Mr Milne’s Torture Maths Lessons

The name ‘torture’ comes from the children. I prefer to think of my maths’ lessons as ‘challenging’. After all, if the children can easily answer the problems given to them, what are they learning? If I’m not challenging the children then I’m not doing my job as a teacher.

The lessons are designed around Ann Baker’s ‘Problematised Maths Situations’. The children are presented with a real life, word problem related to the maths’ work and skills they are currently studying. The children then have to apply these skills in order to find the answer. I use real life problems so that the work has some relevancy.

When first confronted with these problems all of the children said they were too hard and complained that they couldn’t do them. They were continually seeking my support in order to provide them with a path to finding the answer. The answer was the all important goal … but I wouldn’t provide them with the path. “Torture!!” I wanted the children to tell me what they had tried so far, to show me what they had done and describe why they had chosen this particular method. I wanted them to find the path and not to use a path that I would choose. If they only ever do what I would do then what have they learnt? Nothing, except that if challenged ask Mr Milne and he’ll tell me what to do. By not showing them a path they need to think, seek their own solution and develop resiliency. In other words, keep on trying. When confronted with a problem they will have the skills to find their own solution. These aren’t always correct … but then … life is like that!

At the end of each lesson the class and I review what steps, methods and skills individual students or groups of students have used in order to solve the problem. We talk about why particular processes were chosen and as a result the children see that there are many different paths to take to find a solution. There is no one correct method as everyone’s thinking is different. Have a go! Take a risk! Learn from what you do, not from having someone do it for you.

It has taken most of first term to get to the point where some of the children are prepared to have a go by themselves. The really pleasing thing about this is hearing these children say how good they feel about themselves and how much their confidence with maths has grown. Some of the children are still not there…but I will persevere, just as I want them to.
Welcome back to school and the beginning of Term 3

I hope you all had a wonderful and relaxing holiday. The staff returned from their break with many varied tales to regale ranging from enjoying a powered hang glider flight over a kilometre above the earth’s surface to camping trips up north or around the river. Congratulations Melinda on the signing of your wedding nuptials over the holiday break. We wished Miss Umback all the best on the last day of term and welcomed Mrs Paterakis back to school on Monday.

A special Maccy welcome is extended to Annie, Annika, Toby, James, Madeline and Kimahri, our six new Reception children. We wish you and your families an enjoyable and rewarding learning experience at our little school.

Mrs Kathigitis is heading off to Europe on Long Service Leave at the end of week 2. We wish her and Mr K all the very best on their holiday. Sally Anderson will replace Mrs K. Sally worked at Maccy last year and will once again take the children for the teacher’s Non-Instruction-Time lessons of either Visual Arts, Drama, Music or Health and PE.

Year 7s

Even though we have only just begun 2nd Term information has been arriving at school with regard to next year and the choice of high school that our Year 7s could attend in 2014. In the past our children have chosen to go to Heathfield, Eastern Fleurieu, Mt Barker, Urrbrae or the local private schools. Mt Barker High is our children’s school of right and the positive education program they are currently running certainly looks exciting and fits very closely with what we are doing here at Maccy.

Children from the Eastern Fleurieu “Drumming Group” entertained our Year 5-6-7 class at the end of last term providing our students with a taste of what they could choose to do if they went to EFS.

SAPSASA

Over the next couple of weeks many of the students from our senior class will be involved in a variety of SAPSASA events:

Our Year 6-7 footballers will be combining with students from Meadows to play against Murraylands Christian School in the Small Schools Knock Out Cup
Our Year 6-7 girls will be playing against Callington in the Small Schools Netball Knock Out Cup
Next week our Year 3-7 children have the opportunity to learn Tag Rugby with a visiting specialist rugby coach
The Year 6-7s, along with students from Echunga PS, will then be taught the skills of Tackle Rugby in preparation for a SAPSASA Tackle Rugby competition involving combined Maccy and Echunga boys and girls teams to be held in Murray Bridge in Late May
The Year 5-6-7 class is also practising their table tennis skills in the hope of gaining selection in the school team to play in a carnival to be held on May 24th

Congratulations Casey Wallace on gaining selection in the SAPSASA Barker District Netball Team to play in the State Primary School Netball Championships later this month.

We wish all of our competitors all the very best in all of their up-coming sporting endeavours.
PJ Day

Just over $112 was raised by the student leaders as a part of the PJ Day held at the end of last term. This money was handed to Kylie Brunner who is heading the sub-group of the Macclesfield Community Association looking into the establishment of the Skate Space in Macclesfield.

Our charity for this term will be the “Young Heroes Foundation.”

Car Park Safety

I wish to raise a couple of important points that we all need to consider re the safety of our children:

*Please don’t walk through the staff car park. Vehicles come and go at anytime during the day so we request that parents and caregivers do not access or leave the school via this area.

*When reversing out from the parks in front of the school please double check that there is nothing, especially children, behind you. I will remind the children of the importance of using the footpath until they are past the bus shelter when riding home.

*We ask that all parents park on the school side of Vernon Street when dropping off and picking children up. This saves the worry of children having to cross the road and walk behind vehicles backing out from the school parks at these busy times.

Maccy Merits

50
Caleb Wouters

100
Liam Tregaskis, Sebastian Scamps, Jock McBeath
Aelfy Moring

Term 2 Calendar…..keep it on the fridge and refer to it often!

Please find a calendar of special events and activities we have planned for this term attached to this newsletter……. but please appreciate that this could be changed, added to etc at the drop of a hat.

Sports Day – Thursday June 6th

We have had to push Sports Day back to week 6 of this term as it was the first free day we could find in what is proving to be a very busy term.

House Leaders

Angas
Captains: Casey Wallace and Thomas Rowe
Vice-Captains: Samantha Chapman, Phoebe Cain and Jake Bentley

Battunga
Captains: Cassidy Cooper and Luke Swinburne
Vice-Captains: Isabelle McKenzie and Lucas Schack

Davenport
Captains: Courtnie Merideth and Aidan Roe-McBeath
Vice-Captains: Anthea Suckling and Travis Holdsworth

NAPLAN Testing – Years 3,5 and 7

"The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. It has been an annual event for schools since 2008.

On Tuesday 14, Wednesday 15 and Thursday 16 May, students will take the 2013 NAPLAN tests.

NAPLAN assesses skills in literacy and numeracy that are developed over time, through the school curriculum. NAPLAN is not a pass or fail type test, but rather shows how students are progressing in numeracy and literacy skills against national standards for all Australia children. It also provides valuable information that allows schools and governments to better target effort and support to help all students achieve their potential and acquire the basic skills to help them build successful and happy lives.

All students are expected to participate in the tests. Students with disability may qualify for reasonable adjustments that reflect the support normally provided to them in the classroom. Some students with very specific circumstances may be exempted from participating in the tests. For information about participation in NAPLAN, you can go to: http://www.nap.edu.au/naplan/parent-carer-support.html

NAPLAN tests fundamental skills rather than specific content, and as such is not a test for which students can study or drill. The best way you can help your child prepare for NAPLAN is to let them know that NAPLAN...
is just one part of their school program, and to urge them to simply do the best they can on the day. The use of services by coaching providers is not recommended.

An individual student NAPLAN report will be issued by the school later this year. Parents can use this information to monitor how their child is progressing and to identify any areas of concern. Parents may also wish to use their child’s results to discuss progress with teachers. More information is available at www.nap.edu.au."