

Assistant Principal Message

Dear Parents and Carers,

Term one is almost over and what a busy term it has been. Teacher professional development, visiting artists, sports, showcases and above all lots of learning. One craze that has taken over the hearts and minds of a large number of our students is Pokémon cards. Pokémon is a phenomenon that originated in Japan a number of years ago as a Nintendo Game Boy game about little monsters with special powers. As the craze spread to kids around the world children have taken to the cartoons, comic books and trading cards with gusto. We all know that Pokémon trading cards are a fad, and like other fads, they will come and go as soon as the novelty is gone.

A number of schools have taken to banning the trading of cards basically for two reasons; firstly, card trades going awry leading to arguments and fights and secondly children being taken advantage of—novice, younger players getting pressured or tricked into losing valuable cards through trading with older or more experienced players. Often when children are swapping the cards they say they didn't mean it and they want them back.

At Melton West Primary we don't mind letting students bring some things to school that might be of interest to them, as long as the children demonstrate responsibility with the items they bring to school. However, a number of students are bringing the cards into the classrooms and thereby causing disruption of instruction time. They are arguing out in the playground and continuing this into the classroom, thereby, making teachers use valuable teaching and learning time to sort out issues. Cards are going missing causing great distress to students and once again causing loss of teaching and learning time.

We have told students not to bring special Pokémon cards to school and informed them that we will not use valuable instruction time to solve problems caused by trading cards. We made this decision after a number of incidents which had a significant effect on teaching, learning, and social relationships in some of our grades. We appreciate your assistance in communicating with your children about this school policy.

This is the final Parents as Partners Newsletter for the term. I hope you have found it informative and valuable reading. I wish all the children and their families a restful and enjoyable vacation and look forward to seeing all students back next term –“ Eager and Ready to Learn.”

Kind regards

Jennifer O'Connor

Assistant principal P-2 Learning Community



Students and staff commemorating Remembrance Day at a special assembly this week

Message from our School Vice Captains

Hello everyone,

This week we had Harmony Day. On this day we had an incursion; Miss Parker helped make this event happen. The lady who presented this incursion was Mona Williams who told us two true stories about her childhood. Mona is from Guyana, South America. She told us some good stories like when her brother was 3 years old he had paper stuck up his nose and another story about black rugby shorts, the story was about this boy who wanted these rugby shorts so he asked his mum and she said yes but then the boy wore the shorts everyday even under his school clothes. They got ripped and worn out but he refused to throw them away.

We hope you have a safe and Happy Easter!
Shehrish & Brooklyn

Getting it right in reading!

Don't stop questioning!

Last fortnight we looked at the benefits that can come from using before reading questions. By using these, students use their prior knowledge, make predictions and make connections which better prepares them for what they will be reading. Once these before reading questions are done, your child has a better understanding of what language might be used in the text, along with characters motivation, location and the possible outcome of the story.

Once your child begins to read we want to keep 'tuning them in' to their own comprehension of the text. This can be done by pausing at various pages throughout the book to check their understanding of what they are reading. It is important to do this as far too often children have the ability to decode what they are reading, (words are pronounced correctly and read fluently) however, they are not able to retell or answer any questions regarding the text.

Some 'during reading' prompts you may wish to try:

- "What do you think will happen next?"
- "How does the character feel?"
- "Why did..... happen?" (relate to what the character is doing and the purpose)
- "What is the problem in the story?"
- "How do you think they can solve the problem?"
- "What have you learnt so far?" (Use for a non-fiction text)
- "What would you have done if you were the character?"

These questions will assist your child in thinking further about the text and to continue to make predictions and connections as well as inferencing and visualising. By doing this regularly when reading at home you will be strengthening your child's comprehension strategies, which will lead to increased success in the classroom.

We have now covered before and during reading strategies. In our next newsletter we will continue along to cover after reading strategies. As Albert Einstein said "The important thing is to not stop questioning."

Samantha Bowden

Reading Intervention Co-ordinator

Marvelous Math's

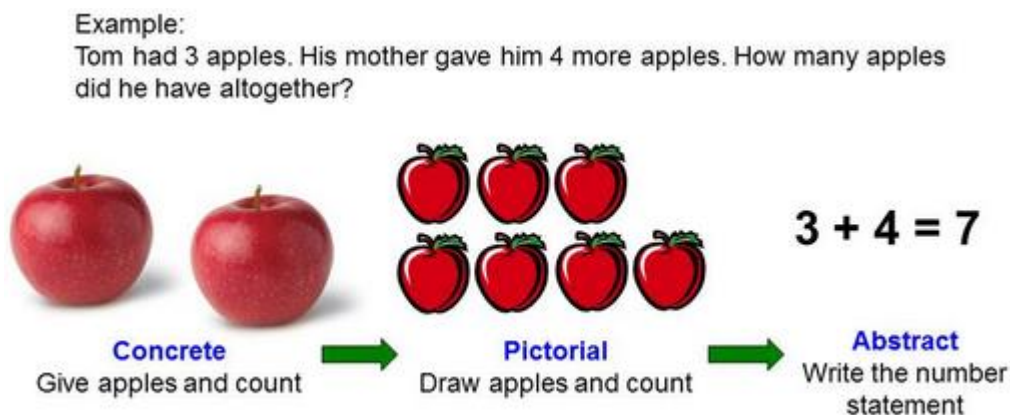
Concrete – Pictorial – Abstract

The Concrete-Pictorial-Abstract (CPA) is an approach to teaching mathematics. This approach is originally based on the work of Jerome Bruner in the 1960s. It allows students who have difficulty with mathematics to benefit significantly from lessons that include multiple models that approach a concept at different ability levels. For parents and teachers, when we came through the education system we were taught predominantly through the Abstract approach. Therefore we missed out on required Concrete and Pictorial exposure to mathematical thinking

CONCRETE = Refers to the use of manipulatives, Cuisenaire rods, measuring tools or objects that the student handles.

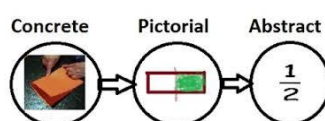
PICTORIAL = Refers to the use of drawings, diagrams, charts or graphs that the student draws.

ABSTRACT = Refers to the abstract representations such as numbers and letters that the student writes.



Activities with concrete materials should be the first stage of mathematical learning as it allows students to develop the understanding that operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) can be used to solve real-world problems. Pictorial relationships are evident through the creation of visual representations to assist students in developing the mental picture of what they are doing. Abstract thinking is recorded using symbols that provide a shorter and more efficient way to represent operations. Students require experiences with real life learning in order to understand the meaning of those symbols. If the connections are not made between the stages by the student, then it will result in them having 'gaps' in their learning which can impact their learning of new concepts.

Student's performance of symbolic operations will simply become rote repetitions of meaningless memorised procedures. In classrooms everyday, students are able to recall times tables facts but have no conceptual understanding of how to apply this knowledge to problems. Allowing students at home to use concrete materials around the home (eg. bottlecaps or stones) to manually create groups, pictorially represent this as a drawing and then representing the problem in abstract terms of numbers and symbols, will allow for mastery of times tables facts.



INSIGHTS

by Michael Grose – No. 1 parenting educator



Tolerance: a vital ingredient for your child's success

Kids who accept differences in others are setting themselves up for success in the world of diversity that they will enter.



Want your child to be successful way past the confines of the school gate?

Then you need to make sure your child is tolerant of individual differences and accepting of children and adults who look and act differently to them.

There's no doubt that success in today's world depends on the ability to understand, appreciate and work with others. The child who is open to differences is likely to have more opportunities in school, in business and in life in general.

Schools are diverse places

Walk into any school ground in Australia and you'll witness diversity firsthand. You're likely to see children from many different cultural, racial and family backgrounds. You'll also see kids with different needs and diverse ways of expressing themselves. Some kids will wear their hearts on their sleeves, while others will be taciturn and quiet. Tolerant kids are accepting of these differences. They make friends with children and young people who may look and act differently to them.

Intolerance breeds bullying

Intolerance, or prejudice, is at the heart of a great deal of the bullying that occurs among children and young people. Kids who look and act differently or who are more isolated often experience bullying for no apparent reason other than the fact that they are 'different'. Whole-hearted acceptance and even appreciation

of differences is a preventative bullying measure that we can all support.

Tolerance starts at home

Kids learn attitudes such as tolerance from those around them. Children in primary school usually reflect the attitudes of their parents. While adolescents are strongly influenced by their peers, parental attitudes still have a significant impact on their attitudes to other people. In short, if you want your child to be accepting of differences – whether they are racial, cultural, behavioural or in sexual orientation – then make tolerance a family trait. Here's how:

- ✓ **Help your child feel accepted, respected, and valued.** When your child feels good about himself, he is more able to treat others respectfully.
- ✓ **Model acceptance.** Kids learn what they live so make sure you welcome differences in others, and be sensitive to cultural or racial stereotypes. It also helps on a practical level to discuss prejudice and stereotypes when they occur in the media.
- ✓ **Challenge prejudice or narrow-minded views.** Sometimes kids, knowingly or unknowingly, can say the cruellest things about others. As a parent respectfully remind your child or young person about the impact that a narrow view can have on his or her own behaviour as well as on those it may be directed towards. Intolerance of diversity is an attitude that parents should make a stand against.
- ✓ **Answer kids' questions about differences honestly and respectfully.** Teach your kids that it is acceptable to notice and discuss differences as long as it is done with respect.
- ✓ **Respect individual differences within your own family.** Your ability to accept your children's differing abilities, interests and styles will go a long way towards establishing an attitude of tolerance in the children themselves. By valuing the uniqueness of each member of your family you are teaching your kids to value the strengths in others, no matter how diverse.

Modern Australia is such a wonderful culturally-rich place. This diversity is part of its magic. One way to make sure our children fully appreciate this richness is to fully embrace tolerance in everything we do.

parentingideas.com.au parentingideas.co.uk parentingideas.co.nz

Michael Grose Presentations

PO Box 167 Balmarrig Vic 3926 p + 61 3 5983 1798 f (03) 5983 1722 e office@parentingideas.com.au

All rights reserved. For more ideas, support and advice for all your parenting challenges please visit our website.

© 2013 Michael Grose

facebook.com/Parentingideas.com.au

twitter.com/michaelgrose

