This term in science all of the students are focusing on aspects of the science of Physics.

A definition for Physics is the branch of science concerned with the nature and properties of matter and energy. The subject matter of physics includes mechanics, heat, light and other radiation, sound, electricity, magnetism, and the structure of atoms.

In order for me to really engage our students in this physical science context I have had a science group called Sci World come to our school for several days to work with our students in different workshops in this area. They have done a Robotics workshop with the year 6/7 class which is leading on to some simple coding and programming skills, circuits and switches, simple machine, Heat workshops and Light workshops.

Here are some photos of some of our students engaged in these workshops.
In the Junior Primary Rainbow Class we have been continuing with our structured literacy programs. The reception students have continued on with their Jolly Phonics and are progressing through the main 42 sounds. They are learning the letter sounds and formation and beginning to blend. Other students are working on their Word Box Words in order to achieve greater fluency and to have more practice in blending sounds.

Students continue to do well in their weekly spelling activities. Each student has their own individual words which are taken from the Oxford Word Lists. They are gaining lots of practice at spelling and writing their individual words and then using these words for a variety of activities such as: putting these words into sentences, typing them on the computer and writing them on the whiteboards.

Our genre focus for this semester is recounts and procedures. Students are enjoying reflecting on their weekend in their weekend recounts. They have begun sharing their exciting weekend news with their classmates at the end of the session.

Procedures are being explored during our fun cooking lessons on Friday. This term we have enjoyed some delicious fruit kebabs, pancakes and chocolate banana muffins. We have been focusing on the structure of a procedure through recipes.

Lastly, we have begun joining Mrs Castleton’s class on a Monday afternoon for a joint Rainbow Classes activity. This week we explored Reconciliation Week. Each group looked at a different element of Reconciliation: head – what do we know, heart – how do we feel and hands – what can we do? All students enjoyed working together in their groups and learning more about Reconciliation Week.

The room 7 students have now finished all the 42 Jolly Phonics sounds and are now putting those sounds to work. We have been identifying sounds in words by using the head, tummy, tail strategy and are able to blend 3 and 4 sounds together to make words. We have been segmenting words into sounds and identifying the short sounds and the digraphs in each word, by putting dots or lines under each sound. We are beginning to recognise the difference between long and short vowel sounds and understand that a vowel sound is in every word, this was a fun learning activity as the students searched everywhere to find a word without a vowel sound.

There are lots of words that don’t follow the rules of phonics and aren’t spelled the way they sound, such as ‘was’ and ‘who’. These words are called ‘tricky words’, we have been learning to identify these words in texts and recognise the tricky component of each word, these words need to be memorised.

Our writing focus this term has been Narrative writing, we have listened to and watched many different narratives to gain a greater understanding of the main features of a narrative. We have identified the characters in the text, what complication they have encountered and how it was resolved. Some texts we stopped at the complication and developed our own resolution.
We have been looking at Possum Magic as our example text for Narrative writing this term. We have explored the structure of narrative writing, character and setting and how WOW words are used to make the story more interesting. We have explored the words “invisible” and the antonym “visible,” “miserable” and “predators” as well as “magic” and “magical.” Our class has begun to write a class story and will have it finished by the end of the term. We are brainstorming ideas for our characters and setting at the moment. After we decide on the characters we will brainstorm the complication (a problem) and the resolution (how the problem will be fixed).

We have begun to look at what makes a sentence and using capital letters and full stops in our sentences. We are looking at ways to make our sentences more interesting by adding WOW words into our sentences and trying to use our Jolly Phonic sounds to apply to our writing.

We are working hard on our handwriting, making sure we know the difference between capital letters and lower case letters as well as writing our numbers 1-20 correctly. Many students are paying careful attention to how their letters are formed and have already shown improvements from the beginning of the year.

All students are now getting spelling words each week and the Reception students have shown excellent skills in blending their sounds to read their words as well as sounding out to spell their words. Many students have been practicing their Oxford Words as part of homework which has helped them to move up in reading levels! Room 8 are Literacy Stars this term!

Year 1 and 2 students should be able to generate creative ideas and arrange them into a logical sequence to create a Narrative text. In Room 6, we have been learning to structure a short Narrative, based on interesting visual prompts, pictures and video clips. Students need to understand the purpose of an Introduction (or a ‘hook’ for readers), and then lead into an exciting, interesting, happy or sad Complication for the main character. After that, students will lead into a Resolution (solving the problem), and finally end the story with a great ending or conclusion that satisfies a reader. Students have been practicing sentence writing skills, use of punctuation and are now beginning to add speech marks and adjectives to make writing more interesting. Year 2s are currently working to increase the complexity of descriptive language in Narrative writing. Instead of saying “the elephant walked down the path”, students can try “the old grey elephant trudged down the windy green path” and so on.

So far, we have written texts about frogs and snails, squirrels, tigers, as well as interesting human characters doing both ordinary and extraordinary things such as looking through a magnifying glass, or climbing a huge forest cliff on a journey to school. Over the next few weeks, we will be looking at different kinds of bridges and trying to imagine what might happen if you “stepped cautiously over a magical bridge” and what land might be on the other side. We are going to use all five senses to create intriguing Narratives!

In the ‘Beginner Learner’ wave group, Miss Pilla’s super learners are being introduced to short and long vowel sounds and can sort words into 5x groups according to the ‘middle vowel sound’. For example, ‘fox’ in the o group, ‘cat’ in the a group and ‘net’ in the e group.
Room 8’s writing. We are using a template to help with the structure of narrative writing.
Room 1 and Room 4 students
working on reconciliation activities together.

Room 7
Reception
Segmenting words into sounds and identifying the short sounds and the digraphs in each word, by putting dots or lines under each sound.
The year 3s and 4s are learning to write imaginative narratives. There are many different types of narrative such as historical narratives, mystery narratives, fairytales and more. In our daily shared reading block, we are focusing on ‘Dreamtime’ stories from Aboriginal culture. The students have learnt that the purpose of dreamtime stories is to explain their beliefs of how and why the world is the way it is and how people should treat each other. By the end of term, the students will write their own dreamtime stories that must conclude with a coda/moral e.g. ‘Appreciate what you have’. We will be exploring traditional fables such as ‘The Tortoise and the Hare’ and ‘The Boy who Cried Wolf’ to explore codas further. In the lead up to independent writing, the students have been learning to write descriptively about settings by using adjectives to describe the 5 senses. We are reading ‘The Witches’ by Roald Dahl and using the author’s fantastic descriptions to visualize what is happening and recognise how to use adjectives and adverbs to create an atmosphere e.g. fear, excitement, sadness etc.

The students have also explored contrasting characters (characters with different or opposite personalities) in movies to develop an understanding of creating characters that an audience can relate to and appreciate.

This term Room 1 have been learning about narrative texts. We have compared the front covers of fiction and non-fiction texts in order to see how we can tell just by looking at the front cover what sort of text a book is. We have noticed that most fiction texts have drawn characters rather than photos and that often fiction texts have animals or made up creatures in as well as people. We have looked at the three different parts of a narrative working out what characters are in the story and what the setting is. Room 1 discovered that often in fiction texts animals are the main characters and are given human emotions and characteristics. We have then looked at the complication in various stories, what characters it involves and whether the complication changes the characters or not. We have discussed happy and sad endings with all students giving an opinion as to what sort or fiction text they like best and what sort of ending they prefer.

During our Jolly Phonic and Jolly Grammar lessons we have been learning about nouns, verbs, and adjectives. Some of us now know that a noun is a person, place or thing and that verbs can be past, present or future. We have been working hard to change the verbs in sentences from past tense to future tense. We have also been making sure that we put adjectives in our sentences in order to make them more interesting. We have practiced our sentence construction both verbally and orally which enables us to sharing our learning with each other.

We are making some minor changes to our stations this term to allow students more time to work on their oral language and co-operation skills. We will now have a handwriting and spelling station, a writing station where we will continue to work on our grammar and sentence construction and then we will have an oral language based station. In addition students will also continue with Reading Eggs and Guided Reading.
My Literacy goal is...........

To identify the correct order of an adjective in a simple sentence- Yr. 5

To use commas in my writing- Yr. 5

To get more than 80% in my spelling tests- Yr. 4

To learn what a causal explanation is and when we would write one- Yr. 6

To use complex sentences in my writing- Yr. 5

To get full marks in my spelling test- Yr. 4

To add dialogue to my narrative writing- Yr. 5

To build on my flooding vocabulary for my causal language- Yr. 7

To develop my oral language skills so I can peer teach other wave 1 students about different key language features in a causal explanation. –Yr. 7

This term has seen the Wave Intervention system be expanded by adding more content for students to learn, especially around the extended writing concepts.

We have used a variety of accredited sources, such as the Departments Literacy and Levelling systems, as well as the Australian Curriculum to build our students knowledge content and understanding around different literacy topics. As is with all our subject areas we also have a section dedicated towards growth mindset and team work and collaboration- with the key focus this term being on ‘Be a leader not a Boss’- where the students are understanding the importance of having positive leaders in their literacy groups and classes. Over the last two weeks the students have been going through data testing to be assigned to the appropriate wave for their level of learning. As we have also said to the students there is always room for growth and improvement and with this the opportunity to move up a wave.

We now have 4 waves in Primary- all waves focus on Guided Reading, Comprehension, Oral Language, Fluency, and Vocabulary- however different waves target different levels.

**Wave 1- Cassie Young**
This group’s key focus is on peer teaching- understanding the literacy concepts enough to teach each other.

**Wave 1.5- Kate Nolan**
This group’s key focus is on using the skills learnt during activities and adding them to their writing dependent on the genre they are writing.

**Wave 2a- Kristi Wandner**
This group’s focus is on fixing misconceptions- especially in regards to grammar, spelling and punctuation.

**Wave 2b- Zoe Kiley**
This group is following the same format as wave 2 a, however just allowing them to work in a smaller group.

**Wave 3- Michael Hawkey**
This group’s focus is on Jolly Grammar concepts around spelling and grammar, along with a heavy focus on guided reading and comprehension.
As you may already be aware, the primary years students learn a different genre of writing each term (with the exception of term 1 where students learn 2 genres). This term, we are looking at explanation writing and in particular, causal explanations.

So what is explanation writing?
Explanation texts are factual genres used across all curriculum areas to explain the sequence, cause or theoretical understanding of a phenomenon or event.
As a genre, explanations detail and logically describe the stages in a natural (e.g. the water cycle), social (e.g. making a law) or technological (e.g. brick making) phenomenon of our world.

What is the purpose of explanation writing?
The purpose of an explanation is to provide logical, time related information to explain and describe events happening in our world.

What are the common explanations?
Sequential – details the stages in an event e.g. *from apple blossom to fruit; the life cycle of a frog.*

Causal – details what causes the change from one stage to the next e.g. *how digestion happens; why tsunamis occur.*

Theoretical – details the possible phenomena behind a natural/created process that is not fully understood e.g. *The El Nino effect.*

As mentioned above, students in the primary years will be focussing on causal explanations this term. Our work has already begun as we built up our knowledge on the topic in which we are writing our explanation on – floods. Our final causal explanation writing piece has not been decided upon as yet, but possibilities include, ‘why floods occur in a particular area?’ or ‘what causes floods?’ Students have researched flood locations across Australia from 1970 onwards, shared stories of their personal experience with floods, created a word wall with flood related vocabulary identified through recent newspaper articles and viewed videos and researched the human and physical factors contributing to floods.

With common knowledge for all students, we will now move forward in teaching the students about the purpose, audience, structure and language features required for a causal explanation. We look forward to writing a joint causal explanation using our collective ideas later in the term, followed by an independent construction of the text from each student.