

## First couple of weeks in Grade 3-4.

What a positive and wonderful start to the year we've had! Everybody (staff and students) have agreed that the first few weeks of the year have been a great success!

### **Settling In:**

Exercise books have been labelled, pens and pencils all sorted and we've all had the 'do not run with scissors talk'. Getting all the stationary sorted at the start of the year is a big job, although our Grade 3-4 students have helped us get everything organized and up and running very efficiently.

We've spent several Circles discussing how we'd like this year to progress, the kind of 'feel' we'd like to have in our classrooms and how we can make our classes the best learning environments possible. We've all gotten to know each other quite quickly, making connections, finding similarities and ensuring that we can all be comfortable.

### **Maths:**

Along with some beginning of the year assessment tasks, we've hit off the Maths curriculum with a focus on place value. We've played several dice games that use 'partitioning' (adding tens or hundreds to the relevant place value only, rather than counting up by, say 100, on our fingers). We've also examined exactly how to read, say, order and think about numbers into the thousands and tens of thousands. As usual, hands-on materials have been a major component in Maths lessons in every classroom.

### **Writing:**

Lock up your adjectives, Croydon, because the Grade 3-4s are being descriptive! From interesting trees to superheroes, from cuddly animals to house hold appliances that the Grim Reaper might buy for his bathroom, the Grade 3-4 students have been stretching their vocabulary and writing descriptive pieces. We have been focusing on all five of our senses, showing and encouraging students how to use language that involves all relevant senses when describing a certain object. Many examples of student's

descriptive writing are now on display outside the staffroom for the reading enjoyment of all.

**Reading:**

“Ooooooh, this book is too easy” said a spoilt Goldilocks.

“...and this book is too hard” she said, discarding ‘War and Peace’.

“...but this book is *just right!*”.

We have spent much time setting up our classroom libraries and getting into the routine of our daily Reader’s Workshop. We’ve discussed the concept of ‘Just Right Books’ and how it is necessary for us to choose our books wisely in order to become more proficient readers.

During a Reader’s Workshop, all students will gather on the floor while we teachers model and explain a particular reading and thinking strategy for 10 – 15 minutes. After that, students get stuck into their own Independent Reading, focusing on the strategy just shown to them. Our thinking is recorded in our Reading Workshop exercise books. Finally, the hour-long Workshop session concludes with an opportunity to share our thoughts and use of strategies. We teachers have been very busy conferencing and assessing student’s abilities on a one-to-one basis, getting to know each student as readers so we can best prepare to teach them.