



THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

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WINDHOEK INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

FROM THE DIRECTOR

And, We're Back!

When the school closed on Friday 6th March, no one had any idea that it would be more than seven months before (almost) everyone would be back on campus. It has been a long wait and, for many, a stressful and challenging one. It was therefore very exciting and satisfying to welcome learners, teachers, colleagues and, indeed, parents when we opened again this week.

'is it working?' I was asked at this week's board meeting. Well, we only have five days' experience so far but we have no reason believe it is not working. Students are behaving responsibly and the revised schedule seems to be doing its job. We have to be pleased with the way the first week has gone.

The Car Park

The changes to the car park – and therefore traffic flow – were made to improve security. We now have far more control over who gains access to the school premises. This is important.

But it is obvious that the traffic is not flowing as smoothly as before. This is a concern and, for many, a frustration.

In fact, things seemed a little better by the end of the week and it may be that we are all learning how to manage the new arrangements.

Here are a few things that will help.

- Please use the whole car park. It is when vehicles gather in one part of the car park that the congestion is worst. Please spread out, even if your children then need to walk ten or twenty metres further.
- Please use the twenty or so slots up towards the PTA hut. They were off-limits during the hybrid model but they are now fully open – and frequently empty.
- Please do not stop to drop-off your children without first parking. It only adds to the congestion.
- Encourage your children to "share" the pedestrian crossings. Certainly, cars must stop for pedestrians but people on foot can also wait for ten or twenty seconds to allow a number of cars to pass.
- When you leave by the West Gate, please consider turning RIGHT on Scheppmann Street away from the school and towards Westlane. This will greatly help traffic trying to turn into the Main Gate.

Thank you. Stay safe.

Peter MacKenzie

Teacher Feature



Jane Harrison
Grade 5 Homeroom Teacher

What is your educational background?

Until I was 18 I lived with my parents in my hometown, which is on the outskirts of London, England. I then studied for a degree at Reading University and completed my PGCE at Warwick University. I also have a TEFL diploma, which I completed by distance learning when I started teaching overseas. I embarked on my international career in 1984 after completing my, then obligatory, probationary period in the UK.

Where were you before Namibia?

Before Namibia I was teaching Grade 5 students in Hyderabad, India. India was the 12th country that I had taught in, making Namibia number 13. I started my international career in Cairo, Egypt, so I have come full circle back to Africa. I have taught on all continents (except Antarctica – no school there, but I did get to camp on the ice with the penguins).

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Director Search

The Search Committee, which consists of five members from the Board of Directors, would like to update the community on the continuing search for a new Educational Director.

The deadline for applications is this Saturday, October 24th. At this time, around fifty applications have been received, and the stronger candidates have already been interviewed by the consultant we have engaged. An initial list of “semi-finalists” has been shared with the Search Committee, and a second list will be received early next week.

The next stage is for the Search Committee to identify the candidates we believe would be the best fit for the school and arrange a one-hour interview with each one. Many of the applicants work in international schools scattered around the globe and in different time zones, but we are confident that we can arrange mutually convenient times for the interviews.

The outcome of this phase will be the selection of a small number (two or three) of finalists.

In normal times, the school would bring these finalists to Windhoek for a multi-day site visit to see the school, meet the community, and get a feel for life in Namibia. The finalists would also be interviewed by panels of parents, teachers, administrative staff and learners who would then share their impressions and observations with the full Board of Directors.

Unfortunately, on-site visits are not currently possible, so the final conversations will all be done virtually. The Board highly values community input in this process, and we will shortly be inviting interested parties to put their names forward as volunteers to speak with the final selection of applicants.

Primary Principal

On a separate note, Beth Smith has announced that she will also be retiring at the end of this school year.

The vacancy for a new Primary Principal will be announced shortly. Peter MacKenzie, the current Director, will start the selection and filtering process and, perhaps, conduct preliminary interviews. However, once a Director has been appointed, he or she will join the process. The final decision will be that of the incoming Director, though it is expected that he or she would be guided by Peter’s knowledge of the school.

Change

We understand that change can be unsettling, and 2020 has already presented us with many unexpected changes. For a school to have enjoyed six years without a change in the Senior Leadership Team is not common, and we are grateful that Maggie, Beth and Peter have provided a long period of stability and continuity.

At the same time, we know that change brings with it new opportunities and possibilities. By their very nature, international schools are dynamic. As familiar faces move on, others arrive and bring with them fresh perspectives and new ideas.

We are sorry to be saying goodbye to Beth and Peter, but the Board is looking

Teacher Feature Continued

What motivated you to be a Teacher?

As a teenager and college student, I used to run Cub Scouts, Scouts, Brownies and Girl Guides! It was kind of natural that I would work with children and so I studied to become a teacher.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

The holidays! No seriously, having a class is like having your own extended family. I love getting to know the students and also knowing that what I am sharing with them will help them develop into fully rounded human beings.

What do you think are important qualities an international school teacher should have?

To be an international teacher you need to have patience and flexibility. You must want to get to know and learn about people and places where the lifestyle and culture is different to your own. That's what makes this lifestyle so interesting.

What are your hobbies?

I love travelling, and along with camping and hiking it fills most of my spare time. I have made seven trips to climb mountains in Nepal (not the real biggies!), along with the Huayhuash circuit in Peru/Andes and, of course, Kilimanjaro. As a result of my travelling I have become a keen photographer, so as I can share my experiences with family and friends. My other love is rugby! I was privileged enough to see games at the last two World Cups, in London and Tokyo. I have also been to the 7s in Singapore. My hope was to do the 7s in SA this year, but ... Maybe the Lions in SA next summer? If I do stay still, I love cooking, reading and yoga.

forward with optimism to the next chapter in the school's proud story.

Further updates about filling these two positions will follow regularly.

On Behalf of the Board Search Committee

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

MAP Testing

Monday we will begin administering the MAP Growth (*Measures of Academic Progress*) tests. The purpose of these tests is to determine your child's instructional level and measure the growth in student learning over time. The results will provide teachers with information about what students are ready to learn now. Here's an overview of the testing timeline:



Measuring What Matters™

Dates	Grades	Test
October 26 - 30	Grades 1-5 Grades 1-5 Grades 3-5	Practice Test Reading Language
November 2 - 6	Grades 1-5 Grades 1-5	Mathematics Makeups
November 9 - 13	Grades 1-5	Makeups

All of the classes will have a practice session with the MAP test before taking the tests. The practice sessions enable the children to familiarise themselves with the process and the kinds of questions that are asked. As shown in the table above Grades 1-5 take Reading and Mathematics tests while Grades 3-5 also take the Language Usage test.

How can you help prepare your child for the test?

As with any school day, it is important that your child is well-rested, eats breakfast and arrives at school by 7:20. Please encourage your child to do his/her best on the tests and not to rush. The tests aren't timed and finishing first does not mean the child is the best or has done well on the test.

Under "normal" circumstances the results would be sent by email to those parents who have attended an information session explaining how to interpret your child's results. For this round of testing, the results will be sent by email by the end of November (once all of the makeup tests have been completed and the teachers have had time to review the results.) A virtual parent information session will be offered to explain the report. For more information about MAP, here's a link to the [Parent Toolkit](#). The *Family Guide to MAP Growth*, found on this site, may be of particular interest.

Assemblies

Now that we are back at school for a full day, we will be having assemblies at school by section (Lower Primary and Upper Primary) in alternate weeks. Due to social distancing and space limitations in the auditorium assemblies will be just for the children, teachers, and assistants.

Regards,
Beth Smith

Grade 3 interaction with Grade 11!



This semester, in Portuguese, we are focusing on speaking skills. Anyone learning a new foreign language knows that the hardest part is speaking the language. You get shy about pronouncing words and using incorrect grammatical syntax, you're worried others won't understand you and therefore it is much easier to learn the reading and writing skills and avoid the speaking skills as much as possible!



The Grade 3s are proving to be incredible risk-takers and inquirers and took on the challenge to engage in a simple interview with our Grade 11 students. Since they have been busy exploring Portuguese greetings as well as how to engage in a conversation to learn personal information from others they took their new learnt knowledge and applied it to a real life situation.

Muito obrigada meninos!

Ms. Jacky F



SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Change is possible - what is necessary is the political will

[Urgent Solutions for Urgent Times](#)

This year has shown us all how quickly the world can change and how important it is for us a humankind to stand together and to take action.



"The UN is marking its 75th anniversary at a time of great disruption for the world, compounded by an unprecedented global health crisis with severe economic and social impacts. Will we emerge stronger and better equipped to work together? Or will distrust and isolation grow further? 2020 must be a year of dialogue, when we come together to discuss our priorities as a human family, and how we can build a better future for all." (<https://www.un.org/en/un75>).

***'The art of reinvention will
be the most critical skill of
this century'
(Yuval Noah Harari)***

As for the global situation, great changes also happened in our smaller communities and one of the biggest changes in our lives here at school was/is certainly the sudden move to Remote Learning in March. Covid-19 has forced us to adopt new ways of interaction and to adapt to this different way of learning.

We had to make changes faster than anyone would have expected, just to be able to cope with the drastically changed circumstances and we had to make these changes quickly without being prepared and having time to look into ways of managing a different status quo.

In this context, I started to reflect on the way we can make sure we adapt fast to a situation where strangeness becomes the new normal. How do you live in a world where profound uncertainty is not a bug, but a feature? The increasing pace of change makes it even more important to try to move with the changes to adapt and to prepare ourselves and the next generation for a life where predictability is not the norm anymore.

Is technology the answer? It is not. It is a tool for us to use, but it may not consume us. We have to guard against serving it and instead keep letting it serve us to an extent that we allow it to.

For the young people we are educating, the message, now more than ever, needs to be: 'you need to know who you are and what you want from life'. We have the responsibility to help guide young people to become this confident and have the soft skills to be assertive, compassionate and open minded. Advice to be given to a 15 year old: 'Don't rely on the adults too much. Most of them mean well, but they just don't understand the world.' We adults find it much more difficult to adapt to the rapidly changing world. So our goal should be to give young people the skills to be the ones driving change to change the systems that have led our world and our society into the current impasse.

([What Kids Need to Learn to Succeed in 2050](#) some of my thoughts in the above contribution were inspired by this article.)

***"To keep up with the world of 2050, you will need to do more
than merely invent new ideas and products, but above all,
reinvent yourself again and again."(Yuval Noah Harari)***

**Regards,
Maggie Reiff**

Grade 8 Idioms

So they say the pen is mightier than the sword ... In Grade 8 the students worked on Idioms. The students were given five idioms to write a paragraph showing their understanding of the phrases within their writing. They were also asked to create their own idioms, give the literal meaning, use it in a sentence, and design a poster about it.

Angie Janse van Rensburg

Please enjoy some of their work.

What you say - Marilu Roos

I have always been told to watch my tongue, which means that I shouldn't tell everything that happens in my life. I have been careful of what I tell people, but I have had a **slip of the tongue** from time to time. This one time I accidentally ruined a surprise party because I was ranting on the phone about it and the person for whom we were throwing the party overheard me. I was so **at grips with** the conversation that I didn't even notice the person standing behind me. **I put my head in the noose** that day, but we still had fun at the party. The owner of the coffee shop where we had the party was **a chip off the block** and she helped us set up the decorations. I was really grateful for all her help and I became a regular customer at her little coffee shop. The moral of the story is, do not **get off your guard** when you are throwing a surprise party!



My identity - Maedot Abeje

Your identity is what makes you, you! You should not waste your valuable time on wanting to be someone else. **Speak of the devil**, comparing yourself is an act of violence against one. The saying "**steal someone's thunder**" means you are stealing their light and identity. Sooner or later you're going to **get a taste of your own medicine** when you fail to be happy because you are not yourself. I'm going to tell you something **straight from the horse's mouth**, create your own identity, and be happy with who you are. Anyway, you wouldn't **be caught dead** in anything else besides yourself.

Decisions - Salome Rey

Yesterday, **in the heat of the moment**, I decided to **jump on the bandwagon** and start my own YouTube channel. After an hour of trying to come up with a good name for my YouTube channel and brainstorming some ideas for my first video, I realised that this was a lot harder than I thought. My first video needed to **cut the mustard** and set the tone for the upcoming videos. Maybe I could play **devil's advocate**...

I would talk about abortion and see how my subscribers react! Wait, I don't even have any subscribers yet. I need to spread awareness about my channel so that people will subscribe. But now that I think of it, I don't want to lose the possibility of gaining subscribers just because I am talking about a sensitive topic. One slip-up could ruin me. This is soooo hard! I guess **it's back to the drawing board**. What could my first video be about? Maybe I could introduce myself and make a tutorial on how to craft a dreamcatcher using recycled materials. Now that is more I like it!

Please click [here](#) to see Maedot and Salome's idiom and [here](#) to see Rachael and Nipun's idiom.

Social Studies meets English

The Grade 8s had the opportunity to write and give their opinion on what extent they think population predictions are accurate. They were tasked to write an essay for both English and Social Studies on this topic.

In English, the students focused on using the P.E.E.L format when structuring their essays, this applies well to informative and factual essay writing. Here are some examples and predictions from some of our Gr. 8 students:

Angie Janse van Rensburg

Population Predictions - Gerhard Fischer-Buder

I agree that Japan will go extinct in the next 1700 years. Japan is a great example of a country with an aging population that is going to go extinct. This essay is going to be about the DTB of Japan, how Japan isn't the only one at risk of extinction, and finally about how Japan's government is going to make an attempt at trying to save itself.

Firstly, Japan is what experts call a [DTB](#) (Demographic Time Bomb). "The doomsday clock developed by Hiroshi Yoshida and Masahiro Ishigaki, economists at Tohoku University, relies on population and fertility data from 2014 and 2015." In this extract from a website that I found, it states that even Japanese economists themselves know that their country will be on it's last few, if not the final person in 1746 years. Japan is going to be extinct if they don't get their numbers up hastily.

Furthermore, Japan isn't singled out as being one of the countries in [East Asia](#) that is on a path towards extinction. "Neither current nor projected population decline is unique to Japan. Many East Asian societies are forecast to encounter a rapid decline over the coming centuries. A similar exercise to that of Japan was published in South Korea, with the rather more generous assumption of 10,000 Koreans left by 2503." This extract that I found from another source explains how Japan clearly isn't the only country to become a past society lesson in the future. Along with Japan, many other Phase 5 countries in the world are going to suffer, unless they present the world with a large-scale population boost.

Lastly, the government in [Japan](#) isn't making as big an impact as people who live in Japan could hope for. "Government projections show the birth rate will hit just 1.35 children per woman within 50 years, well below the replacement rate." In this extract from a website that I found, I read that the government itself is proving that their country's birth rate just isn't cutting it anymore, yet they have still not made a pro-natalist policy to try to raise birth rates. Japan needs to step up their game if they don't want to start teaching children about a country that went extinct because they didn't try to solve the problem.

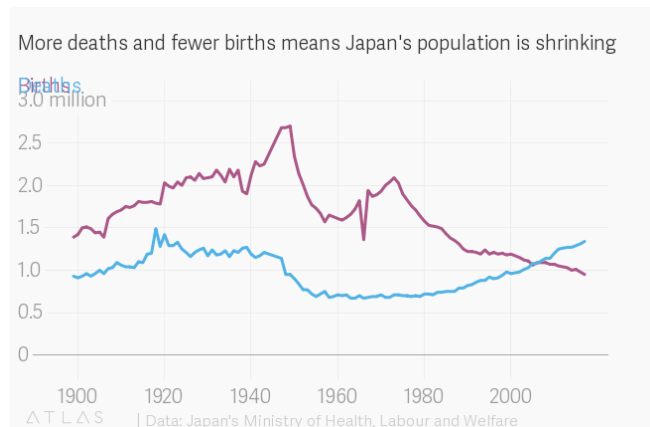
In conclusion, Japan is by all calculations, past and present, going to lose all of their population if they don't try better to increase their birth rates and lower their death rates, but still, have such a high life expectancy.

Aging of Asia - Maedot Abeje

The earth's wrinkles may be starting to show! By 2023 we are expected to hit 8 billion and 10 billion by 2030. Population growth is good, right? But, what about population decline? Japan and several other countries in Asia are experiencing the worst population decline due to their ageing population and some consider the countries are becoming extinct. I believe that countries like Japan will turn extinct if they refuse to do anything about it. In order to see if Japan and several other countries are going extinct, we are going to discuss the reasoning behind the declining population, why I think it will become extinct, and possible solutions.

First of all, a big reason why the population is declining (especially in Japan) is because of low fertility rates. If you look at the map at the bottom it's shown that the deaths have been increasing and the births have been declining. This happens because of some factors that contribute to Japan's ageing population such as improvements in nutrition, the advanced medical treatment helped reduce disease, and also Japan has turned into a developed country and due to the social structure or lifestyle choices of a woman she chose to not have kids. However, more children mean more financial care which may be difficult for parents. Overall fewer births and higher deaths mean the country is shrinking.

I think Japan will be extinct due to its high life expectancy. Experts say that back in 1966 the life expectancy was 67.8 years of age, but as of 2017, it was 84.10 years of age. When life expectancy increases so do the risk of diseases, and disabilities. Japan is very technologically advanced, so lots of people have access to healthcare,



hygiene, a good diet, and proper exercise which increases their years. It's clear that Japan's high life expectancy would lead to an ageing population.

A possible solution for Japan will be to change the rule of immigrants. Data shows that the number of foreign workers has changed drastically (almost 1 million foreign workers), but only a few are permanent residents, and the rest may not bring their families. Because of this, Japan should change the rules for immigrants, as they can contribute to population growth. Therefore, if Japan embraced the immigrants, their population can skyrocket.

In conclusion, if Japan will not do anything to stop this population decline they will be extinct. Getting to Japan, where it was 50 years ago will be challenging and take up quite a bit of time. Low fertility rates and high life expectancy will continue to contribute to Japan shrinking, but if they turned to immigrants maybe just maybe, they can stop this decline.

'Experts predict that Japan's population will go extinct within the next 1700 years. To what extent do you agree with such predictions? Rachael Arowolo

More than 20% of Japan's population is ageing so I agree with this statement to a certain extent. But I think that more of an explanation is required that is why I will be explaining why I agree with this statement and why not based on the economy, rates as well as possible reasons for extinction, and possible solutions.

Firstly, as I mentioned in the introduction, more than 20% of Japan's population is ageing and or over the age of 65. (Clear and solid point.) This also means that Japan has the oldest population in the world along with that Japan also happens to have the third-largest economy in the world. So the rapidly ageing population may begin to negatively affect Japan's economy because an older population means more retirement and fewer people actually working which leads to a labor shortage. (A well-written paragraph)

Japan has been trying to hopefully boost its birth rate for years to withstand its ageing population but it has not drastically worked. In fact, in 2019 the expected births fell by an estimated 5.9% to 864,000 for the first time since 1899. The health ministries have since reported that the drop is most likely due to the declining number of people still in their reproductive age obviously due to its ageing population. The current fertility rate of Japan is 1.369 which is a 0% increase compared to 2019, some educated guesses as to why are; the uncertain employment for young men which makes unsuitable options for marriage and fewer people wanting to get married. But the Japanese government has offered incentives to encourage more couples to marry and to have children, they have offered things like more affordable child healthcare, parental leave, and more accessible assistance to parents but this has since seen very little impact. Japan currently has a death rate of 10.865 not including the effects of COVID-19. (I don't see your linking sentence here?)

Nevertheless, according to the BBC, the rate is still relatively low compared to other countries troubled by this virus. " In early 2020 Japan saw fewer deaths than average despite the fact that in April Tokyo saw 1,000 deaths perhaps due to COVID-19, yet as a whole, it is possible that the overall deaths might be down in 2019on 2019." Although Japan does not have the lowest death rate due to COVID-19 it is still relatively low so Japan must be doing something right.

The declining fertility rate has impacted some important factors in Japan. It has impacted things such as lifestyle changes., Japan already has to be one of the healthiest countries but even so, as you get older your immune system becomes weaker so lifestyle changes have to be made. Next is people getting married later or not at all, nowadays there is not as much of a rush to get married seeing as the divorce rate is about 40-50 percent in the US alone so it is understandable why the desire to be married has mellowed over the years as well as people not wanting as many children and often seeing having children associated with marriage. Along with those is

economic insecurity for the younger generation which is essentially a lack of a steady source of income often heading towards poverty. The final factor is the increased life expectancy, according to "The Diplomat", "Fifty years ago the life expectancy was about 70-72 years old but it has since increased to 84 years old" (I feel you have covered these topics already in the other paragraphs - remember not to repeat yourself.)

I don't really know where we will be in 1700 years. But according to the Japan Times " Research conducted by the National Institution of Population and Social Security has shown that about 896 villages, cities, and towns all over Japan could be facing extinction by 2040 alone." So if it is heading in that direction then yes, I believe that Japan's population could be facing extinction.

Middle School PE Development

During Term 2, our Middle School Physical and Health Education students will have the opportunity to do PE in smaller classes. The girls will do Netball with Ms. Viginia and the boys will do a Rugby module with Mr. Jackson-Read.

As a department, we believe in the value of single gender teaching in Physical Education in addition to the many benefits from mixed gender lessons.

Can I remind parents of children in Middle School that WIS t-shirts or house shirts are required for PE lessons. They are available from the school PTA centre. We will let you know their operating hours soon.

Tom Jackson-Read

The Secondary IB Learner Profile Trait for the month of October is:

Communicator

A COMMUNICATOR understands and expresses ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others. IB students regularly deliver stimulating presentations and drive excellence in group assignments.

Check out the Oryx at the end of this month to see who will be our WIS Communicators...

Click [HERE](#) for more information about the IB Learner Profiles @ WIS.



How does one keep up with all the games and movies the children are exposed to? Some of them are not appropriate.

commonsensemedia.org offers great guidance on apps, games, movies and books for families. The reviews tell parents what to look out for, what's good and what's bad. When dialogue fails, at home, the website has an ultimate guide to parental controls.

Ask anonymously at www.bit.ly/wis-techq read your answer in the ORYX

A note from the PTA

A WARM WELCOME FROM YOUR PTA!

To new families, we are so delighted to welcome you into the WIS family! Our heartfelt wish is for you to have a promising year and future at WIS. Together we hope to make your transition as smooth and easy as possible. We always want you to feel a sense of belonging.

To existing families, welcome back! As life unfolds, we applaud how we have all pivoted to respond to the various disruptions which although may be immeasurable, have kept our children, learning and our community together. We believe we have reopened as a better school!

Please read the file linked [HERE](#) to reveal the pertinent information in each section.

Gala Event Postponed

Dear WIS Community,

Given all that happened this year and the uncertainty that remains, the WIS Gala organising committee has decided to postpone the event until May or June 2021. The date will be confirmed in January 2021. We believe it is better to wait until the situation is more clear, and we will be able to make the most of what should be a wonderful celebration of the school's 30th anniversary as well as an important fundraising opportunity.

We would like to assure you that we will be keeping our ticket sales as well as the current awesome giveaways from some great sponsors until then!

If you at any time feel you could contribute to this event with your time, donation or creative ideas please feel free to contact myself (jferreira@wis.edu.na) or Ms. Beata (bstephanus@wis.edu.na). In the meantime, we will continue to work on this fantastic fundraising event (all funds raised will be used for the improvement of our sports facilities).

Thank you to those who have bought tables and tickets as well as to our sponsors. Tables and tickets are still available. Kindly contact Yolanda (yvisser@wis.edu.na) at the school office if you wish to buy any.

Ms. Beata and Ms. Jacky on behalf of the WIS Gala organising committee

WIS Birthday Gala 2020

POSTPONED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

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