



THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

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Dates to Remember

April 2021

- **02:** Good Friday - Public Holiday
- **05:** Easter Monday - Public Holiday

May 2021

- **04:** Cassinga Day - Public Holiday
- **13:** Ascension Day - Public Holiday
- **25:** Africa Day - Public Holiday



FROM THE DIRECTOR

TRANSITION

Last week in my piece for The Oryx I mentioned that most of the members of the Board of Directors are comparatively new (three only attended their first meeting last night) and that August will see two new members of the SLT – the Director, Ethan Van Drunen, and the Primary Principal, Marcelle van Leenen.

I actually find this rather exciting. I have changed jobs (changed schools, changed countries, and usually changed continents) six times and every time I have approached my new position with a terrific sense of anticipation. In each case I was looking forward to the new challenges and hoping that I could make a positive difference.

I know that Ethan and Marcelle are preparing for their new jobs in a new school in a new country with the same enthusiasm and optimism. And the Board that has been taking shape since the AGM in January has already hit the ground running. There is much to feel very optimistic about.

Change is sometimes a little unsettling but, more often than not, fresh eyes see new angles and the energy that the newly arrived can bring reveals previously unseen opportunities.

The school has enjoyed an unprecedented period of stability and continuity for the past six years but it is no bad thing that one chapter is ending and another beginning. Out with the old, in with the new. Exciting times!

Peter MacKenzie

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Yesterday, Danai Maramba offered two sessions (one face to face and one virtual) for parents to understand what Seesaw is and how to get logged on. Thank you to those parents who attended. The recording from the virtual meeting will be sent by email to all parents.



One of the requirements of being an IB PYP school is that students keep a “Student Development” portfolio of their learning. We used to have paper folders or files where students kept their work. Parents would usually see these folders during Student-Led Conferences. With Seesaw, parents no longer have to wait for the conferences, because you can view your child’s posted work at your convenience and interact with your child about his/her learning. You can write a comment to your child about their work, or leave a voice recording. Seesaw is a tool that allows for parents, teachers and students to collaborate, reflect and give feedback to support learning.

This year, a new addition to Seesaw is the “Reflection as a learner” folder. This folder is a means to communicate assessed learning as we go. We are giving feedback and reflecting on learning to identify strengths and goals with students. Then we post the sample on Seesaw and encourage your child to come home and share and reflect on their learning with you. We encourage parent input.

One of the advantages of Seesaw is that it is digital and can be downloaded to a pdf when the student leaves the school. Many schools around the world use Seesaw and if the new school uses Seesaw your child’s account can be activated and all previous work posted will be there.

During remote learning, parents were given a home code which gave access to the portfolio so that you could support your child with the various lessons. Since learning has been face to face home codes haven’t been necessary because the teachers support the children’s learning. Instead, parents need a family account. If you don’t have one please see Mr. Danai Maramba to set one up.

If you haven’t done so already, I encourage you to look at your child’s Seesaw portfolio in the next few weeks prior to the Student-Led Conferences (April 27th and 28th). Have a conversation with your child about their work and also comment on what you have seen.

Regards,
Beth Smith

PYP Coordinator’s message



Over the last two weeks Grade 5 has begun their PYP Exhibition journey. In the final year of the PYP, students engage in the IB PYP Exhibition — this is a student-led inquiry into a problem/issue and concept of interest to them. This is both a demonstration of student agency and a reflection on students’ capacity to orchestrate their own learning. The Exhibition offers students the opportunity to put their interests, Transdisciplinary thinking, knowledge, conceptual understandings, skills and attributes of the Learner Profile into action. They undertake their investigation both individually and with their peers, together with the guidance of a mentor and homeroom Exhibition teachers, from within the school community.

To highlight the beginning of the Exhibition process students took part in a two day workshop. Day 1: at Utopia -N/a’an ku sê and then Day 2: WIS. This is to kick start and unpack the process with some team building, camaraderie and excitement leading into their Exhibition journey 2021.

The PYP Exhibition is an opportunity for students to synthesise the essential elements of the PYP and share them with the wider school community. As a culminating experience, it is an opportunity for students to exhibit the attributes of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Learner Profile they have been developing throughout their engagement with the PYP. The Exhibition unit takes place under any Transdisciplinary Theme.

Based on the Transdisciplinary theme: “How the World Works”, students identify a problem and pitch their persuasive proposal. From here they form their concept inquiry groups based on similar interests and ideas. Throughout the process the students will be required to incorporate the essential elements of the PYP:

Knowledge, concepts, skills, Learner Profile Traits and action.

1. **Knowledge:** What do we want students to know about?
2. **Concepts:** What do we want students to understand? (big ideas)
3. **ATL Skills:** What do we want students to be able to do?
4. **Learner Profile Traits:** What do we want students to feel, value and demonstrate?
5. **ACTION!**



How can my new understanding evoke authentic and meaningful action?

The staff and Grade 5 students would like to thank WIS for sponsoring this workshop and making this experience possible. Thank you!

Thanks go to Ms. Annemarie, Ms. Jane, Mr. Gerson, Mr. Danai and Ms. Richenda for taking the time to go with Grade 5 to begin this exciting process.

Avril van Zyl - PYP Coordinator

Celebrating Namibia's Independence

In Grade 1



Oil pastel flag by Glorious.



Flag made on the Seesaw app by Soliyana.

Click [here](#) to hear what Philipp has to say about the Namibian flag colours. We focussed on Namibia during the Lower Primary Assembly.

- Click [here](#) to hear a Namib Desert version of “We’re going on a bear hunt” - adapted by Ms. Jan and 1J
- Click [here](#) to hear a sandy version of Baa-Baa Black Sheep - adapted and performed by Cole
- Click [here](#) to hear a Namibian song taught by Ms. Johanna

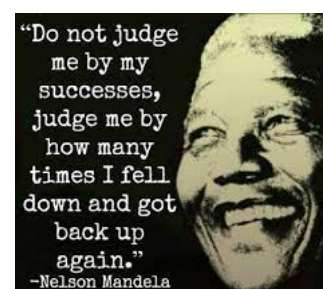


SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Growth Mindset and Grit

The events of the past year have turned the world upside down. More than ever, we had to learn to be flexible, adapt and find new ways of doing things. Our older generation, with established lives and routines needed to find ways to learn new skills. But the generation of young people growing up, are affected in a similar way too. Especially those finishing their school careers - those who are planning their futures - have had to accept that things are very often not the way they had hoped they would be.

In order to be able to manage our lives and interactions, it is so important that we develop and have a growth mindset and grit. Everything has changed: the way we travel, social interactions, education, even how economies are managed in this time of crisis.



If we approach the challenges we are facing in a manner that is positive and constructive and with a ‘can do’ attitude, we are likely to be able to manage these challenges and come out on top with a sense of achievement and satisfaction. We will be able to adapt to new situations and embrace them for the sake of our own wellbeing.

A group of WIS staff is currently doing a workshop on ‘Well being and Flourishing’. Part of this are modules on Positive Psychology, Mindfulness and Growth Mindset and Grit and

what I found most interesting in yesterday's session is the idea of ‘deliberate practice’.

Deliberate practice is something that can apply to all of us in many different situations - in our school lives (students), in our professional lives and in our personal lives. There are 4 aspects that drive deliberate practice:

1. There needs to be a reason and focus
2. Challenges must exceed skill
3. Immediate feedback to what we are doing is critical
4. And repetition - repetition - repetition.

According to Malcolm Gladwell (and I recommend his book *Outliers*) we can only become good at something if we practise it for at least 10 000 hours, but we need to be deliberate and motivated in getting there.

The most successful entrepreneurs not only have courage and imagination, they also have a sense of urgency. **They're not willing to wait.** They have a burning desire to get something done.

For our young generation who is building their futures, I wish that they see the urgency and importance of this deliberate practice so that they can help to shape the world in a way that works - for society but also for our planet. For those of us who are already well into our established lives, I wish that we can be receptive and adaptable to help this young generation to achieve just that - make your planet a better place.

Regards,
Maggie Reiff

Middle School Student Council

The Middle School Student Council is now in full swing. The Executive Committee for the group has now been decided through a vote last week. Our Middle School Student Council President for the year is Ishaan Agrawal from Grade 7 with Benjamin Oldenburg from Grade 6 serving as Vice President. Nicolis Swart in Grade 6 and Gonçalo Andersen in Grade 8 will work together as Treasurers and keep the books. Abigail Segamwenge will be the Secretary keeping everybody in line, and Naeem Robiati in Grade 7 will be our Reporting Officer for the year.

They have already begun fundraising, selling Easter Eggs before the March Holiday raising almost N\$ 5000. This week they are continuing to raise funds by selling raffle tickets in Secondary Homerooms for a draw on Thursday during second break to win this amazingly delicious Easter Hamper full of goodies.



Great work, Team!

Portuguese Cultural Explorations



Part of learning a new language is learning about the target language's culture. With this in mind, the Grade 6 and 7 Portuguese classes explored Easter traditions.

There is a traditional game originating from Brazil and the immigrants from Madeira to the country called "*Balamento*", the loser of the game is responsible for buying almonds for the winner the following year (Portuguese have the memory of an elephant - we never forget!).

One of the favourite parts of researching the culture is learning about the foods which accompany each

celebration. For Easter, the Portuguese eat *Bacalhau* (Cod fish) on Good Friday and Sunday is normally celebrated with *Cabrito Assado* (Roast Lamb). The gifts we exchange are normally *Amêndoas Doces* (Sweet Almonds) and naturally *Chocolates* (chocolates). We make a *Folar da Páscoa* (traditional Easter bread) which accompanies lunch but is also given as a gift from Godparents to Godchildren.

However, the all time favourite is the desserts. We have the *Pão-de-ló* (Portuguese sponge cake) which is maybe the best known cake in Portugal, this cake dates back to the 15th Century. It was made in nunneries and, as with all Portuguese cakes, was very rich in eggs. The recipe of Pão de Ló was taken to Japan in the sixteenth century by the first Portuguese sailors. At the time it was also called Pão de Castela, the Japanese adopted the recipe and call it Kasutera, one of the most typical cakes in Japan. This is the one which our students got to taste and write the recipe for. I wonder how many will experiment with this recipe over the Easter weekend?

Ms. Jacky

Oldest Living Relative

Oral History Comes Alive - Grade 9 by Aqeela and Jade



The Grade 9 students had a **blast** at creating a presentation that told the story of the life of our '*oldest living relative*'. The investigation into our past deepened our understanding of history and connect with our elders to learn more about their personal history. This was an eye opening experience. I have become closer with my grandfather and now know so much more about him. Learning his past makes me understand his personality and why he acts certain ways and has certain traits. He went through many struggles in life in the midst of apartheid and poverty which gives me an entirely new, respected opinion of him. It also helped me understand my very mixed bloodline and ancestry. My mixed blood lines have made it so that I cannot identify myself with just one or two ethnic groups. Sometimes this makes me feel out of place and unsure of who I am but now I realise that my mixed bloodlines are quite special and interesting. This was one of the many examples where one shouldn't judge a book by it's cover. In regards to history, this has given me information and a source for my coursework on the apartheid laws towards non-white South Africans. This would broaden my perspective and would be a reliable primary source. I have found this project to be useful in helping me to find myself and to have a better understanding of others.

What I took away from this, was an incredible experience, as it deepened my understanding of what hard work means. Learning that my ancestors who lived in poverty and worked incredibly hard to support the family gave me a totally different perspective on life. It also showed what is allowed and not allowed in my culture, for example; not saying my ancestors' names to show respect. The whole of the Grade 9 history class enjoyed doing this project, because we got to learn something new about our families and ourselves and to deepen our family connections which is always a plus.

A Day in the IB Biology Class

The Grade 11 Biology class had a visit from the IBDP Coordinator and History teacher, Rick Fitzpatrick, during a chromatography experiment. The Grade 11 students were tasked with separating and identifying the different pigments in a plant through the use of a scientific technique, paper chromatography.

Students were expected to liquify a leaf of their choice to extract the pigment. They then used a pencil to draw a line about 10mm from the bottom edge of the paper and a spot in the middle of the line. The extracted pigment was placed on the spot on the paper which was then suspended on a stick and placed in a container with the tip of the paper touching the solvent.

The solvent is absorbed by the paper and moves up the paper by capillary action. As the solvent crosses the area containing plant pigment extract, the pigments dissolve and move with the solvent. The solvent carries the dissolved pigments as it moves up the paper. The pigments are carried along at different rates because they are not equally soluble. Therefore, the less soluble pigments will move slower up the paper than the more soluble pigments.



Paper chromatography is useful for identifying unknown compounds and is often used in crime scene investigations to match ink, lipstick or coloured fibres to the evidence.

Iuze Limbo - Grade 11 Biology

Grade 11 thoughts and experiences

We are Grade 11 Biology students of the IB diploma program, sharing our thoughts and experiences in our Biology class.

The subject is composed of eleven topics (including Higher Level topics), and we are currently on topic 2.9, Photosynthesis.

Photosynthesis is the process by which plants synthesise raw products, also known as inorganic compounds into organic compounds. On Friday 26th March, we conducted small experiments, which helped us separate and isolate different photosynthetic pigments, using chromatography. We did this experiment in a variety of steps, from collecting and grinding our leaves, to observing the different pigments on the chromatography paper.

Our group consisted of four students, and we ran this experiment with certain levels of success and complications, such as struggling to distinguish each photosynthetic pigment.

"I felt like this experiment was a good introduction into this sub-topic, as it has allowed us to engage different levels of the topic (photosynthesis), and has given us more skills in terms of conducting an experiment"- Lukene Chauke

"After doing notes on the topic and going over it in class, I think that this experiment was an excellent way for us to hone our knowledge and test what we had learned. We had to use both our experimental and analysis skills in order to perform the experiment which not only allowed us to learn more about photosynthesis, but also to learn from the mistakes we made when doing the experiment and/or analysing the results afterwards." - Olivia Shino



Lukene chauke and Olivia Shino , of the IBDP Class of 2022

IB Learner Profile

Caring

Congratulations to the following seven students and one teacher for displaying the IB Learner Profile trait, **Caring**, for the month of March

Well done to, Gr. 6 - Hala Ayoub, Gr. 7 - Malik Bassingthwaighte, Gr. 8 - Tolou Wolf, Gr. 9 - Yannick Derra, Gr. 10 - Dombelle Joao, Gr. 11 - Tessa Wolf, Gr. 12 - Esnard Saisai and Teacher - Jeff Bonazzo.



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

Principled

A PRINCIPLED student acts with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice, and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups, and communities with which they interact. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them. IB students are infused with the academic integrity that is a fundamental value of universities and colleges.

"If it is not right, do not do it. If it is not true, do not say it!" Be a principled WIS student. Do you understand the effects of cheating on yourself, your school, and your peers? Do you know how to reference the sources used in your work? Are you strong enough to own up to and live with the consequences of your mistakes - taking responsibility?

Please send your nominations to Ms. Angie by 26 April 2021 - nominations for students and teachers!

W.O.R.D.
Milla Leibbrandt, Grade 7CK
reading for WORD.



INCLUSION

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the survey on 'Inclusion and Diversity at WIS' that was sent out in February. Your thoughtful contributions have helped begin the process of unpacking our philosophy and mindset of inclusivity at WIS.

Your honest insights have allowed us to measure our current shared understandings and practices and how we would like to move forward, this being the beginning of the conversation, with the intention of collaboratively implementing a working document from all stakeholders of WIS, for WIS. We would like to take this opportunity to invite those who have the capacity, interest or willingness to support or join the Inclusion Committee to please contact the Chair Ms. Laura lsmith@wis.edu.na

The image below was generated from your responses. Thank you.



2021 ZONE 3 JUNIOR OPEN QUALIFIERS INVITATION

Back To School Namibia Market

About Back To School Namibia

Back to School Namibia is a charity project to raise money to help kids not to drop out of school in remote areas of Namibia. We are a team of expats in Windhoek and it is only based on volunteer work.

100% of donations go directly to the kids in need through stationery, school uniforms, sport and educational materials.

You can watch this short video to show you what we have already done in Kavango East last month: [Watch it here!](#)

You can also visit our website for more information: www.backtoschoolnamibia.com

One stall N\$300 - FNCC on 10th April (9:00 to 12:00)

It is a good occasion to get rid of the items that one doesn't use anymore. We also open it to other vendors to offer more offers to our visitors. Back To School will sell second hand clothes and a few more things.

All the proceeds of our sales (from the stall Back To School Namibia) will go to buy stationery for schools in Kavango.

Many thanks for your support, we do believe that all together we can make a small difference.

Virginie Schaffert - 0812 22 33 04

