

Partners in Learning Newsletter

Moving forward *With the Passion to Succeed*

Assistant Principal

STEM – Canberra Conference

Last week Mr. Spudvilas-Powell, myself and two Year 6 students – Airlie Sheppard and Anyang Wal travelled to Canberra to learn more about STEM practices. STEM is an acronym for the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. We learned that STEM is part of at least two major changes in our society. In our world of rapid technologically driven change STEM is thought to be the foundation of our future economy and wider prosperity. STEM involves not only the content but also the process, the *how* we work together to solve complex scientific problems.

The goal for schools and educators is to not only create little scientists and engineers but to also build the capacity of students to be better able to live in the world, and to empower them to make the world a place worth living in. STEM practices are about the capabilities students demonstrate while exploring the content in mathematics, science, engineering and technology. The STEM practices include:

- Spatial reasoning
- Location and arrangement
- Patterns and relationships
- Design and making
- Change
- Developing and improving explanations and solutions
- Problem posing

The most important element of STEM is LEARNING not the subject. We learned that the values of curiosity, resilience (keep trying), problem solving, critical and creative thinking, intercultural understanding, personal and social capabilities and ethical understanding that students take on board as they are engaged in STEM experiences, is what really matters.

It was a wonderful experience to watch our students get excited as we worked through a prototyping exercise where we collaborated together to create a structure that would withstand a high level of shaking. As we worked through the task the values of curiosity and resilience were at the forefront for both our students. I was reminded then that STEM practices are everyday practices that help our students to stay future minded, involve the family and community and provide opportunities for students to think scientifically and make sense of the world through experiments and evidence.

Warmest Regards,
Kathy Cvitkovic
Assistant Principal

"I have no special talent. I am only passionately curious." – Albert Einstein



IMPORTANT DATES

Assembly– Friday 22nd

September 9:00am

Last Day Term 3– Friday 22nd

September 2:10pm Dismissal

Term 4 — Monday 9th October

Please note: Students are to wear hats during Term 4.



Jessica Hodge



A Word from Our School Vice Captains

Dear Parents/ Guardians,

Last night, Wednesday 20th September MWPS had the Art Show, it was a successful night!

Tomorrow, Friday 22nd September is the last day of Term 3, students will be dismissed at 2:10pm. Assembly will be held at 9am.

We hope you have a great holiday!

Thank you :)

Getting it right in English!

Fun Literacy activities for the holidays

The school holidays have crept up again. The weather is getting much warmer with sunny days ahead. We know many children (and teachers!) are looking forward to a nice break and getting outside to enjoy the beautiful weather. However, if you are after some other stimulating activities to keep children occupied, we encourage you to continue to build their literacy skills, ready for Term 4.

Some ideas are suggested below:

Enjoy the outdoors!

Make the most of the beautiful weather and take a picnic blanket to your local park. In between bouts of football or the playground, have some quiet time and encourage your children to read some well-loved or new books in the shade.



Visit your local library

Most local libraries often have some great activities on during the school holidays. It is also an opportunity to encourage children to continue reading at home, with engaging and interesting books they have chosen for themselves.



Games

There are some great board games that promote Literacy. Some of these include: Scattergories Junior, Celebrity Heads, Guess Who, Scrabble, Boggle, Pictionary Junior.

If your children are still learning to automatically read High Frequency Words, encourage them to play games with their siblings or friends such as SNAP!, Memory or Go Fish with these words. Ask your child's teacher for a copy of the cards.



Technology

Don't forget there are many great educational apps and programs that can be accessed on your children's electronic devices.



Red Writing

iPad App



Book Creator

iPad App



Sock Puppets

iPad App



www.teachyourmonstertoread.com



www.heraldsun.com.au/kids-news

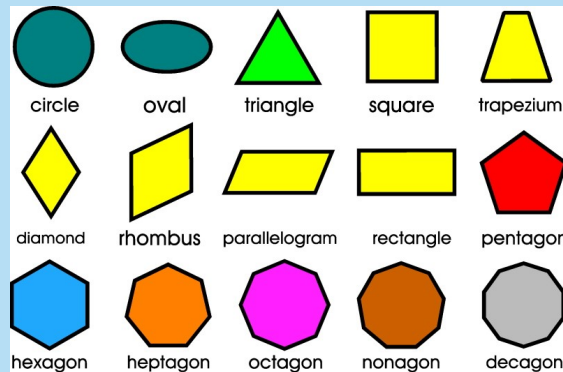


<https://www.getepic.com/>

Sarah Marshall- Leading Teacher Literacy

Marvellous Maths

Working with Shapes F-2



Shapes are an important attribute in our world around us. We use shape as a way of identifying and organizing visual information. The topic Shape belongs to Geometry in the Mathematics curriculum.

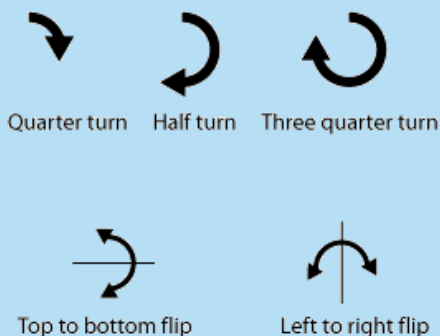
Students begin by being able to identify the important features of two-dimensional shapes and use these distinguishing features to compare and contrast various shapes. For example, triangles have three straight sides and the three angles can be of various sizes and rectangles (and squares) have four straight sides and four right angles. Students also learn the common geometric names for 2 dimensional shapes at this stage. See above.

Students then move on to physically carrying out the actions of turning, flipping and sliding shapes, and predicting the results by visualising what this might look like in simple cases. Students practise identifying the shapes that will fit into gaps and how the shapes need to be manipulated by turning (rotating) or flipping (reflecting).



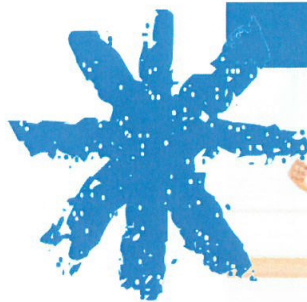
It is important that students understand that changing a shape by turning, flipping or sliding does not change what *kind* of shape it is, and that the moved/transformed shape is the same as the original, only in a different position or pointing in a different direction.

The transformations discussed at this stage include:



In later years, students will move on to classifying shapes and angles. But first, playing with shapes and knowing all about shapes is the first step!

Leonie Hooke



Failure! What a genius idea!

by Michael Grose



A leading Victorian independent school is actively encouraging its students to fail, which is an absolutely genius idea.

As reported in *The Age* (28th August 2017), Ivanhoe Girls Grammar School is holding Failure Week to teach students that making mistakes is a crucial part of learning.

Teachers are sharing their personal stories of failure and students from prep to Year 12 are learning challenging activities such as abstract painting, juggling, reciting poetry and dancing. At the end of the week they'll be displaying their new skills in front of each other with the emphasis being on stuff ups rather than perfection.

I suspect for many students making errors, stuffing up and struggling to get things right will feel uncomfortable. But that's the whole point.

Kids need to fail more if they are to succeed

Traditionally, schools and, in recent years, parents have excelled at celebrating student success. "Top marks", "Dux of the school" and "Perfect score!" are the types of aspirations that teachers and parents have for kids.

But to many students academic success means "Don't stuff it up!", "No mistakes please!" and "You've got to get it right!"

It's been widely reported that Australian kids are anxious, perfectionistic and risk averse. They just don't feel comfortable with failure. And who could blame them? We've hidden failure and disappointment from them for far too long. In recent years there's been a common perception that failure damages people. Unfortunately, this is to the detriment of young people's future success.



Failure is an integral part of learning anything significant, challenging or worthwhile. Resilient learners realise that they don't always get things right the first or even second time but with effort and practice they will master skills, find solutions and gain the knowledge they need to succeed.

As reported in *The Age*, failure, if handled properly, provides kids with the feedback they need to help them achieve excellence. Yes, kids need positive feedback too ... but only when it's deserved. When we tell a child everything is wonderful when, in fact, his work is mediocre at best, we give him a false sense of achievement.

Failure takes bravery

I've long been a fan of encouragement. What I mean by that is parents and teachers focusing their comments on

parenting*ideas

the processes (effort, contribution, improvement) of what kids do rather than the outcomes. Encouragement places the locus of control onto the child, which is essential for resilience. That doesn't mean that we avoid giving a child feedback if their work or behaviour isn't up to scratch. By all means, we should inform kids when they need to lift their game, but this feedback needs to be provided respectfully and with sensitivity if we want it to be taken on board.

The real strength of encouragement is hidden in its French derivative, the verb *courre*: 'to give heart'. Encouraging teachers and parents to somehow find a way to give their kids the courage to be imperfect. It takes a brave soul to make a mistake sometimes, particularly when others may be watching.

Failure needs a supportive environment

It's all very well to encourage kids to have a go but they won't stretch themselves unless mistakes are truly accepted by the people that matter to them. A child won't speak up in class when he's unsure of the answer if he knows his classmates will laugh at his errors. Similarly, if kids are to take more learning and social risks they need to know that mistakes and stuff ups won't be thrown back in their faces at home by parents or siblings.

Five simple ways to encourage kids to fail and celebrate errors

- 1. Model failure:** Next time you break a plate when emptying the dishwasher, avoid negative language ("What a klutz!") or catastrophising ("This is the worst thing ever!"). It's a plate. Stuff happens.
- 2. Tell stories of failure:** We tend to be nostalgic of the past and tell kids of the good stuff when we talk about our childhoods. But kids love to hear the warts'n'all stories of the difficulties you faced and stuff-ups you made as a kid. It makes you more human and also gives them permission to do the same.
- 3. Encourage them:** Develop a vocabulary around effort, improvement, contribution and enjoyment. Be your child's cheerleader but don't avoid giving feedback when necessary.
- 4. Tell and show kids how to improve:** Feedback is always best when it has a teaching focus. So next time you pick up a child on their poor schoolwork or untidy bedroom, make sure you remind them how to do it right.
- 5. Provide the time to fail and get it right:** Modern teachers and parents are time poor. Crowded curricula and busy lifestyles make us less tolerant of failure. But as anyone who has taught a young child to do up his or her shoelaces will know, some things can't be rushed. Time and patience can be your best assets when helping kids to handle learning challenges.



Failure doesn't sit comfortably with many of us, but it's an essential element to success. The idea of a school setting aside a week to encourage their students to fail more may challenge our perceptions of the education process. But it's a very timely, very smart idea that should be adopted and adapted by schools and families everywhere.



Michael Grose

Michael Grose, founder of Parenting Ideas, is one of Australia's leading parenting educators. He's the author of 10 books for parents including *Thriving!* and the best-selling *Why First Borns Rule the World* and *Last Borns Want to Change It*, and his latest release *Spoonfed Generation: How to raise independent children*.

We're a Parenting Ideas school

parentingideas.com.au/schools

Deadly News

Last week, Friday, students from Koori Club and The Culture Club performed at the Melton South Dream Big Festival. Under the Big Top Tent, students from local schools as well as members of the community, came together to promote health and wellbeing. The day was filled with stilt walkers, amazing song and dance performances as well as some enchanting story telling. The Koori Club students were joined by children from Melton South to perform songs and help illustrate the creation story of Bunjil and Waa. Year 5 student, Jasmine said about the day, "It was great to let other people know about the culture we represent." The Culture Club students performed their own version of the Haka followed by a Polynesian cultural dance choreographed by T.K from Melton West's EMBRACE program. Year 5 student, Sharon explained, "It's good to show our talents and culture to other people."



Students from the Koori Club showing their clap stick skills.



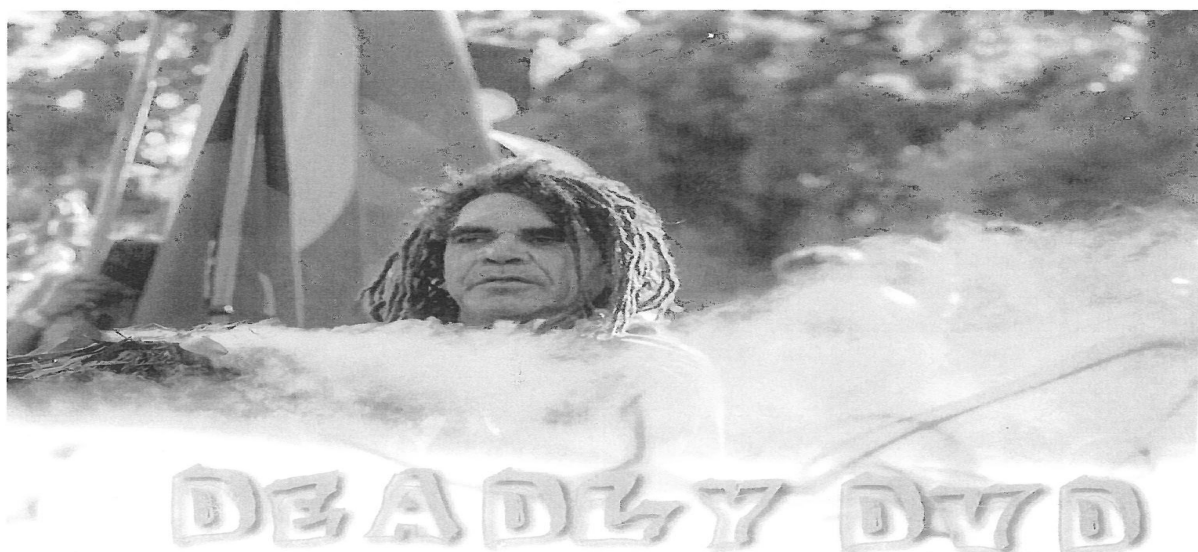
The Culture Club boys adding a bit of fun to the dance.



The Culture Club girls showing it's all about the hips.



Bunjil eagle flying down to his nest.



RECONCILIATION PROJECT 2017

Are you...
DEADLY? STRONG IN YOUR CULTURE?
WANT TO TELL YOUR STORY?

Be part of Melton City Council's DEADLY DVD project – it's solid!

CELEBRATE RECONCILIATION AND COME JOIN US FOR A YARN
Community BBQ and DVD filming
Saturday 23 September, 2pm-9pm
Kirrip Aboriginal Community House
26 Exford Rd, Melton South

CONTACT
Sally Atkinson
Email: sallya@melton.vic.gov.au
Phone: 9747 5285

This initiative is funded by the Australian Government

