



THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

FROM THE DIRECTOR

"Equal" or "Fair"?

Bear with me while I share with you a brief anecdote.

In a school in Tanzania a dozen years ago the issue of health insurance for teachers had become an issue. The school provided health insurance for its teachers within Tanzania but also when they went home once a year. Some teachers came from Europe or Australia or New Zealand or wherever. Others came from the USA. And that was the problem.

To give a Dutch teacher full coverage when she visited her family in the Netherlands cost X. But to give the same coverage to an American teacher spending time in the USA cost a great deal more – maybe even 2X.

The debate was about "fairness". (Which is usually a bad place to start.)

One argument was that it was only "fair" for the school to spend the same amount on each teacher. The other argument was that it was only "fair" for the school to provide the same level of health insurance to everyone. But the two were mutually exclusive.

Equal money = different levels of coverage.
Equal levels of coverage = different amounts of money spent per teacher.

Perhaps the above will help to put into context another school problem that we wrestle with every day. Obviously, we should (and I hope we do) treat all learners equally. We also try to be fair. But what if there are circumstances when it is hard or even impossible to be both "fair" and "equal"? (And let's not even get into what different people would consider "fair".)

I hope it is reassuring to hear that teachers face such dilemmas often and learn to navigate these dangerous waters. That isn't to say that parents invariably agree with every decision we make but please understand that decisions are never arbitrary or taken without a great deal of thought.

But it's not easy. A bit like being a parent, I suppose...

Peter MacKenzie

Beth Smith

Please note that Beth Smith, Primary Principal, is unwell and will be out of school next week. In her absence, please bring matters to the Director, Mr. MacKenzie.

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Dates to Remember

February 2018

- **12 - 16:** Book Week
- **16:** Braai, Bagpipes & Bar Party - Starts @ 18:00
- **20:** IBDP/IGCSE - Info session (7:30 - 9:00)
- **20:** UBC Representative visiting (18:00)
- **28:** SPTC details TBC

March 2018

- **1:** PSLC - Details TBC
- **2:** Secondary Sports Day
- **2:** End of term 3

WEEKLY PUZZLER

This week we received two correct answers, both solvers going by the name of Anonymous. Well done!

Now onto the new puzzler. The value of an antique coin is related to its age. Coins have historically shown the year in which they were minted, making it easy to determine the age. In our scenario a coin with the year 1400 AD is worth \$100. A coin with the year 1200 AD is worth \$120. A coin with the year 800 AD is worth \$160.

Can you determine how much a coin with the year 200 BC would be worth?

Please send your solution, or any interesting puzzlers, to pfarrell@wis.edu.na



PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Next week we are celebrating Book Week. There are many activities planned throughout the week. It's a celebration of reading and interacting with books. This year's theme of Mother Tongue Languages highlights the importance and value of reading and being read to in one's mother tongue, the language which a person has grown up speaking from early childhood. Many of our children are studying in English but at home speak another language or two. While it's important to keep up with the reading in English, it's equally important for children to keep up with reading in their mother tongue language, Encouraging your child to read and to develop a love of reading is one of the best things you can do to help your child academically.

*Regards,
Beth Smith*

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Exams, the good and the bad

Examinations are a necessary feature in any educational system. However, how useful are they? Do they really serve a purpose and what is their real purpose?

We have just been through the annual exercise of the mock examination. As the name says, it is a trial. The purpose is mainly to have an idea what is in store in the final examination. It does, however, also give students an idea of areas that still need to be worked on. I would like to suggest that this is the spirit in which the Mock Examination reports should be read as well. Today, these reports will be sent to parents. Teachers take a lot of time to write extensive and detailed comments on these exams. It is a good exercise to go through the comments and try to plan the study and revision schedule in the different subjects accordingly. Rather than using these reports as a tool to put more pressure on the children, we should use them as guidelines to help students work on preparing for their final examination.



During lessons following the mock examination, teachers will have gone through these examinations thoroughly. Once again, this is an exercise that should have been meaningful for students to get an idea on areas they need to work on in preparation for the final examination.

How useful are exams in the non-examination grades though? Often, the main comment of students moving into Secondary School is that they are anxious to write exams. And sometimes the idea of learning ends up to be narrowed down to - learning for tests and exams. That should not be the case. In examination courses - IGCSE and the IBDP, yes, students need to be prepared to be able to manage time and organise themselves to cope with the examination. But in the lower years, the main focus should not be exams.

In the past months, and in moving more towards a more current approach to Teaching and Learning, we have realised that we need to review this practice of writing exams

right through Secondary School. We have come to the conclusion that we don't want to put our Year 7s through this stress already. They should be given the opportunity to transfer to Secondary School in a way that is not determined mainly by the idea of tests and exams. This pressure comes early enough, but when moving to Secondary School, there are already so many new and challenging things. Maybe leaving out the idea of having an exam at the end of the year can help make the transition a little less daunting. We will then gradually introduce students into the habit of exams. In Year 8, students will be writing exams, but not in all their subjects. And then in Year 9, students will have a full examination at the end of the year.

All this tries to ensure that we can use our time in the classroom more effectively and that the focus moves away from purely "exam and test preparation". We would welcome your comments on this topic. It is something, once again, that is quite out of the ordinary, but we feel it will make a positive difference to our Teaching and Learning in Secondary School.

Regards,
Maggie Reiff

EARLY CLOSING on WEDNESDAY 21st FEBRUARY

Something we have done – and will only ever do – very infrequently is close the school early for staff training. But we have run out of scheduled professional development days for the current school year and we do need to have a couple of hours with all teaching staff before the end of February.

Please be advised, therefore, that on **Wednesday 21st February** all classes will end at 13:30. All classes up to and including Year 9 would in any case finish at 13:30 but on this day Years 10 to 13 will also be dismissed at 13:30.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Peter MacKenzie, Director

WIS Model United Nations

The Model United Nations (MUN) is an after-school activity revolving around an educational simulation of the real United Nations. This rigorous yet fun activity refines people, moulding them with the mannerisms of politicians, diplomats and lawyers.

In addition to learning to persuade and "win people over" MUN also baptises its participants with two vital arts: the ability to speak comfortably and confidently in the presence of a large audience and the art of using critical thinking to forge creative solutions to solve complicated real world issues.

In MUN, students are appointed as Delegates of predetermined countries in Committees of the United Nations, where they are expected to fiercely defend their country's standpoint, forge alliances and try resolve international issues in debates. The WIS MUN Club teaches its members everything that they need to be a good Delegate- everything from Parliamentary Procedure (rules of an MUN conference) to writing Resolutions & Amendments (proposed solutions to real world problems), as well as conducting research and how to be effective at public debate.





The best part about being a Member of the WIS MUN Club? You get to travel abroad and represent the School in MUN Conferences! At the moment we are preparing for the Change the World MUN Conference which will be held in Barcelona this April. We will also attend the Johannesburg MUN Conference at the American International School of Johannesburg later this year as well. In the future, we hope to attend more international conferences.

Anyone can join MUN. We meet after school on Mondays from 14:30-15:30 in Room 66 . Ms. Vogelaar and Mr. Rishchynski help to run the club and a wide range of students from across Middle and Secondary School take part every week. If you have ever wanted to work on your public speaking skills, or learn more about world events or just passionately debate your class-mates, we recommend that you stop by and see what the club is all about!

Aaditya Pillai, Year 12

Volleyball for all Tournament

The eagerly awaited annual Volleyball for All tournament, hosted at DTS, has become a hugely exciting and fun day of sports that is a permanent fixture on the annual Windhoek sports calendar. Three teams from WIS were among the 240 teams competing on the day for the coveted title of 'VB for All 2018 Champions'. All of our teams performed well with our staff team once again getting to (but sadly not beyond) the last 16 in the K.O. phase of the competition.

We look forward to seeing even more participants from the WIS community next year.



Mr Jackson-Read

CAS Project Continued...

First and foremost we would like to inform all the Oryx readers that not only are we working with the Year 4 class of Ms Kirstin Hildebrandt but also the class of Mrs. Charné De'Ath. We would like to say a special thank you to these two teachers for all their help and allowing us to work with their class as this project would not have been possible without them!



On Monday 29th January we completed the first major stage of our CAS project. Not only did we do a short presentation, but we also planted the seeds of the plants we were going to plant in our future redesigned garden. This lasted from 7:30 am to 9:05 am.

The aim of our presentation was to give the students an idea of what they will be doing on that day as well as the planting day itself. Our presentation explained to them: why water is important, how one can reduce the amount of water he or she uses, how our garden was going to run on water conservation methods as well as what they will be doing today. We also incorporated a few things from their syllabus to make it more relatable.



Going into the class (we are not going to lie) we were nervous to present in front of these small children. However, that soon disappeared as the children got more and more excited! The level of engagement between the younger students and us made us forget that we were actually presenting. Hands raised from all corners of the classrooms as we presented. All the students seemed really engaged and loved what our CAS project was about.

After our presentation we split into four groups and began to plant the seeds into egg cartons. The students were paired up and had to fill their egg cartons with soil, plant the seed as well as spray their new plants with water.

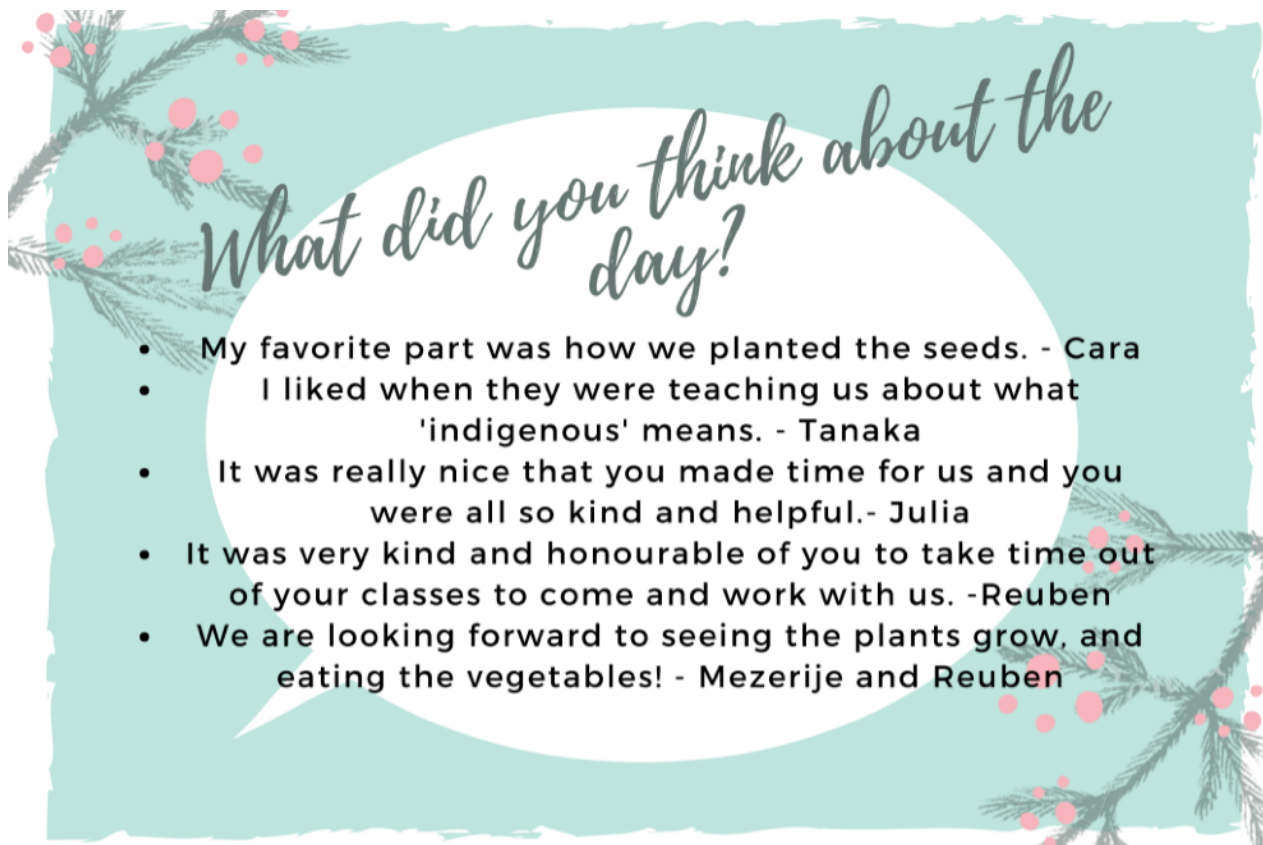
We planted seeds such as carrots, kale, sunflowers, indigenous Namibian flowers as well as many more! Working with the younger children was surprisingly easy. All of them behaved so well and listened to everything we had to say!

We hope the children had fun and we believe it is important to educate the younger students of the school on the importance of water conservation as the earth is in their hands in the future. We hope they enjoyed the experience and we look forward to working with them on 27th February with Mr. Fabian, where their seedlings will be transferred to the garden. This will give them the opportunity to watch their plants grow as their school year continues.



The next step of our CAS project will be to find sponsors and to have meetings to discuss the design of the garden. If you are interested in participating in this CAS project do email us at: hashraf@wis.edu.na. We will keep you updated on the progress of our project.

Here's what some of the kids thought about the day!



Ashraf, Gabie, Kyle and Leart

Donations to the North

WIS received a letter from a lady named Klaudia who wanted to help a school she schooled at. She decided to do this because she saw that the students were struggling and did not have enough resources and she didn't want to wait for the government to do something. She also attended this school.

The school's name is Omaandi Combined School in the North and it has grade 1-10. She informed us that some students have to walk long distances to get to school and they sometimes come to school on an empty stomach due to being less fortunate.

She asked the school if we could donate some materials for the school such as story books, reading books, learning books from Grade 1-10 and other stationary and school supplies. Each class was asked to donate specific items.



As a school we were able to donate 16 boxes that included games, books, stationery, puzzles, lunch boxes, water bottles and other miscellaneous stuff.

This was coordinated by the Primary, Middle School and Secondary Student Councils.

We are happy that we had the opportunity to host this book drive and are satisfied with our outcome.

Olivia Shino



Braai, Bagpipes & Bar Party!

Image by: Chris Parkes

You are invited to a fun family evening

DATE: Friday, 16 February 2018
TIME: 18:00 until late
PLACE: WIS Campus

WHAT TO BRING?
Bring a picnic basket or Braai supplies!

WHO CAN COME?
You and your whole family!
The PTA will open the PLC kitchen...
AND
Ross OC Jennings, The First Piper will entertain us with his magical bagpipes!

COME AND RELAX, HAVE FUN AND ENJOY THE EVENING WITH US!



W I S
WINDHOEK INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

WIS Bazaar Flyer

The PTA Raffle

The PTA Raffle Team is busy gathering fantastic, adventurous prizes, family prizes, surprising prizes, prizes to relax you, prizes to spoil you or someone you care about.

Prizes that will take you to places, prizes that will delight you



In March, your Raffle Book will be delivered to your family.

BE PART OF THE ADVENTURE

SUPPORT THE PTA RAFFLE & Stand a chance to win.

A BIG THANK YOU ,TO OUR SPONSORS BELOW.



PROUD SPONSORS

WIS

PTA RAFFLE





Book week - 12th - 16th February 2018

Dear parents

This year Book week at WIS, will be held from the 12th until the 16th February. The theme will focus on: [Mother Tongue languages](#). This year we will be celebrating our diverse languages and cultures. So **students and parents** are encouraged to share books and stories from their own culture and mother tongue. There will be a sign up sheet for parents on the blogs if you would like to visit classes and share your stories.

Other activities and events planned for the week:

- Year 8 students will be performing their version of the "Gruffalo", for students from KG 1 through to Year 2.
- Drop and read times in the classroom - reading for enjoyment.
- Students sharing books and stories from their culture and language.
- "Reading Thatch" - where students and teachers can read together at break times.
- Donate a book - if you have books to donate for schools less fortunate than us then a book box will be available in the library.
 - Valentine's Wednesday - Learner Profile: **Caring the** focus in class is to make a card or a letter for a friend. Please no gifts, flowers etc. But students are encouraged to wear **red/pink** that day.
 - Teachers are planning lots of fun literacy based activities in class.
 - Friday - Reading River - all staff and students will meet on our central pathway for 15 minutes reading - connecting our school together (09:30 am)
- **FINALLY on Friday - there will be a dress up book parade: Please dress up as your favourite character from a book of your culture/mother tongue. Bring the book along to walk with. Venue: small sports field at: 7:50 am.**



Thank you

We look forward to your enjoyment and input.

Kind regards

Primary Student Council





Ssshhhhhh!

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Kunshuis Graphic designs' *Valentine!*

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<p><i>tweet tweet!</i> YOU'RE SWEET!</p>  <p><i>Happy Valentine Day</i></p>	<p><i>I love</i> HANGING <i>with you!</i></p>  <p><i>Happy Valentine Day</i></p>	<p><i>My Love is</i> UNCONDITIONAL</p>  <p><i>Happy Valentine Day</i></p>	<p>I HERD <i>it's Valentine's Day!</i></p>  <p><i>Happy Valentine Day</i></p>
<p>NO BUNNY <i>compares!</i></p>  <p><i>Happy Valentine Day</i></p>		<p><i>You are</i> TOADALLY <i>awesome!</i></p>  <p><i>Happy Valentine Day</i></p>	<p>I'D SPEND <i>all 9 lives</i> WITH YOU!</p>  <p><i>Happy Valentine Day</i></p>
<p><i>I am</i>WILD <i>ABOUT you!</i></p>  <p><i>Happy Valentine Day</i></p>	<p>OWL BE <i>your Valentine</i></p>  <p><i>Happy Valentine Day</i></p>	<p><i>You are</i> UNFORGETTABLE!</p>  <p><i>Happy Valentine Day</i></p>	<p><i>Nice</i>ASS!</p>  <p><i>Happy Valentine Day</i></p>

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All order must be in my Monday 12 February 2018

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