Term 1 Week 5

4 March 2016

REAL Science

For the year 2016, Term 1 has begun with a great deal of enthusiasm and engagement by the students at our school. We have spent the first 3 weeks talking about what they want the teaching of science to look like, feel like and sound like. After brainstorming this together and talking about some of their suggestions, I then designed my Personal goal.

My Personal Goal for Teaching Science in 2016

"I want my students to learn in a safe, happy, relaxed and inspired atmosphere, where they have a greater choice and voice over what and how they go about their learning of science. To create an environment of JOYFUL learning."

The primary classes then moved on to talk about character strengths and how they can be used to support their attitude towards their learning and everyday choices that they have to make. To help them understand what a character strength is we got into smaller groups and made butter by pouring cream into a jar until it was half full, putting the lid on it and then working together as a team they shook the cream until it changed from cream into butter, where the butter milk had to separate from the butter. When asked what character strengths they needed to use in order to finally produce the butter, words such as patience, tolerance, persistence, perseverance and teamwork came from the discussion. These are all great strengths of character that we all need to practice throughout our everyday lives, both at school and at home. From these discussions the students then had to write their own personal goals about their attitude towards their learning of science for this year. These will be revisited and changed as they feel they are achieving their goals.

The JP Classes have also been talking about their attitude, and I have used a couple of my favourite childhood stories to get them focussed on developing a growth mindset towards their learning in science. The two stories we read and based our discussions around were "The Little Engine That Could" and "The Hare and the Tortoise". If you hear your child saying "I think I can, I think I can...... ", when trying new things, then please encourage them to have a try and let them know that it is ok to make mistakes as long as we learn from them and keep on trying.

The benefits from spending time with each class on their “growth mindsets”, has built a strong foundation for their learning in science this year. We have now begun our learning in the strand of Biology.

Other things that have been set up this term are the Vertical Garden outside of the JP Building and the Butterfly Garden down near the JP playground equipment. Thank you to the Primary Rainbow class for your enthusiastic help with planting the plants and to Steve for setting up the watering system and a big thank you to Liam and Madelaines’ grandparents for propagating some seedlings for our caterpillars to eat from once they have grown and established a bit more.

Karen Hill (Science Teacher)
Junior Primary Rainbow – Room 4

In the JP Rainbow Class some of the children have been learning and practicing their Jolly Phonics Sounds. They have done various activities to help them practice the sounds, e.g. writing on the whiteboard, smartboard, reading jolly phonics cards and doing activities in their books.

Others have been enjoying working on their “Spelling” words and writing sentences for these spelling words. They have also been enjoying making their Spelling words out of Lego letters, writing them on the white board, smart board and outside with chalk. The Spelling groups have also had some practice typing these words on the computers and becoming more confident using the computers e.g. how to change colour, size, font and some are printing and getting print out independently!

JP Rainbow class have also been practicing their “reflective writing” skills each Monday. Thank you to all the parents who have been writing what they did on the weekend to help us help them remember what they did on the weekend. This really helps them understand how to reflect and what weekend writing is all about. Some of the children have become totally independent with writing their weekend reflective pieces (without a visual guide sheet). Others are still practicing using the visual guide sheet to help them think of what to write for their reflection, but are becoming much more confident with each reflective writing session.

Furthermore, the children have been practicing writing factual points in History. Which involves them remembering certain facts about the “History of Communication” and recording them. We have been very impressed as to how independent the children have become with their writing.

This term the Jolly Phonics Wave are focusing on letter sounds using the Jolly Phonics program. This program teaches children to read and write through a synthetic phonics program. This means the children are taught the main 42 sounds of English, not just the alphabet. This program helps the children remember the sound by connecting an action, sound and letter together. So far we are able to identify the following sounds; s, a, t, i, p, n, c, k, e, h, r.

We begin our session by reviewing the sounds we already know, we then introduce our new ‘sound of the day’. We look at a picture and listen to a story while trying to identify as many things as we can that has the new sound in it. We practice the action while repeating the sound before playing a quick game to help us remember the sound and action.

This week we began making words with these sounds on whiteboards using magnetic letters. We are beginning to blend sounds together to make familiar words.

Reception – Room 7

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The students in room 8 have had a successful and smooth start to the year. They have coped with the swapping and changing of teachers for literacy beautifully. The Reception students in particular have been amazing at coping with this change. During Reading for Learning time all the Reception students plus a few others from the class go to Ms Lade to Jolly Phonics and while the remainder of the class go to Miss Pilla or Hayley. You may have noticed that your child has been bringing home their Jolly Phonics books, sight words and or spelling words. Please support your child by just spending a few minutes each day helping them to practise these as this helps to consolidate their understanding.

Recount writing has also been a focus for this term. The Reception students have been doing lots of oral recounts, while the rest of the students have been trying to write their own sentence using the main features of who, what, when and where. We have been writing about things they do on the weekend plus using the events they have taken part in to form their recount writing, such as Athletics, Hip-Hop performance and the Police Safety visit. The students have been using the days of the week and dates as part of their writing.

Students have been taking part in our Integrated Activity Wheel during the week in our class. These sessions allow students to consolidate the learning they have been doing in their wave groups and continue to practise their skills in handwriting, spelling, sound recognition and sight words in a fun and interesting ways. You’ll see in our photos pictures of students forming letters with natural materials, putting counters underneath the sounds they can hear in the words and learning to blend letters they have learnt together.

What a busy but exciting start to 2016! Our Reading for Learning program is now in full swing, and Miss Pilla’s Beginner Learner Wave are mastering the use of common digraphs in words (such as sh, ch and th), as well as use of both upper and lower case letters. Using Jolly Grammar 1 as our foundation, we have been building up some new and familiar concepts this week. There has been strong focus on sentence structure, and inclusion of basic punctuation marks, as well as completing ‘word sorts’ and spelling activities to enhance vocabulary. In a word sort, children are expected the sort words into 2 or more groups, basing their decisions on common features in words. For example, ‘th’ words might be sorted into words that end in ‘th’ (moth), words that begin with ‘th’ (think), and words with ‘th’ in the middle (brother). They make their own decisions and then explain their reasoning afterwards.

We tackle the Big 6 each morning and the stations cover a wide range of literacy skills, including iPads and technology, spelling, vocab, reading, sentence writing, phonics and grammar.

Spelling lists that reflect our focus sounds are being sent home each week so students can work on these words at home, in addition to having our Thursday morning spelling session.

In Recount genre writing time, students are aiming to improve and extend their sentences by adding more information, detail and grammar. Students have been writing terrific weekend recounts, and are now beginning to self-edit their work at the end of a writing session. They are currently learning to use different coloured hi-lighters to identify their capital letters, full stops and spelling errors. When an obvious spelling error has been made, or a letter has been written backwards or omitted altogether, children are encouraged to have another go at these words and make minor improvements on their own or with a peer. Soon, we will also introduce writing checklists at the start of each lesson, to ensure all students include key features in their writing. This will slightly change each lesson, but often includes punctuation, finger spaces, grammar, adjectives, “wow” words (technical language), careful letter formation, and taking risks with new sight words.
Miss Pilla’s Beginner Learner wave group – working on the ‘Big Six’ in their small group stations

SCIENCE GARDENS
Room 8 students forming letters with natural materials, putting counters underneath the sounds they can hear in the words and learning to blend letters they have learnt together.

Luke and Holly building sentences

Malachi making a powerpoint

Room 4
This term, the year 2s, 3s and 4s attend daily ‘shared reading’ sessions focusing on exposition texts (persuasive writing). Our topic for the term as a collective group is ‘Should students use ipads at school?’ In Room 5 genre writing lessons, students are continuing their learning about persuasive writing with a focus on ‘Junk food should be banned at school.’

We are following the Designing, Teaching and Learning Cycle which is a teaching method used to scaffold genre writing. Scaffolding moves students from being highly supported in the learning process to becoming independent.

In Room 5, we are currently in the ‘Setting the Context and Building the Field’ stage. After defining the meaning of ‘junk food’, students drew and labelled their favourite junk food and drinks and as a class, we sorted the examples into categories. This activity built interest and enthusiasm about the topic and began developing topic specific vocabulary which students will need to use in their writing later this term. In groups, students brainstormed what they believe to be the ‘pros’ and ‘cons’ of junk food.

This year in the Primary Rainbow Class we have changed our Literacy station activities. All students now complete their spellings and handwriting tasks independently and then they move onto their genre writing activity. This term, so far, we have been looking at recounts. Students have been learning that the beginning of their recount must contain the ‘who, what, where, when and why’ details. We have been reading recounts, listening to recounts and writing our own recounts. After our spellings and genre activities we split into three groups to do either Reading Eggs, Guided Reading or making an iMovie. The iMovie is a new activity for all of us but we have been having great fun writing, directing and acting in several movie trailers. As we learn more about the iMovie app we will move onto writing short movies which we will then film in our small groups.

During our literacy learning we have also been studying pictures of emotions, first we verbalise which emotion we think is being shown and why we think that and then we write sentences about that emotion, this task has been continued in our health lessons where we are learning how to read body language which can help us to understand the feelings of others even when they do not say anything.

We have continued on with our yellow box comprehension activities which are a firm favourite with all the students as well as our Jolly Grammar and Jolly Phonics learning. We have been playing sentence building games making both silly sentences and sensible sentences. These games help us with sentence construction as well as grammar and punctuation. We have also been playing oral language barrier games which need us to speak clearly and concisely in order to direct our partner to certain points in a picture.
What a busy but exciting start to the year in Room 13. As of last week all our Literacy programs are up and running.

There are three mains areas of our Literacy this year in primary- Spelling, Reading for Learning Shared Learning and Reading for Learning Wave Intervention.

Cassie has outlined our new approach to spelling in her section. This new layout will take place in all primary classes and give the students a chance to fix any misconceptions with spelling patterns and at the same time learn new methods and strategies. Room 13 spend 10-15 minutes a day on spelling completing an activity using their spelling words. I look forward to seeing the students spelling not only improve in the Friday test but also take this across to all subject areas.

Our Reading for Learning Shared time has the genre focus on Narrative and Exposition, this links in well to preparation and revision for NAPLAN next term. This year we have taken on the focus on historical narratives and the students choose the topic Ancient Egypt. It was great to have a primary source of information from Clare the students thoroughly enjoyed it. As most students are familiar with structure of a narrative we are focusing on expanding their vocabulary and also their understanding of figurative language. I look forward to reading their narratives at the end of the term.

Finally Wave Intervention, this year I again have wave 1.5, most of the students in my wave are familiar with different language concepts such as synonyms and alliteration, however cannot transfer this learning across to extended writing tasks or other subjects. We will be having a large focus this term on building vocabulary and comprehension through our guided reading text, oral language adding expression to our reading and also on extended writing tasks to ensure our knowledge of language features transfers across to our writing.

I look forward to sharing your student’s data from the end of last year and their progress this year at our 3 way interviews next week.
As of last week, our literacy program is completely up and running! The first 4 weeks of term allowed for the primary years staff to undertake a range of data collection on students and get to know the new students in our class. You may notice a change in our spelling program this year for all primary years students including the Primary Rainbow students. This is a result of some recent training which staff attended in late 2015 and several discussions amongst staff around ways in which students learn to spell effectively.

Each child in the primary years and Primary Rainbow class has their own individualised program set for the next two terms. Students have been given their data and know what they need to do in order to move through the stages of spelling. These stages include:

1. **High frequency words.**
2. **High frequency letter patterns e.g. night, fright, light etc.**
3. **High frequency morphological elements e.g. affixes, compound words etc.**
4. **Errors from own writing.**
5. **Interest words from students.**
6. **Tier 3 words e.g. scientific words or topic specific words.**

In order for all students to make progress, students will be undertaking 10-15 minutes of targeted spelling lessons each day throughout the week.

As a point of interest, there is often the debate around the importance of spending time working on the skills of handwriting when our world is moving further into the use of technology. Interestingly enough, studies have shown that neat and legible handwriting has a close link with being a good speller. Automaticity, legibility and fluency of handwriting all assist in becoming a good speller!

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### Road Crossing – weeks 4-11, Term 1

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