Week 4 this term was a celebration of Science in schools throughout Australia and the theme for this year’s Science Week was “Drones, Droids and Robots.” All of the students in our school were involved in 2 science shows over the last 2 weeks - one show was called “DROIDS” and the other show was called “LIQUID NITROGEN” and they were highly engaged in the different experiments Sci World presented to them.

Also every student was involved in a poster competition where they had to design a robot with a real purpose in mind and include the features that their robot would need in order to carry out its desired purpose. The posters have been up on display in the hall and the breezeway and all students and staff, have had the opportunity to view the posters and vote for their 5 favourite. The winners of the poster competition will be announced at the Week 8 assembly and prizes will be awarded. The detail, quality and effort that all students put into creating their poster was outstanding. Any parents that would like to view the children’s efforts please come and see me and I can open up the hall for them either before or after school for the next couple of weeks.
The Junior Primary Rainbow Class has continued to enjoy writing recounts of their weekend. They have enjoyed listening to a variety of narrative texts such as “Elmer the Elephant”, “The Very Hungry Caterpillar”, Franklin Fibs” and “Franklin’s Canoe Adventure”. We have been finding the main character in the story and discussing where the story is set. We have also been talking about the problems that these characters have encountered. We have had a lot of fun making different crafts that relate to the books we are reading. We have made a patchwork elephant using sponges, a caterpillar necklace and a clay turtle that looks just like Franklin. We have continued with our procedure writing in our weekly cooking sessions.

The reception students have been progressing well with their jolly phonics sounds and those that are ready are getting very good at blending. Describing words have been a major focus in Spelling and we are seeing many interesting sentences. You can see some examples below:

“Some cakes taste yucky but some cakes taste delicious.”
“I went to bed and I had a dream that I made a rainbow cake.”
“If I had a dragon egg I would hatch it.”
“I looked up and saw a blue balloon in the sky.”

Kind regards Jackie and Aleah

Room 7 has been working really hard in both WAVE and literacy lessons this term. We have been focusing on the long vowel sounds and magic ‘e’. We began by making our own magic ‘e’ wands and experimented with words, such as; can, rod, Sid and cut by placing the magic ‘e’ wand at the end of the word. By doing this we learnt the rule “‘e’ at the end of a word changes the short vowel sound to a long vowel sound”. For example can became cane, rod became rode, Sid became side and cut became cute. This rule has taken some time to learn but with a friendly reminder we remember what to do and we are able to change the word and its meaning. (I have not told them that there are always exceptions to the rule... we will leave that to another day, no need for confusion just yet!)

This term we have been writing about our weekends every Monday. This recount writing is a great way for us to see improvement in our writing and sentence structures. We learnt that words are made up of letters and sentences are made up of words, sentences begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop. Our sentence structure has been a focus in many activities as we are sometimes forgetting that we need finger spaces and that the sentences needs to make sense, otherwise it’s just a jumble of words! Many of us are already seeing great improvement in our weekend writing, our next step is to add more detail into our sentences.

Book Week has been filled with many book activities, We made Piranha peg fish, Cow jumping over the moon crafts and Room 7 tooth fairies, just to name a few! We enjoyed the Dress Up day and found enjoyment trying to guess the name characters around the school. Well done to Oliver for winning Room 7 Best Dress up, in Miss. Lade’s opinion, room 7 was the best dressed class in the whole school!
Room 8 have been working on procedure writing this term. We have made lemonade in the class, we followed a simple recipe and took lots of photos of the steps. We then grouped the photos, one for ingredients and one for the steps. We had to sequence the steps and then write our own procedure to match the pictures. We have been exploring descriptive words and sentences that will make it easier for the reader to “picture” the steps. For example instead of just writing “cut the lemons” we wrote “cut the lemons in half.” We are using time connective words like “first, next, then last” to show sequencing. The next time you do cooking, perhaps involve your child and let them help with the steps, this will develop their ability to break tasks down into simple steps. We have also been working on reading every morning with our partner, we are developing skills like “stretching the sounds out” in words, looking at beginning sounds and chunking to help us with developing better reading strategies. We have been doing daily handwriting practice so that we are automatic in our letter formation, some students are even starting to learn link script in their handwriting. We have been reading lots of books from the “Book Week” books and have enjoyed completing activities to go with the book. We read “Ollie and the Wind,” we spoke about why some things are taken by the wind and why some stay on the ground. We then followed a procedure and made a kite that we tried to fly. Our class has been doing lots of activities to sort words and pictures into sounds that are the same. We have been focusing on vowel sounds, both long and short and really concentrating on listening to these vowel sounds and sorting them into the correct group. We are finding it easier to sort with pictures than with words because sometimes there are more than one vowel in words.

Room 6 students are working across a wide range of literacy areas in Term 3. Our current focus in genre writing in Procedure texts, and we are learning to read and follow steps or instructions, and also to write our own texts. We have learnt to make a paper chatterbox, draw a cartoon pig, make a sock puppet, and we even worked with our 'big buddies' in peer monitor time to make a paper plane and then compete to see which one flew furthest. We have produced some exciting work and projects, and soon we will be trying out some recipes too! We are extremely excited about the new outdoor nature play area being opened, and we hope to have a campfire soon and try out some bush food recipes. What a fun procedure lesson!

Students continue to get Spelling lists each fortnight and are tested every second Wednesday morning. They are given opportunities throughout the week to learn and practice their spelling words, and are encouraged to also work on these at home when they are able.

This week we are celebrating Book Week by reading all of the shortlisted stories including any prize-winners / major award winners. We have really enjoyed all the new books! We loved one of 'honour' books called "Ollie and the Wind" and have been very busy making colourful kites this week as a fun craft project, as Ollie loved to fly a kite in the wind. We are also having special 'book week mornings' every day this week, where the teachers are reading wonderful stories that we loved when we were younger and we wanted to share these childhood favourites with our students.
BOOK WEEK
Students in Room 5 have been busy working in their Three Wave Literacy Intervention groups each morning. Mrs Cox-Walliss is teaching a number of Room 5 students in the Extension group. They are learning to write Investigative Reports with a focus on the Olympics. Each morning, the year 3/4s work on their spelling lists for the fortnight. These lists are formed based on individual student data from the Words their Way Spelling Inventory. The lists provided, target spelling patterns that students aren’t yet able to spell. Fortnightly assessments are showing great improvement and the original test will be given again at the end of the year to measure how much has been retained.

Our genre writing focus during Shared Reading is ‘Procedural Recounts’ with a focus on craft projects. The students have undertaken different art and craft activities and recorded the outcome. By the end of the term, the students will work in groups to design and sew t-shirts for calico bears and will record how they went about it in individual procedural recounts. The bears will then be donated to local kindergartens.

Here are some of the art and craft activities we have written about so far.

- 2D shape kites
- Picasso style Portraits
- 3D Shapes

The Primary Rainbow Class have been learning about expositions, or persuasive texts, this term. We began our learning looking at protest banners. We have learnt that a persuasive text does not need to be a page long or even a paragraph long but rather it can be just two or three words such as ‘Ban Cars!’ or ‘Stop the War!’. All students then made their own protest banner with subjects ranging from stopping whale slaughter to banning guns and violence.

We then moved onto looking at how interviews can often be a form of persuasive text such as when television and film celebrities are asked about the clothes they wear and the food they eat or when sport celebrities aim to persuade us to try their particular sport. These interviews often persuade us to buy products associated with the celebrity, the TV show or film or the sport. We discussed how some celebrities are paid to endorse products. We then discussed who we would like to interview with answers ranging from One Direction to Beethoven.

We are now looking at television advertisements and how they can sometimes ‘bend’ the truth in order to sell us products. We have been watching shows that unpick adverts aimed at children and show the truth behind the advert. We have learned that fast food commercials use staged food that is actually inedible in order to make the product look as good as possible and that the toys shown in commercials can’t always do what the commercials show them doing.

The students have each written me a persuasive letter (mostly asking me to buy them video games!) and they are now moving onto planning their own commercial using some of the persuasive techniques they have learned. Students will have to decide on their product and target audience before they begin filming their commercial.
Room 15 have been working on inquiry/investigative Reports with an Olympic theme. This has formed the basis of the Shared RFL time that is undertaken by the whole of the primary years at MBSPS. During the first half of term 3, the children have been ‘building the field’, which means they have been developing their knowledge about the Olympic Games. This knowledge will be used when they are writing their own reports later on in the term. Currently they are now working on the ‘deconstruction’ phase of their inquiry/investigative report writing which includes learning about the structures and language features used and found in these types of reports. As we move forward Room 15 will also work on constructed their own reports in groups so that ideas can be shared and developed in a constructive manner. These types of discussions during the ‘joint construction’ phase enable the children to improve their report writing skills during their independent writing of an inquiry/investigative report which will form the last phase of this unit on report writing.

During the RFL wave sessions, members of the group that take place in Room 15 have been working on a weekly station rotation system. Each week there are 4 RFL wave lessons, and each lesson has 4 stations. The stations are: guided reading (teacher led), reading comprehension, wave document task and growth mindset/oral language task. Each student will complete each station by the end of the week. As well as the stations, the beginning of each lesson will begin with the whole class working on a ‘Jolly Phonics’ task. This helps the children to develop their writing at a word and sentence level.

In reading for learning this term we have had a focus on Inquiry Information Reports and our chosen topic was the Olympics. The students have been sharing their prior knowledge of the topic and this gives the teachers an insight to the student’s level of understanding. Some of the facts the students were able to share include- why the Olympic rings are those colours, where the Olympics is this year and What it means by the Ancient Olympics games. Currently the students are working on developing their skills around key language features and structure of writing an inquiry information report. During our Wave 1.5 lessons we have a focus on building our oral language skills- in particular around peer teaching and feedback. The students a designing a success criteria then teaching the remainder of the class in small groups a punctuation concept. They are working together to have explicit teaching, an activity and to finish with reflection. Our stations this term are around building the big 6- in particular comprehension, oral language and understanding of different literacy components in our wave document.

Below are some pictures from our Primary word wall that demonstrates the students understanding and learning of information reports in particularly around the topic of Olympics.
Recently, the school has begun work on the learning dispositions of children and their impact on student outcomes. Catherine and I attended a professional development day hosted by Professor John Hattie, who is highly accomplished in his field of education research. Hattie undertook the largest ever meta-analysis of quantitative measures of the effect of different factors on educational outcomes. In other words, he has thoroughly researched hundreds of teaching strategies and environmental factors to see which ones are the most effective in achieving student growth and outcomes. His research shows some of the things that teachers do have greater effect sizes than others (obviously!).

To add on, this week we have begun working with the primary years students on the metacognitive strategies. These are simply strategies and methods which are used to help students understand the way they learn, in other words, it means processes designed for students to ‘think’ about their ‘thinking’. Students are being asked questions such as “how do you know you have met the learning intention today?” and “how can you move your knowledge from surface to deep level?” We have begun this work during our Shared Reading session each day, but this will filter through to all other curriculum areas too. We are encouraging students to transfer these skills as well as their content knowledge. While we are in the infant stages of this new learning, we are certain that with persistence and encouragement, we will see our students being able to articulate what a good learner looks like beyond grades and scores.

Thank you to all the families and community members who supported the Room 12 and 13 $20 BOSS PROJECT! It has now come to an end and the businesses will be completing a reflection next week on all their learning!