Let’s get ready for a busy, challenging and fun 2014!

Senior School (Year 5 and 6) Curriculum Newsletter Term One 2014

A warm welcome to our Year 5 students and families and our returning Year 6 families. We hope you have all had a restful and enjoyable holiday and are as excited about the year ahead as we are! As always, Years 5 & 6 will be extremely busy with many challenges along the way. We will keep in touch with you via a termly newsletter and information evenings but please feel free to make an appointment to see your child’s teacher if you have any major concerns or drop in for a quick chat before or after school. There’s lots of important information here so......please read on!

Meet the Teachers...

Julie Nield SN
Senior School Team Leader
Julie is from the UK and emigrated to Australia with her family 7 years ago. Julie is a History specialist and is passionate about History in the new national curriculum. She is in her fifth year in the Year 5/6 area at WPPS. Julie enjoys exploring her newly adopted country, athletics and travel.

Samantha Teng 5T
Samantha is from Vancouver, Canada and has recently moved to Melbourne after teaching in London for 7 years. She has thoroughly enjoyed her time teaching the fantastic students at Wattle Park Primary. Some of her interests include travelling, reading from her Kindle and trying new foods.

Moira Spierings 6S
Moira has been teaching at Wattle Park for a number of years and has taught in grades right across the school. Many of the students in this area will have been taught by Moira in the Junior School, and know her well. The Year 5 and 6 team are delighted to welcome Moira with her wealth of experience to the team for 2014.

Karl Jenkinson 6J
Karl lives with his family in Blackburn. He joins us after 5 years teaching upper primary in Dandenong. Prior to teaching, Karl spent time as a research scientist (Univ. of Melbourne) and coordinating public health projects. Karl loves family time, travel, reading, food and watching the Hawks dominate!

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IMPORTANT:
• Information Night Tuesday 11th February in the Year 5/6 Flexible Learning Space. This is your chance to hear more about the teaching and learning in Years 5 & 6.
• Punctuality: Please support your children in maximizing valuable teaching time by ensuring they arrive at school in line by 8:50am.
• School diaries: Diaries must be at school every day and go home every night. They are a valuable organizational and communication tool, so we ask that parents check and sign the diaries on a weekly basis.

Integrated Curriculum

SCIENCE
Year 5: The Solar System. The earth is a part of a system of planets orbiting around the Sun. Students will consider the role of the Sun as the provider of energy to the earth.
Year 6: Geological Change. Sudden geological changes or extreme weather conditions can affect the surface of the earth. Students will consider the effect of e.g. drought on living and non living aspects of the environment.

HISTORY
Year 5: British Colonies in Australia After 1800. Students will study the economic, political and social reasons for British settlements in Australia.
Year 6: Moving to Federation. Students will study the events leading towards Federation and the influences on Australia’s form of government.
Literacy

Reading
This term students will develop reading strategies aimed at improving their overall reading ability and comprehension. Through the use of author studies on Chris Van Allsburg and Colin Thompson, Reader’s Notebooks and Literature Circles, students will focus on making connections, identifying character traits and discovering meanings within texts. Students will also be encouraged to ask questions when reading and will track their thinking on post-its. Students will focus on who they are as a reader, what their strengths and weaknesses are and will be active in improving their reading. Students should continue to read at home each night and ensure Literature Circle homework is completed and ready to be shared with their group on a weekly basis.

Writing
Students will take time to set up their Writer’s Notebook and understand the process of developing a piece of writing from ‘seed’ to published piece. They will be encouraged to bring in a variety of their own ‘seeds’ to brainstorm ideas for possible writing pieces. Through the use of the Writer’s Notebook, students are able to follow their own interests and write about ideas and topics that are truly their own, allowing all students to develop their own individual style as a writer. As well as using the Writer’s Notebook, students will also be involved in writing lessons focussed the purpose, structure and features of Information reports and Exposition texts.

Spelling
A variety of spelling strategies will be investigated in weekly spelling lessons focussing on phonetic awareness, visual strategies and morphemic and etymological strategies (word origins). Students will select new spelling words on a Monday and complete LSCWC (look, say, cover, write, check) of their words each day before being tested on Friday.

Speaking and Listening
Students will contribute to class discussions and sharing sessions developing suitable tone and volume. Listening and responding appropriately are also a focus of these sessions. Students will also investigate debates in linking with their understanding of expository texts.

Numeracy

If two’s company and three’s a crowd, what are four and five?

Students will be encouraged to take risks and be confident in their personal knowledge of Mathematics as they investigate many different areas of the Mathematics curriculum. Students will investigate whole numbers, developing strategies to be applied in mental and written computation. They will focus on counting, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Other areas of mathematics to be covered include statistics, probability and chance, measurement of length and 2D shapes.

ICT

The Senior School ICT goal for 2014 is to extend the use of ICT to develop 21st century learning skills and improve student learning outcomes, across all curriculum areas. Students will use ICT for research, communication and presentation purposes. Students will be exposed to a range of programs and will be encouraged to develop their information technology skills. Level four students will participate in a Cyber Safety unit aimed at ensuring students use ICT in a safe and responsible manner.

Transition

Year 6 students will receive documentation later this term regarding secondary school placements for 2015. Please keep an eye out for these important documents and ensure these are returned to your child’s teacher by the due date to ensure your child has the best chance of gaining a place at the school of your choice. If you have any questions regarding the Secondary School transition process, please attend the Level 4 Information Evening on the 11th of February.

Hard at work...