ENRICHMENT and EXTENSION NEWS: “WHAT DO YOU DO IN ENRICHMENT?”

This week I will provide you with an overview of the activities the students have been engaged in during the Enrichment sessions this semester in Years K-2. The Enrichment Program provides rich literacy and language opportunities to ensure that students become empowered communicators. The program also provides an environment conducive to encouraging mathematical thinking by providing opportunities for students to engage in real-life problem solving situations as well as mathematical challenges. Students participate in cooperative group work as well as individual tasks where they can display their creative abilities.

“WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN LANGUAGE AND EXPRESSION?”

It is essential to aim for a wide and rich literacy experience that ensures students have the opportunity to develop.

The activities are designed to develop and enhance skills that allow students to:

- express feelings and thoughts
- communicate effectively with one another
- think in the abstract

A selection of resources, including picture books and artworks are chosen to encourage advanced responses in a variety of ways. Students use a variety of graphic organisers to organise their ideas and plan their responses. These include the mindmap, fish-bone, Y chart, P.M.I, venn diagrams and others that are appropriate for the task.

The program encourages students to use extended language to predict outcomes, recount sequentially, present an opinion and elaborate on the main concept. Students provide personal reasons for their responses and answer questions about the stories when the answer is not found directly in the text. In short, students work towards becoming confident communicators of thought and feelings as well as facts. Thinking in the abstract allows the students to grasp more complex issues and develop and direct their own learning. Students also develop the reflective process by evaluating their own and others’ responses. Their journals are a record of their learning and will be taken home at the end of the year. Some of the texts they have studied this semester include: Climbing Rosa by Shelley Fowles, Where is the Frog by Geraldine Elschner, The Frog Prince by Bros. Grimm, Why by Nikolai Popov, Growing Frogs by Vivian French and The Magic Pillow by Demi.

“WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN SOLUTION FINDING?”

It is essential to engender a love for mathematics in the early years and to celebrate mathematical thinking.

The activities are designed to develop and enhance skills that allow students to understand that:

- mathematics is all around us and an important part of our lives
- mathematics is creative and innovative
- mathematics helps us to solve real-world problems
Students look for imaginative ways to identify and make solutions for different types of problems. They learn to examine and analyse the problem before they brainstorm and evaluate their ideas to select the best solution. The students have enjoyed looking at some Australian versions of fairy tales and ballads as a source for identifying problems that require a solution as well as posing their own problems. These stories include Cindy-Ella, The Three Little Bush Pigs, Big Bad Bushranger and The Lamington Man. The students are introduced to the Design Process to create devices that could solve the various problems. This involves developing choice and ownership of the tasks. We are continuously amazed at the imaginative designs that the students create.

This process is inquiry-based learning which is a thoughtful approach to understanding and solving problems. This process is also applied to the mathematical challenges presented which require the selection of specific strategies to find solutions. Students follow a step by step instructional program designed to develop students as confident and competent problem solvers.

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