soul stone' the name given to Warriors of the land of Batibo, my home soil. He was known for having killed a lion and bringing back its skin to the soil. The lion's skin is still present in the palace today. My grandfather made a necklace from the lion's fangs and named it in my dialect 'Fang of peace'. He said the necklace was taken from the king of the Savannah but the king of the Savannah was not taken from the necklace, meaning the necklace is still part of the lion, in other words, the lion still resides in the necklace. My grandfather said, "only the first son of his son should inherit the necklace or the lion's anger before death will act out," if his first grandson gets the necklace the lion's power will bring peace to his family.

My grandmother believed in the necklace and made sure her husband's dying wish came true. She believed all my grandfather had said. I don't blame her. It was their time, it's all they ever knew. I only ever knew my grandfather through my grandmother. She told me stories of his battles and all the red that comes with it, "A battle of warriors is full of red and black, black after one is gone, whatever is left of the one gone is given back to the land where he originates from, where he is destined to return." Her stories of my grandfather were never sad, at least they were never made to sound sad, as all warriors choose to end that way; they were destined to live that life.

My grandmother gave me the necklace when I was 10. The first thing I noticed was the structure of the necklace and the irritating feeling it radiated. The necklace was pale-white with black Tiger-like stripes going all around it in a single intentional row, with a pack of eight fang-like artefacts with writings and symbols engraved in every single one of them hanging off the main rope, which gave the necklace a rather sinister look, an old look, a dangerous look. There were three main bigger fangs among smaller ones, the biggest one in the middle and two smaller ones at each end of the hanging fangs. This made the necklace look like the innards of an apex predator's mouth adding on to the necklace's sinister look. The old necklace smelled like roasting metal though no metal was used in its production. If you sniffed hard enough you got a dash of clay in its nose stingingly disturbing aroma at the end of each augmented sniff. You could smell its age. The necklace felt rather smooth in contrast to its look and pungent smell, the smoothness kept up all around the necklace except the areas with writings and symbols, where it gained a gravel-like sensation beneath your fingers. The necklace is a symbol of peace but looks like the incarnation of anger.

There were times when I looked at the necklace and it seemed to stare right back at me, a peace necklace that radiates nothing but fear. The necklace is covered in 'peace' but if you dig deeper into the necklace's dark core it's full of evil, remnants of the animal's pain, anger and hatred towards anything of the human bloodline. The way lions are killed, the way they suffer before their souls leave their bodies, remains in what's left of their once Majestic selves, Rage. "The necklace was taken from the king of the Savannah but the king of the Savannah was not taken from the necklace". A warrior wears the necklace of 'peace' (rage) to fight for peace, but the necklace wants no peace, its rage feeds the warrior's courage aiding them fight blood sucked battles*. I am not a warrior, the lion's soul can rest in peace.

**Lions are pierced several times with long thin spears aiming for their internal organs except the heart, the warrior wants the creature to bleed till death, to feel every stab, to roar till it chokes. The lion must hate and suffer before death.*

Fact: no lions remain in my land of origin.

E-learning / Remote learning

GERMAN - Foreign Language

I am introducing " **Ticket to Berlin - the adventure game show!** " to our Grade 8, 9 and 10 German learners.



Six young learners of German embark on a turbulent journey through Germany. The participants originally come from 6 different countries. Whether wakeboarding or kitchen battle: many challenges await the candidates! **For each of the 19 episodes there are interactive exercises as well as tasks on vocabulary, grammar and regional studies.**

The feedback from my students is very positive! It is fun to watch and you learn a lot about Germany and the German language.

<https://www.dw.com/de/deutsch-lernen/ticket-nach-berlin/s-32294>



W.O.R.D.
Taboka Takawira in Grade 8 is reading for WORD during remote learning!



WIS 30th Birthday Gala

Thank you to our sponsors!

If you would like to get involved contact Beata Stephanus (bstephanus@wis.edu.na) or Jaqueline Ferreira (jferreira@wis.edu.na).



WIS Birthday Gala Dinner

30

5 December 2020

19:30 for 20:00

RSVP by 27 November 2020

Business Casual

ADULTS ONLY - N\$500.00PP

Buffet Dinner

Cash Bar

**All proceeds will go to the development of the
new sports courts.**

