



HIGH SCHOOL NEWS – Term 1, 2022



Games at the After School Social on Friday, Week 3

With this newsletter, the High School Team warmly offer a glimpse into some of the key learning across High School in Term 1. A key focus is supporting students to deep engagement within their learning, by enabling them to see how it is meaningful for their lives. Another key goal is to create a stimulating, engaging and supportive learning and social environment, for both teachers and students.

ENGLISH with Stephanie

Class 7 and 8: 'The Alchemist' by Paulo Coelho

Both classes are reading 'The Alchemist' this term. A book about finding your 'personal legend' or 'destiny' and the Universe conspiring to help you achieve it, students have already begun offering examples of these 'special coincidences' in their lives. Both classes are reading the novel or listening to the audiobook and have begun drawing their maps to follow protagonist Santiago's journey. Students will be exploring the themes and symbolism of this text and writing creatively about their own experiences, so those students who previously visited 'The Alchemist' at Blue Mountains Steiner should see this classic tale in a new light.

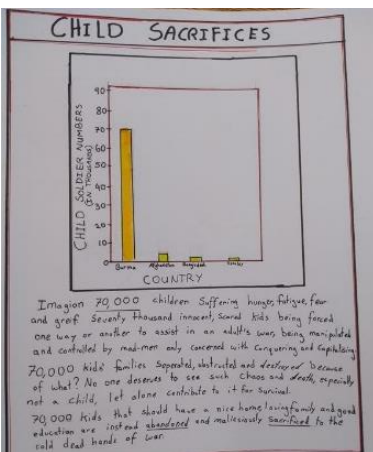
Class 9-10: Spoken Truths – Poetry and Beyond.

For the first few weeks of this term students will be writing 600 words from the heart and consider entering their prose or poetry into the annual Whitlam Institute's 'What Matters?' writing competition. For the rest of the term – on either side of their Geography odyssey camp! – students will be looking at 'Spoken Truths' where they will examine, annotate, analyse and write about traditional poetry, song lyrics and slam poetry. Students will also compose a slam poem, review each other's work, and then present their compositions to the class <https://www.whitlam.org/what-matters>

MATHS with Leanne

Class 7: This term we are focused on developing numeracy skills such as decimals, fractions, percentages, rates and ratios within the common theme of sports. For example, students looked at the top speed on the alpine speed slopes, converted it to metres per second, and then measured out on the school driveway how far the skier would travel in one second. As of last week, students have a weekly homework sheet, each with the same topic but with varying levels of difficulty, depending on the individual student.

Class 8: Students have been introduced to the concept of exponential numbers and then to develop and practice introductory index laws. One scenario that was discussed in class was the story of the magician who presented a chess board to a king and asked for one grain of wheat on the first square on day one, two grains on the second square on day two, four grains on the third square, eight grains on the fourth square, then 16, 32, and continuing for 64 days. On looking up world wheat production, we found that it would take more than just a few years to put the right amount of wheat for the 64th day! We then compared this to pocket money, asking for 1c on the first day, and so on as before. For the first few days there is very little pocket money, but how long before the pocket money was more than \$1,000,000? As of last week, students have a weekly homework sheet which is set out for different ability levels, and beginning this week, there will be individual learning support lessons or extension groups depending on students' learning needs.



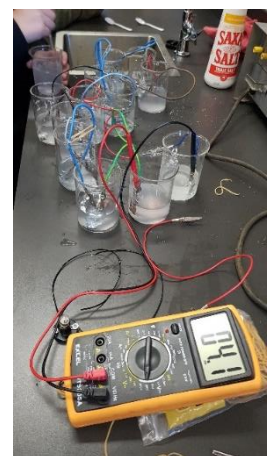
Class 9-10: This term we are looking at statistics, with a focus on current and historical data from various situations such as wars and famines. In one example, the class looked at countries where there are – or have been – child soldiers. Students looked at statistical bias in media reports, as well as misrepresentation of data. The mathematical skills learnt are divided by individual student ability, with more advanced students developing more advanced skills, such as using standard deviation to assist with analysing data. Last week saw the commencement of a small group of students who want to expand their algebra skills.

SCIENCE with Curt

Class 7 and 8: In a shocking start to the year, both classes have been investigating the Physics topic of 'electricity'! From the earliest discoveries to 'current' use, students have been experiencing and investigating the power of electricity and magnetism. Early experiences included tasting electrical current and exploring its uses, as well as making a telegraph in the lab to send morse code messages. Further exploration gave an opportunity to make a battery in small groups using salt water and then connect the individual cells to make one large battery. The journey of discovery continues as we find links between electricity and magnetism.

Class 9-10: Did you know the earth first formed some 4.6 billion years ago? Class 9 and 10 are in the know! They have been investigating the history of the earth and the geologic processes and features that have formed our living world. The scale of time involved in the development of life on earth and our brief time here has been a humbling experience for some students, as have the geological processes involved in shaping the world. They have found that the earth is very dynamic and active, in which very little remains fixed across geologic time. Even our local environment of the Blue Mountains was once the floor of an ocean and later mostly covered by lava flows as much as 60m deep, emanating from about 95 volcanoes that once erupted across Sydney and the Blue Mountains.

The class battery!



GEOGRAPHY with Sarah (7-8) and Lynn (9-10)

Class 7-8: The Global Garden

Why are we learning about Africa? This was one of the first questions from students this term. Good question. Where do we begin...?

Did you know that the Amazon Rainforest wouldn't exist without minerals blown across from the Sahara Desert or that rhinos have co-evolved with oxpeckers who kindly remove ticks and act as an alarm system for the shortsighted rhino? Did you know that the Kayapo people have carefully felled trees to make their gardens in the Amazon, enriched them with composted mineral rich ash, and grown medicinal and food crops where farms now fail on depleted soil? Where did the rare earths in your phone come from? The clothes on your back? What environments were changed to get them there? Who has cared for those lands for centuries?

These are the BIG questions we are investigating as we meet the global garden, Gaia, Mother Earth, this connected planet that we are inextricably part of. Each continent with its unique character, each biome with its intricate balance, each food web with its interlaced connections and each Indigenous cosmology woven with wisdom, reveals to us the truth: it matters. We are connected to Africa, to the world, in strange and beautiful ways. That is why we call it the global garden, and that is why we are learning about Africa!

Class 9-10: Food Sovereignty, Water and Changing Biomes

Which comes first: the trees or the rain? Rain and trees/vegetation are symbiotic processes (forests pull water toward them). This is known as the Biotic Pump. We have been investigating how restoration of the small water cycle through the creation of healthy soils (soil carbon soak) and improved vegetation cover can address food scarcity as well as mitigate impacts of climate change such as extreme weather events. The students are individually investigating regenerative agricultural movements that restore the ecology of place as well as providing food in a variety of biomes.

THE WATER PROJECT: Classes 7-10 with Lynn



Can you pick which is which? Pictured are soil samples from kitchen garden, orchard, bush circle and an eroded slope.

Sarah and I have been working together to bring the Water Project to High School Students. We have walked the site, observed and mapped the design elements existing in the school that retain rain in the soil and also where the erosion areas are. In the mapping process, students were surprised to see how many design elements exist in the school to capture rain and keep it on the school site.

Next, we conduct experiments to examine the quality of the Soil Carbon Soak across all areas of the school. From this we can set about improving the soak, perhaps with the construction of a rain garden and with strategic planting of vegetation. The idea is to keep all rain that falls on site in the soil, and then to have this water available to plants and trees, which is key to a healthy small water cycle. The more biodiverse the soil, the more vegetation cover, the more we can draw down carbon as well as contribute to regulating the water cycle. This is a practical way to contribute to mitigating the impacts of climate change in our local environment.



Map of the school and the design features that capture and retain rain on site. By Tara, Year 10

MUSIC with Julie

Class 7 is studying graphic notation while exploring the question "What is Music?". We are experimenting with producing a range of sounds using water and the rims of glasses of various shapes and sizes. As a class we have composed a piece using these sounds and are representing it graphically on a score. This will lead into discovering more conventional notation.

Class 8 is becoming familiar with performing on keyboards. Each student is beginning at their own level and being challenged to persevere and develop their skills. Students should be aiming to perform simple piano pieces with both hands together. Ultimately students will choose their own performance repertoire.

Class 9-10 is studying Australian Art Music. Each week we listen and analyse a piece by an Australian contemporary composer which we then perform as a class during the lesson. Students are encouraged to bring in their own instrument for this practical session.

JAPAN CLUB with Sayoko

Embracing a Japanese saying, "This cup of matcha tea is never the same - treasure every meeting for it will never recur", a group of eight keen learners sat together and savoured a cup of matcha tea at the traditional tea ceremony in our first lesson. We have already learnt conversation based various expressions and Japanese writing scripts. I very much appreciate their commitment and look forward to their further progress.



This also informs you, supportive families, that our last lesson for Term 1 will be Monday 14 February as I will be going to Japan. Our lesson resumes in Week 4 of Term 2, Monday 16 May. Anyone High School student is welcome to join!

TECHNOLOGY



Class 7 and 8: Jewellery with Steph

This term, Class 7 and Class 8 are in the Artisan Workshop and making silver rings. In Week 1, students were given a safety rundown and by the end of the lesson, most had measured their fingers with the ring gauge, cut their silver and then annealed it with the gas torches to soften it for shaping. We're using sterling silver, and once joined, filed, sanded and polished, the students will be wearing a very professional-looking ring, all of their own making! Once mastered, students will apply these new skills to make a

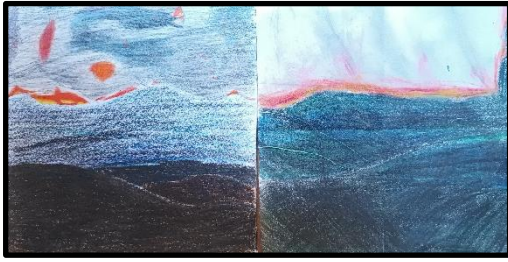
sterling silver pendant of their own design later in the term.

Class 9-10: Woodwork with Derek

Under the tutelage of Derek, Kindlehill parent, engineer and woodworker extraordinaire, Class 9 -10 have been putting their practical skills to work and tackling any jobs that need doing around the school. Whilst some students are undertaking tool maintenance and planing rough edges, others are measuring and making bag hooks for High School. One group has tackled the huge task of researching and designing stools for students that can be stored under the new benches in the Artisan Studio. There is no doubt that future Technology classes will thank them for their hard work when they're taking a restful break!



VISUAL ARTS with Stephanie



Class 7 and 8: Many Parts, One Whole

This term we will be creating two segmented artworks within the unit 'Many parts, one whole'. Examining the work of a variety of artists who have used this concept in developing their artworks, students will focus on the elements of colour and texture to create a variety of small drawings that will be combined to create one large artwork. The beauty of these artworks is the

way each drawing is supported by the others, and unites the variety of techniques that students bring to the work. Each class will be drawing a photograph of the 2019 Blue Mountains fires, and we will enter this artwork into the Australia Art in Nature competition <https://australiaartinnature.com/>. Students will then use some artworks by Brett Whiteley as inspiration to create some ink drawings of the ocean and Katoomba Falls. *Drawings by Vivienne and Eboni*

Class 9-10: Elevating the Everyday – Lino prints

'Elevating the Everyday' will see the class creating relief prints of everyday items found around home or school, as exemplified by Australian Modernist printmakers of the 1930s. Elevating these seemingly boring items to a new status, students have started creating their artwork from direct observational sketches, and they will transfer them to lino in the coming weeks. With a focus on the elements of line and shape, these beautiful prints should be worthy of framing by the time they are finished! *Sketch by Otto*



PDHPE with Lindsey

Class 7 Personal Development and Health (PDH): We have been discussing some of the changes and challenges that we have faced last year and looking at what we may face this year. This has led us straight to the topic of puberty!

Class 8 PDH: We too have begun the year by reflecting on changes and challenges and looking at how well we face them. Again, we have been led to the topic of puberty. There has been some fun and lively discussion around this topic! Our next stop is 'risky behaviour'. We will be looking at a range of scenarios involving, drugs, relationships, and road use behaviour.

Class 7-8 PE: We have started the year with a couple of familiar team games to get back into the swing of things – basketball and street hockey. We are about to begin training for our upcoming whole school athletics carnival. I'm super excited!

Class 9-10 Work Education: In the careers lesson that I have with the class on Tuesdays, we are working on identifying our character strengths, writing elevator pitches, CV's and building to approaching employers for internships one day a week in Term 3. This will be a valuable opportunity for students to test out a potential future career choice.

Class 9 -10 PDH: This term we are delving into the world of fitness. Students are analysing their own fitness habits, their likes and dislikes, what resources we have in our community, and looking at the different components of fitness, and the types of training and the principles of fitness training. Students are setting fitness goals and will then be partnering up with another member of the class to write fitness programs that they will need to undertake for 3 to 4 weeks (enough time to build some healthy habits).

Class 9-10 PE: We have eased ourselves back into the year with some lawn games and a swim at the lake. We are hoping for some more warm Thursday afternoons this term, so that we can catch up on our lost summer! Training for the upcoming athletics carnival will be underway shortly.



INSTRUMENTS AND ALL THAT JAZZ by Lynn

Some students have continued on from Primary School with small group instrument tuition. New students can join these groups where appropriate. Ensembles in wind and string continue into High School and at some time we may be able to separate Primary from High School. We also have a Friday lunch Jazz Ensemble, though students need to be accomplished players to join this.

On Wednesday there is a lunchtime choir for interested High School students. After this, all students come together for percussion/singing at the start of the afternoon program. We look for opportunities for students to perform individually and in ensembles, such as at Fairs, school assemblies, or even just to their peers.

Julie will also take opportunities for class groups to share what they have been learning in the general music classes.

Music is a wonderfully social activity and supports a culture of positive peer interactions during the teenage years. We love music at Kindlehill!

HIGH SCHOOL IN LIFE MOVEMENT by Lynn



The Giant Dragonfly, a handcrafted gift from last year's Class 10, is now hung in High School, gesturing toward its habitat, the lake. The dragonfly is an expert in movement.

Class 7 are working on a simple but beautiful expansion/contraction exercise that transforms into the feeling of a flower opening and closing. They are also learning the first steps in juggling.

Class 8 are experiencing geometry in movement – for example, with Cassini's Curve – in a way that we can embody the connectedness of water. We are also rhythmically throwing and catching copper rods in social formations.

Class 9-10 are reviewing all of the elements described above, but hopefully with some finesse!

Throughout it all, one tries to embody a sense that we are social beings, interrelated whilst growing into our beautiful individual selves. Simple mindfulness techniques for grounding and connecting are also part of these weekly movement sessions.