

GRACE CHRONICLES

Issue No. 8 | October 2023



From the Principal's Desk

It is with great excitement that I start my journey here at Grace Primary. This is a special school with a clear God-given calling to be a shining light in the community and I am looking forward to being a part of its journey going ahead.

So what exactly makes Grace Primary so special and unique?

- At the heart of any great school are the people. Each person, whether a teacher, child or parent, is a unique and valued member of the school community. We are blessed with amazing teachers who lead

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From the Principal's Desk (Cont.)

by example, are passionate, compassionate and committed to the growth of the children under their care. The joy and enthusiasm with which our children go about their day makes walking around the school a happy experience!

- Our Christian foundation means our educational focus is rooted in the Christian view of dignity and the inherent value of each child. I'm excited about the way in which the Charlotte Mason framework gives expression to these Christian foundations, both in its emphasis on habits and character and in its rich and living curriculum.
- The family size of the school is a wonderful asset, enabling the school to maintain its nurturing atmosphere and cultivate a depth of relationships that is not always possible in bigger schools.
- And of course, the school has very recently experienced the joy of growing its physical capacity, with two major building projects completed and wonderful new facilities in place.

It was a privilege to experience the celebration of the Barn Dance Fundraiser at the start of my term at Grace Primary. What a joy to see families sharing a fun evening together and to witness the teamwork and dedication of both parents and teachers in making this event a success.

Looking ahead in the term calendar, we know there are exams and assessments still to come, but we are confident that our children will give of their 'best effort' and do well. We also anticipate with a feeling of bitter-sweet, that it is nearly time to say good-bye to the Grade 7 class of 2023. As is our custom, we will have a special farewell event for them where we celebrate and reflect on the journey that they have experienced at the school.

My encouragement to everyone as we head into these last busy months of the year is to finish well! Psalm 37:3 talks about how we should "feed on His faithfulness" and that is my prayer for all of you.

"Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13

Philosophy Corner: History & Heritage in Charlotte Mason Education



"Now, what I want is facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but facts. Facts alone are wanted in life." This is the way in which Dickens' novel called 'Hard Times' begins, a story in which the notorious school board Superintendent, Mr Gradgrind drives his utilitarian philosophy of education which treats people like machines. Nevertheless, as the novel progresses Mr Gradgrind realizes that he has been missing something very important in his approach all along - the imagination.

Sadly it is often true that when people talk about their memories of History at school, they also only remember facts, facts and more facts! Instead of living stories creating a "pageant of history" from the past, History can become mere informational transfer of dates, names, battle-fields and the like. Not so with the Charlotte Mason approach.

Philosophy Corner: History & Heritage (Cont.)

In her Philosophy of Education (p.78), she wrote the following: "It's a great thing to possess a pageant of history in the background of one's thoughts. We may not be able to recall this or that circumstance, but 'the imagination is warmed'; we know that there is a great deal to be said on both sides of every question and are saved from crudities of opinion and rashness in action."

What are some ways in which this "pageant of history" is presented to children at Grace Primary?

Chronological Approach:

Instead of only going in depth into a few aspects of History, chronological teaching gives children the big picture first, providing them with a clear understanding of the scope of history and how the different time periods fit together. The child is then able to appreciate some of the consequences of events that happened in the past and how they have impacted the present. The chronological approach is aided by the use of:

- Classroom Timelines displayed on the classroom wall, with pictures of famous persons/events added to the timeline as their stories are read and narrated in class. This provides a visual framework of the different historical periods and personalities that have been studied. It also helps them connect history to the other subjects being studied, e.g. artists, composers, science inventors and explorers, which also populate the timeline.
- Book of Centuries, which is a file/book divided into the different centuries from BC to AD, into which children write or draw illustrations associated with their historical period. This reinforces the chronology of events they have studied.

Living Books and Narration

A living book touches the emotions and fires the imagination, making it easier to see in the mind's eye the events that are being described. The facts are there, but they are clothed in those living ideas that make the events stand out in your mind. Living Books would include biographies and other interesting stories of places and events that have happened in History. After the story is read, we invite the children to tell back in their own words everything they can remember from the reading. This helps them to absorb into themselves some of the beautiful thoughts from the book and then tell them again with just that little touch that comes from their own minds.

Excursions

Where possible, visiting historical places in the city enriches the children's concept of their heritage. It helps them to realize that history is not a figment of the imagination, but real events that happened in actual places that we can still visit today. The importance of connecting with these heritage sites in our city was one of the reasons motivating us to invite Kate Crane Briggs from Culture Connect to speak to our parents during August this year. Her talk was entitled 'Being Tourists in our own City' and she reminded us of the wide variety of places of both natural and cultural heritage that we have to visit in Cape Town.

Philosophy Corner: History & Heritage (Cont.)

In summary, while we enjoyed the opportunity that Heritage Day provided to focus on the ideas of "History and Heritage" in September, these are themes we continually explore as part of the Charlotte Mason curriculum - not only in History lessons, but in Picture Study, Composer Study, Literature, Biographies and the like. It is our belief that this focus will continue to enrich the present lives of our children with much of the wealth that has gone before, creating "a pageant of history in the background of their thoughts."

Judy McComb

Our Link with Heritage School, Cambridge, UK

We felt it appropriate in this edition of Grace Chronicles, which has the idea of 'Heritage' as a theme, to tell you a little more about our unofficial link with Heritage School, Cambridge. When the idea of a Charlotte Mason school was still only a seed in our thinking and dreaming, we were put in touch with the pioneers of a Charlotte Mason school in Cambridge called Heritage School.

Similar to our story, this school began in 2007 with only one class of 16 children and from there grew by one class each year. The founders of this school, Jason and Fiona Fletcher, were both educators who had grown disillusioned with the underlying philosophies and values at work in contemporary British education and felt challenged to investigate the possibilities of starting a school founded upon the philosophy of Charlotte Mason. Fiona's mother, Susan Schaeffer Macaulay, had played a major role in bringing the educational philosophy of Charlotte Mason back into the public eye through her writing of the book "For the Children's Sake: Foundations of Education for Home and School" and so the merits of this philosophy were well-known to them.



Since these humble beginnings, Heritage School has grown to include both a primary and high school and has consistently produced excellent results each year. The headmaster, Jason Fletcher, commented recently on their success by saying: "Amidst a national picture of falling GCSE results, ours went in the opposite direction. Our best ever results demonstrate once again that our small class sizes, personalised attention and positive learning culture adds significant value."

The staff at Heritage School were instrumental in helping Grace Primary in our early years of pioneering. They guided us in our selection of curriculum materials, gave us free access to their Teachers Training Manuals and other resources and met with us via Skype to give us hands-on mentorship and encouragement in those early days. Still today, we reach out to our point-person at Heritage, Jean Carter, when we have queries about different aspects of the philosophy/curriculum and we remain deeply grateful to them for the role they have played in our journey as a school.

Check out a recent UK magazine article that applauded Heritage School for their careful use of technology in the classroom:

<https://heritageschool.org.uk/magazine-praises-heritage-for-careful-use-of-technology/>

Glimpses of Grace

With the focus on Heritage Day last month, all our teachers devoted some time to exploring different aspects of our heritage as South Africans in the classroom. We thought you might enjoy sharing in some of their activities.

Grade R:

Over the last six months, the Grade R's have been learning about the different animal groups and closer to Heritage Day, they learnt about the mammals of South Africa. They then made some lovely constructions of giraffes, zebras, hippos and other mammals out of cardboard.

Outside of the Heritage theme, our Grade R's have enjoyed a stimulating and enriching curriculum over these last six months and we are so grateful to Mrs Meissner for all her groundwork in pioneering the development of our preschool. Some of their recent learning includes:

- Looking at Snow Drops and the Flanders Poppy in Nature study;
- Sowing seeds in the Spring garden and watching them germinate, flower and grow.
- Exploring 3D shapes, their properties, names and uses in our environment.
- Learning about the different professions that are around us - including the Checkers 60 Sixty driver!
- Regular singing of songs, firm favourites being those learnt for the school play!

And of course, outside play remains a firm favorite time of the day!



Grade 1:

The Grade 1s learnt about the nine different provinces of South Africa and painted these maps with the provinces in different colours. They have also been learning more about the History of Pinelands this term, expanding their understanding of some of our local heritage sites. This involved doing a walking tour of Pinelands in the Central Square area, looking at some of the first buildings, shops, schools and churches from which our suburb grew.



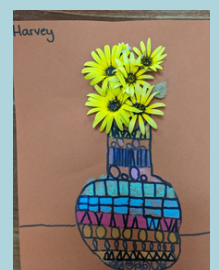
Grade 2:

The Grade 2s had lots of fun learning about the South African flag and why we are the rainbow nation. Whilst sharing together, they discovered that their friends spoke a variety of languages at home. The Grade 2's have also focussed on a variety of cultural groups that are part of our South African heritage throughout the year as part of their History curriculum. They have read various Folk Tales and Living Books associated with these groups such as 'The Herd Boy' by Niki Daly and 'When Bat was a Bird' by Nick Greaves.



Grade 3:

The Grade 3s combined the Spring Day and Heritage Day themes and made heritage vases with spring flowers. Their creations looked proudly South African and beautiful.



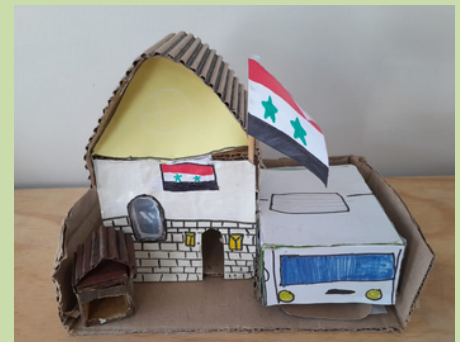
Grade 4:

Long ago, African people blew kudu horns to call communities together so in keeping with this heritage and their syllabus content (i.e. Sound Energy in Science and Johnny Clegg in Composer Studies), the Grade 4 learners had fun making the modern equivalent, vuvuzelas.



Grade 5:

The Grade 5s explored the heritage theme, both in relation to a South-African Heritage craft, in which they did plaiting and weaving with wool to make miniature mats, as well as in relation to their exploration of Asian heritage in Geography. In this latter project, they first explored ways of reinforcing paper to make strong structures. They were then tasked with creating a model of a traditional home/structure in their given Asian country which they have been exploring this year. They could also create their own design, using some architectural design aspects from their country. A challenge was to mainly use reinforced paper materials and include some reinforcement methods of their own in their models.



Grade 6:

The Grade 6s used printed fabrics, leather, felt and pencil to decorate drawings of traditional clothing for some of the cultural groups in South Africa.



Grade 7:

The Grade 7s wrote reports on their individual cultures and family traditions in Afrikaans. They not only learned a lot about the country, but also had great fun being creative.

In a separate exercise, the Grade 7's also enjoyed making heritage placemats after studying the life of Hugh Masekela in Composer Study. His story challenged the class to think about how Hugh still created beautiful music for others to enjoy even through the difficult years of Apartheid. As they listened to his music, the class were inspired to create their heritage placemats in vibrant colours using mixed media - from magazine sheets and leaves to paints and pencil crayons.



My KULTUUR

My kultuur is Suid-Afrikaans. Een van die belangrikste dinge in Suid-Afrika is die nuwe vlag. 'n Nuwe vlag was in 1994 onderwerp. Elke kleur in die vlag verteenwoordig verskillende dinge oor Suid-Afrika, hoewel dit ongenofies is. Hierdie opstel sal al die algemene betekenisse van die vlag verduidelik.

Die blou op die vlag verteenwoordig die eindelose moontlikhede vir Suid-Afrikaners en sonne lig. Ek is nie seker of die moontlikhede 'ondeloes' is nie, maar daar is nogal 'n paar. Ongelukkig is dit meestal wit Suid-Afrikaners wat die meeste van die poste kry, maar baie mense van kleur het nou ook dieselfde tipe werk.

Die rooi verteenwoordig al die bloedvergieting van die oorloë van die verlede en die swaarkry van Apartheid. Suid-Afrika was in baie oorloë, die uiters bekende is die Afrika- en Boere-oorlog teen die Europese setlaars. 'n Ander baie groot ding in Suid-Afrika is Apartheid. Ek weet nie of u dit opgemerk het nie, maar die woord 'Apartheid' het 'die 'apart' daarvan. Tydens apartheid het mense gewoon: apart. Die wit en gekleurde mense wat in Suid-Afrika woon, is geskeel.

Die groen en geel op die vlag verteenwoordig vrugbare land (groen) en minerale in die grond (geel). As u die voorstede in Suid-Afrika besoek sien u got, vrilde heuwels van groen plaas. Dit is omdat die grond ideaal is om te plant. Diamante, goud en koa word ook in Suid-Afrika aangetref. As u na Kimberley gaan, gaan kyk na die Groot Gat. Dit is waar die meeste diamante in Suid-Afrika gevind word.

Die swart en wit op die vlag verteenwoordig die verskeidenheid mense in Suid-Afrika. Die swart kan die evaluering van vasberadenheid en die wit, vrede en harmonie simboliseer. Tydens apartheid, mense van kleur in Suid-Afrika is sleg behandel. Die land wat hulle besit, is van hulle weggehaal en aan wit Suid-Afrikaners gegee, en daar word aan hulle gesê om in ander gebiede te woon. Maar na jare van gevegte en vasberadenheid het hulle gelykheid en die stemme gekry!

O, wonderlike dag toe Suid-Afrikaners gelyk was!

U het miskien opgemerk dat daar 'n spesifieke vorm van 'y' aan die Suid-Afrikaanse vlag is. Dit beteken 'n verdeelde nasie wat in harmonie konvergeer. Werk 'n "eens verdeelde nasie" is die wit en gekleurde mense in Suid-Afrika, en die res beteken "eenheid en saamwerk". Ek dink die stelling is baie waar oor Suid-Afrika en die mense wat daarin woon. Ek is trots om Suid-Afrikaans te wees.

My Erfenis

My erfenis is Afrikaans, Frans, Duits, Iers en Suid Afrikaanse. In my rapport, sal ek die kos, sommige tradisies en die tradisies wat my familie nogsteeds uitvoer vandag en tale noem.

Van my Ma se kant, kom ek van die Franse Hugenote in Frans wat na Suid Afrika gekom het. Die Franse Hugenote het Frans gepraat. Tippiess kosse van Frans is croissants, macrons, gebak en sag, vars, brood. Franse mense vier Christelike vakansiedae soos Kersfees. Hul vier ook 'Labor Day' op die 1st Mei (die maand ek was gebore).

Ek is ook Afrikaans van my Ma se kant. Afrikaanse mense praat Afrikaans! Toe ek 'n baba was, het ek Afrikaans gepraat, maar nie nou nie. Afrikaans kosse sluit melktert, bobotie, koeksisters en vetkoek. Afrikaners het 'n spesiale dans met die naam 'Sokkie' of 'Die Boere Dans'. My familie kan nogsteeds hierdie dans doen.

Van my Pa se kant, is ek Iers. My Ouma en haar ouers is Iers. Tippiess Iers kosse is Ierse Koelrankbrood, Herse pastei en Wit en Swart Poeding. Die Ierse mense vier St Patrick se dag op die 17de Maart en dra groen kler.

Ek is ook Duits van my Pa se kant. My Groot Ouma se man is Duits. Tippiess Duits kosse sluit Schnitzel en Currywurst (prakties hel skyfies).

Sommige tradisies van my familie is: om die presente wegsteeke op iemand se verjaarsdag en om die 'Sokkie' dans te doen.

My KULTUUR

'n Pragtige land, met baie toeriste-aantreklikhede, wonderlike weer, en werklik vriendelike mense. 'n Land wat uit 40.4% bos bestaan, 'n plek met die tweede hoogste bevolking van olifante. 'n Land van berge, en ongelooflike diversiteit en vertroue. 'n Plek was jy sien 5-jariges wat alleen winkels toe stap sonder dat iets sleg met hulle gebeur. J hierdie pragtige land is Zimbabwe.

Ons shona-mense is bekend vir ons historiese terreine in Zimbabwe en meselwerk. Dit word getoon in die feit dat die hele Groot Zimbabwe van klip gebou is, en so ook die klipvoel van Zimbabwe, wat ook in die Zimbabweese vlag is! (sal later daarop ingaan).

Ons tradisionele taal, Shona, is maklik om te verstaan, want Shona is 'n fonetiese taal en as jy die vokaalklanke verstaan, sal jy enige woord wat jy hoor kan spel. Byvoorbeeld, die letter "A" maak 'n "ah"-klank, soortgelyk aan die "a" in die Engelse woord "vader". Anders as die meeste Afrikatale het Shona geen kliks nie en het geen woerde met x, q en l nie. Dit alleen maak dit baie makliker om uit te spreek, wat dit maklik maak vir die Engeltssprekende om in minder tyd te leer.

Een van die eerste Zimbabweese tradisies is die gebruik van Totems. Hierdie totems, (mitupo), word gebruik om die verskillende stamme wat uit die antieke beskawings van die dinastie bestaan het, te identifiseer. Die totems is gewoonlik diere name en gee die sosiale identiteit en rangorde van die stam. Byvoorbeeld, my stamnaam is Hungwe, wat 'n arend is. As jy familie van Zimbabwe is, sal jy weet dat daar 'n arend op die Zimbabweese vlag is. Dit is omdat my voorouers koning en koningin van groot Zimbabwe was. As iemand is Shona, en hulle hoor dat my stamnaam arend is, dan sal hulle weet dat my voorvaders in die verlede heersers was. Totems is ook belangrik omdat jy jou afkoms kan naspree, en deur iemand se totems te noem, kan jy hóm/haar prys, deur lofdigting.

Staff News

As many of you know Mrs Meissner came out of retirement to help us pioneer our Grade R class. We are so grateful to her for the experience she has brought into the foundations of our schooling and for the positive role she has played on our team. She will however be re-retiring at the end of this year!

Miss Pretorius was very excited about taking over the Grade R position next year and so we had appointed her to this role next year. However, she was subsequently offered another role in a preschool closer to home giving her the opportunity to teach in Afrikaans (her first language) and so she has decided to accept that offer and we wish her all the best going forward.

We are, however, very pleased to announce that Mrs Jacqui Welby-Solomon will be joining our team as the new Grade R teacher. Mrs Welby-Solomon has a number of years' experience as both a Grade RR and R teacher and was also involved in both founding a preschool and a primary school in Natal before moving down to Cape Town with her family. Since moving to Cape Town she has homeschooled her 3 boys, David, Nathan and Liam, and has taken a keen interest in Grace Primary, involving her boys in extra-curricular activities such as sport and choir. We are very excited about her involvement next year and also look forward to welcoming her boys to our school!



We have appointed Mrs Kirstin Knight to take Miss P's place as our Grade 2 teacher next year. Mrs Knight has a number of years experience in Foundation Phase teaching and we look forward to having her join our team.



Mrs Rodo will be on maternity leave for the first six months of next year and we are grateful that Mrs Sawden, who has ably covered the Grade 4 maternity post this year, will be teaching Mrs Rodo's Grade 3 class until she returns in July.

We are looking forward to welcoming Mrs Haywood back from her maternity leave early next year. She will once again be teaching the Grade 4 class.



A final change to announce is that Mrs Stoll has asked to reduce her Art teaching load and so will only be teaching the Grade 5-7 classes. We look forward to welcoming Mrs Philippa Versfeld as our Art teacher for the Grade 1-4 classes. Mrs Versfeld is mother to Liam (Gr 2) and Hayley (Gr 5) and we are excited about her contribution in the younger classes next year.

Fundraising News



With lovely weather and load-shedding cancelled, we were all set for a fantastic time together at the third Grace Primary Barn Dance Fundraiser on Saturday 14th October. As usual, we had Charlene and Barry Haschick and their band played live line dance songs while Charlene called directions. The dance floor was soon very full, and covered with left feet and broad smiles! We have always found that this style of dancing is so accessible for all types of people and leads to a great sense of family and community bonding. In addition to the band's dances, the evening also featured the ever-popular school 'flash-mob' dances, where the children have been taught (via videos and various staff) the choreography to go with a particular line dance song. This year we had a junior flash mob to 'Cotton-Eye Joe', and a senior one to the 'Git Up Dance', and the children really nailed the moves and brought much joy to everyone watching... And then the grown-ups joined in and tried to follow the children and, for the most part, were also pretty impressive! It was such a blessing to have our new principal with us for his first Grace event and he drew the final four raffle prizes which included two weekends away for 4 people in beautiful places. Supper consisted of delicious beorie/hot dog rolls and veggie burgers with caramelised onions, all braaied by JP van Wyk and Jannes Kruger and then treats from the bake stall and tuck shop. A huge thank you to everyone who made this event the success it was. We know the children will already be looking forward to the next one in 2 or 3 years' time!

In total, the event and raffle raised just under R40,000 for the solar project, bringing the grand total raised to R120,000 (along with donations from individual parents), which is a good chunk of the R150,000 fundraising goal for this worthwhile school investment.

NB The winner of the Best Parent's Picture is... Mildie Sole! We love the character of this photo.

WINNER OF BEST PARENT'S PIC! 

Fundraising News (Cont.)

Please diarise the 16th March 2024 for our next big fundraiser that will also be our 10th Birthday celebration! It is going to be called our 'Birthday Fete' and will be a combination of a market day and some fun activities that each class will be involved in creating! There will be a tea garden, food trucks, hopefully some entertainment, and also a chance for all our Alumni to catch up with each other and join in the festivities (and maybe even help!).

Anée Kruger who serves on the Fundraising Committee, will be kindly taking a lead with the organisation of this event and will soon be in touch with parents with more information about how to get involved. Let's make this a really special and memorable event, for the school community, but also for the broader community as we praise the Lord for all His mighty works over the past 10 years of the Grace Primary's story!

To the right is a draft logo for the event that Zodwa Gunuza is busy helping us design. We would like to give her a special shout out here for all the joyful hard work she has put into serving on the Fundraising Committee over the past years while her son, Othi (Grade 7), has been at the school - you will be missed, Zodwa!



Exploring Our New Library

With our new building completed this year, we have been so blessed to finally have a dedicated library space for the school. In previous years, many of our living books and reading books were stored in the classrooms or in make-shift bookshelves in the staffroom. While the reading corners in each classroom did provide a space for the children to enjoy these books, it has been a huge privilege to have a bigger room in which to store our growing collection of books and to create an atmosphere in which the children can enjoy books and reading. Over the course of this year we have set up a variety of book displays around relevant themes, explored different ideas for library lessons, challenged the children to a series of reading challenges and elected some Library Monitors from amongst the Grade 7s to help manage the library space.

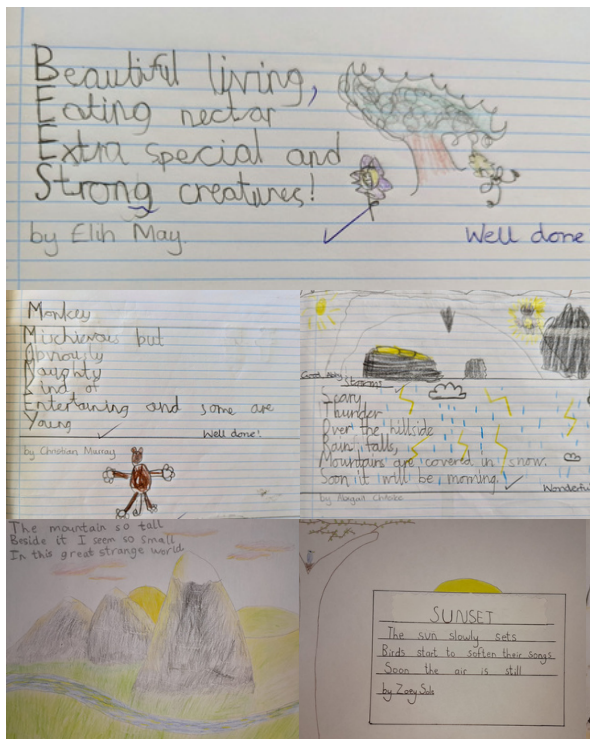
Thank you so much to Anna-Grace Skead, Kiara Spencer, Rutendo Chikono, Isabella Sole, Amy Trimble, Riya-Rae Alfino and Chandra MacAdam for doing such a fantastic job in the library this year. We would also like to celebrate Mrs Jack's mom, Judy Ewing, who comes in faithfully every Thursday morning to cover new books for the library. Mrs Jack is an experienced second-hand book hunter and has brought many boxes of good second-hand books to add to our library collection, which her mom has then covered for library use. Thank you so much, Judy, we appreciate you greatly!



Reading Challenges From the Year

Our reading challenges this year were designed to challenge the children to cultivate the personal habit of reading as well to extend their exposure to other reading genres.

- During the first term, we kicked off with a biography challenge and asked the children to see who could read the most biographies by the end of the term. Our winner of that challenge was Anna-Grace Skead (Gr 7) who read 12 biographies by the end of the term and won a book to add to her class's reading corner. Anna-Grace's favourite biographies were from the 'My Story' collection, which brings the lives of historical people to life through a very readable diary format.
- During the second term, our challenge centered around the most pages read. Children could read books of choice from their classroom selection or from the library and then kept a personal log of how many pages were read from each book. Our two winners of that challenge were Nadya Kruger (Gr 2) who read 12,325 pages and Kiara Spencer (Gr 7) who read just over 10,000 pages. When asked about their favourite book of the term, Nadya chose Enid Blyton's "Wishing Chair Collection" and Kiara chose "Red Wall" by Brian Jacques.
- Last term, our challenge to each class was to read one book from a variety of genres. The goal of this challenge was to choose books outside of the genres that we're naturally drawn to and explore other kinds of books - like folk tales, myths, science fiction, the classics and so on.



Poetry Scrapbook

This term one of our library displays is entitled 'Our Favourite Poems' and we have encouraged the classes to write some of their own poetry. We have been delighted by some of the poems produced by the children, ranging from Haikus to Acrostic Poems and much more. Enjoy reading some of their contributions:



Still on books - we loved the opportunity to support the Help the Rural Child Charity Bookshop sell second-hand books at the school during the second term. The children were able to browse through the books on offer and buy a book to take home for R40 each and we were able to buy some lovely new books for the library as well!!



Celebration Assemblies

Our weekly assemblies are always very special moments in the rhythm and life at Grace Primary. They provide us with an opportunity to come together as a school in devotion, worship and prayer as well as to celebrate special days on our year calendar. They also give our children the opportunity to share their growth and achievements with the rest of the school, whether these be their class recitations, individual music performances or achievements in various extra-curricular activities. Some special assemblies that were celebrated last term include the following:

Spring Day Assembly

This year we invited the grandparents in our school community to celebrate Spring Day with us. We themed the morning around a celebration of beauty and decorated the hall with some beautiful spring flowers and some artwork on spring themes to enhance the atmosphere. We then listened to beautiful songs from the choir, individual musical items performed by Mrs Meyer's pupils, some poetry and a thoughtful devotion from Mrs Meissner, ending with our children giving each grandparent a home-baked muffin and a spring flower. Thank you to the grandparents that joined us for this morning and to the teachers and children for all the items that were prepared.





Celebration Assemblies (Cont.)

Heritage Day Assemblies

Although Heritage Day took place during our school holidays, we made a point of celebrating this important day at two different assemblies before the end of term.

- Mrs Johns and the Grade 5 class led an enriching assembly using narrative stories, drama, poetry and song to communicate our rich heritage as South Africans. From our country's natural fauna and flora, diverse people groups and traditions, rich mineral resources, distinctive history, traditional legends, mouth-watering foods and more, they reminded us that we have much to appreciate and celebrate!
- We also devoted one assembly to celebrating the Xhosa language and traditions guided by our very talented Xhosa teacher, Nobuhle Mngcwengi. She prepared some of our classes to contribute Xhosa presentations, poems and dramatic items and also invited a small group of dancers to perform some Xhosa dance items for us. The group of Xhosa dancers were dressed in traditional beads and performed with such passion, enthusiasm and precision. Eventually some of our own children were allowed to join the group to test their skills and were challenged to keep up! To wrap up the occasion, our senior choir performed a song called 'Plea for Africa' which was very appropriate to the Heritage Day theme.

We would like to say a special word of thanks to Mrs Meyer and our senior and junior choirs for always blessing us at these assemblies with their beautiful singing. The choir has a concert evening planned for Wednesday, 8th November in the Congregational Church Hall which I know will also be enjoyed by our parents.



Special Events

Sports Day

Once again, our annual Sports Day gave our children the chance to test the athletic skills that they have been building in Phys Ed lessons throughout the term. Friday, 8 September proved to be a beautiful day for the occasion which was held at the Vista Nova High School sports fields. Everyone enjoyed the variety of races including sprints, long distance, relay races and a selection of fun races. We ended with the classes competing against each other in a tug-of-war which was highly charged especially when some of the older grades were beaten by a younger grade – but all in fun!! Once again the teachers were defeated by the Grade 7s – but not after a lot of tugging back and forth! Our thanks go to Coach Erin who went out of her way to make this day a success and who has cultivated a real love for sport amongst the children of our school. We were also really appreciative of the help offered by Coach Simon and Coach Daniel from Sports Hub on the day. As usual our parents were wonderfully supportive, providing eats for sale and volunteering at the tuckshop to raise some additional money on the day.



Sport at Grace Primary

We would like to say a big thank you to Coach Erin and her able assistant Coach Keenan for all they have done to give our children increased sports opportunities at school this year. Over the last six months, they have arranged a variety of sports matches against schools of a similar size as well as some local clubs and joint school events, giving our children the opportunity to test their skills in netball and soccer. These matches provided our children with the opportunity to learn the skills involved in playing as a team, how to maintain good character during a game and how to win and lose gracefully. Possibly the highlight of the third term was the experience of our u13 soccer team who played in a soccer tournament in Rondebosch in September and were awarded the 'Fair Play Award' which speaks to their character on the soccer field.



Special Events (Cont.)

Junior Production

The third term was full of excitement as the Grace junior children geared up for one of their most anticipated events of the year, the musical production called 'You are Special' based on the story by Max Lucado. This play was directed by the ever-enthusiastic Miss P with the very able support of Mrs Jack in the areas of props, costumes and special effects and Mrs Meyer, who helped with the musical preparation.

The journey began months in advance with auditions that sparked the children's anticipation and excitement. Then followed regular rehearsals at school with the tireless efforts of their teachers helping these young actors and actresses master their lines and bring them to life. Alongside the dramatic team were some committed parents helping to source costumes and accessories, sew items, do make-up and help in many practical ways to make our production a success. A special thank you to Robin Murray, Anée Kruger, Leisha Peters and Greta Edgecumbe who did so much to help us reach our goal.

As the days inched closer to the big night, there were dress rehearsals at the hall at Cannons Creek which was slowly transformed into a make-believe world of the Wemmicks. It was a symphony of collective effort, dedication, and the shared dream of creating something beautiful.



Clubs and Societies

While there have been a variety of clubs on offer this year, we would like to feedback on just a few of them to give you a flavour for what's happening at Grace during the afternoons. Thank you so much to our teachers for all their hard work in making our extra-curricular programme such an enriching one...

Hobbies and Crafts (Leisha Peters)

The senior hobbies and crafts group have been doing some fabric printing and the children have loved making their own stamp designs to print on the fabric. This club is already working on projects to sell at our Market Day at the end of the first term next year, so you can look forward to sharing in some of their creations.



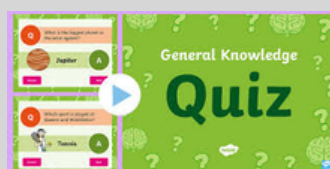
Sewing (Mrs Sawden)

An enthusiastic group of knitters of varying competency gather each Tuesday after school to learn new skills and apply these into knitted projects. During the third term the children learnt how to do purl stitch and some were able to finish their stocking stitch bags. This term, they are knitting Christmas Tree decorations which involves decreasing and using other techniques learnt during the year.



General Knowledge (Mrs Johns)

The weekly General Knowledge (GK) Club gatherings have been filled with fun and excitement. Mixed teams from Grades 4 to 7 compete to see who will be the GK champion at the end of each week. Categories vary from traditional subjects such as Science, History, Art and Music; to subjects like 'Weird Names for Everyday Things', 'Strange Phobias', 'Riddles' or 'Guess the Book Character' from a list of clues. Each quiz starts with a current affairs section so children are encouraged to pay attention to the news and what is going on in the world around them.



Class Excursions

Termly excursions are an integral aspect of our educational philosophy as they provide first-hand experiences of historical places of interest or of the natural world or some aspect of industry/craft. Over the last six months our children have visited amongst others the Aquarium, Arderne Gardens, the Science Centre, Silvermine, the Centre for Conservation Education, Nature Connect, Table Mountain, the Bo-Kaap, the Peter Clarke Art Centre and the Spar Bakery. We regularly feature feedback on these excursions via our Newsflash and on Social Media, so we will just feature news on two of these excursions in the Grace Chronicles – chosen because they have not been done before!



Museum of Childhood (Grade R in Term 3)

This local museum in Rondebosch has much to teach us about how different the experience of childhood was in the past. On the day of the Grade R visit, the weather was superb and the children enjoyed a story, a craft and games outside on the lawn. Some drew a picture to cheer up other children who are currently in the Red Cross Hospital and then they enjoyed seeing some of the toys that were part of the vintage more familiar to their grannies and grandpas!

Bo-Kaap (Grade 5 in Term 4)

The Grade 5's were treated to a fascinating tour of the Bo Kaap area this term, learning about the heritage of this area as well as the history of slavery in South Africa and the roots of the Malay culture. The walking tour was led by Rafiq Jacobs who greeted the children with a tray of freshly baked koesisters to enjoy. He then told them about how the first slaves had come to South Africa and the variety of places of origin represented in their descendents. We usually associate the term "Malay" with the origin of slaves from Malaysia and while many slaves did come from there, Rafiq explained that the word "Malay" was actually the lingua franca for Muslim people throughout East Africa, Madagascar, India and Indonesia and so in time this name came to describe something common to all the slave descendants at the Cape.. The excursion included a visit to the 3rd oldest Mosque in the city as well as a walk through the brightly coloured streets of the suburb with local commentary of the architecture, customs and general heritage of the community from Rafiq.



Class Excursions (Cont.)

Bo-Kaap (cont.)

Here is Zoey Sole's reflection on the excursion:

"I enjoyed this outing a lot. When we got koesisters, I could really taste the spice in them! The tour guide showed us around the area, told us about the history of the Bo-Kaap and we visited the third oldest mosque in South Africa. Seeing the community together was really special. Our tour guide kept stopping to greet people walking by. He knew all of them and some of them stopped to talk to us. The place is really beautiful, especially with all of the colourful houses."



Farewell to our 2023 Grade 7 Class

It is always sad to say goodbye to a group of children who have been core to the school throughout their primary school years. However, these transitions also signal important growth and a step forward into a new season of opportunity and maturity. As is our custom, we have a special Farewell Assembly for the Grade 7's planned for Friday, 24 November attended by the whole school as well as the Grade 7 parents and some special guests.

We asked the Grade 7 class what they would miss about Grace Primary and what they were looking forward to in the new season ahead. Here are some of their thoughts:

Farewell to our 2023 Grade 7 Class (Cont.)



Riya Ray

What will you miss?

The friends and family that we've made - all the relationships formed

Which High School are you going to?

Pinelands High School

What are you looking forward to?

New friends and to start anew, and to have a bit of freedom!

Will miss: *Especially Mrs Gabriels, for her Christian approach to life and challenges, her interesting way of teaching and her motherly care. Also my classmates that feel like family with so many memories and laughs.*

High School: *Pinelands High School*

Looking forward to: *A fresh chapter in my life, with a chance to learn new people skills and see what the future holds as a woman of God with many dreams for life.*



Rutendo

Will miss: *My friends, the teachers and just fun times shared. I will also miss the soccer!*

High School: *Tableview High School*

Looking forward to:

Having a successful soccer career before finishing High School.



Topaz

Will miss: *The computer work and friends I've made over the years. I will also miss the soccer at our school!*

High School: *Curro Century City*

Looking forward to:

Making new friends with different people, and also keeping up with ones I know.



Othandwayo



Uyanda

What will you miss?

My friends and the great teachers

Which High School are you going to?

Cannons Creek

What are you looking forward to?

Meeting new people and the new sports I might learn.

Will miss: *My Grade 6&7 teachers, the fun activities in class, funny memories, and most importantly, my classmates.*

High School: *Cannons Creek*

Looking forward to: *Making new friends, having big new opportunities and GOING TO KOREA TO ATTEND A KPOP CONCERT!*



Chandra

Will miss: *The family-feel of the school, awesome teachers, my friends in other grades, but most of all...my crazy class! I have loved spending the past 7 years with them - we are like family.*

High School: *Pinelands High School*

Looking forward to: *A new start, making new friends, taking Drama and Music as subjects, and more extra-curricular activities like Interact and Christian Union.*



Anna-Grace

Will miss: *My friends the most - the funny moments we have in class and all the things we have been through together. We've become like brothers and sisters over the last 7 years!*

High School: *Homeschool*

Looking forward to: *Sleeping in later in the mornings! And more time for hobbies and learning domestic science.*



Isabella



Kiara

What will you miss? *The environment at the school; how friendly it is, from the lovely teachers to the special cat, Max!*

Which High School are you going to? *Pinelands High School*

What are you looking forward to? *More people for my extroverted self to befriend and more opportunities for sport, excursions and camps.*

Will miss: *This place has always felt like home to me, safe happy place, and even if I came home exhausted, I'd always say it was the best day. I am going to miss my friends so much and will truly cherish the memories and friendships I made here, and am grateful to all the teachers for getting me this far.*

High School: *Curro Foreshoreool*

Looking forward to: *Better sports - especially hockey and soccer - and being in a bigger class with more friends and different clubs to go to!*

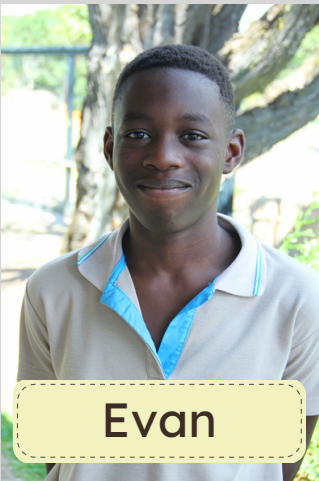


Ethan

Will miss: *Being in a small class that has felt like family, as well as teacher sand friends that take a Christian approach to everything, all the friends I've made and the space to be ourselves.*

High School: *Pinelands High School*

Looking forward to: *More time to bond with my friends (eg on camps and longer breaks etc.), doing more extra-murals, keeping up with old friends, and a slightly later start!*



Evan

Will miss: *All the friends I've made and the family-type atmosphere in the classrooms. I will also miss having an entire subject dedicated to History!*

High School: *Pinelands High School*

Looking forward to: *Choosing debating instead of sports, and also to wearing a blazer, shirt and tie.*



Amy

Growing in Character

Focus Habits

As parents of Grace Primary children, you will be familiar with our approach of using regular habits to cultivate discipline in the lives of our children. Whether it be in their academic work, their morals or their physical control and organization, these habits are vital to their personal flourishing – and since education is about growth in all areas of life and character, this is an important area of focus.

This year we have focussed on the following key habits:

TERM 1:

- OBEDIENCE
- BODILY SELF-CONTROL



TERM 2:

- IMAGINATION
- ATTENTION
- PERSEVERANCE



TERM 3:

- GOOD TEMPER
- APPRECIATION



TERM 4:

- BEST EFFORT
- SHARING



Encouraging children in these habits has taken different forms throughout the year. At times we have had to lay down some firm rules and fair consequences to help children establish personal growth in habits. At other times, we have had to be aware of rhythms that will help the children build good habits in class, for example alternating skill oriented lessons with those that are more inspirational so as to encourage attention or giving our children an activity break between lessons using our new wooden play equipment to get some ‘wiggles’ out. We also recognize the important role of biblical stories, biographies and other living books in inspiring our children towards the habits we value. It is so true that discipline without inspiration is manipulation and therefore the use of appropriate stories is a vital aspect of our philosophy.

As mentioned above, our final habit for the year is the ‘Habit of Sharing’ and we are once again delighted to be partnering with St. Thomas Church, Heideveld to put together Christmas food hampers to give to their Daily Bread ministry which looks after needy families. We will also be putting together some toiletry packs for their teens who are going on a youth camp at the end of this year. Please look out for our further weekly communications in this regard.



Grade 6&7 Mentorship

Over the last six months we took some time with our Grade 6's and 7's to talk about various issues related to their transition to adolescence and High School. We are grateful to Kirk Adams (Youth Pastor at PBC); Coach Simon (Sports Hub); Coach Erin and Mildie Sole (parent) for giving of their time to speak to the children about these issues and to frame them from a biblical perspective. Here is some feedback from some of the children...



Othi Gunuza (Grade 7)

One of things we learnt from Kirk is that we become what we believe and that can be something we need to think about, because we are sometimes controlled by our beliefs. And sometimes in life it may be hard not to be distracted by our urges, but we learn to control ourselves. And we've also learned to be with God even though in the hard times we might forget about him, but He is always with us.

Gcina Sulelo (Grade 6)

The talks we have at school are very meaningful to most of the boys. When we had a talk with Coach Simon we spoke about appearance and mental states. He spoke about how he was bullied growing up. He asked us if we go to the mirror and look at ourselves and say we're ugly. He told us that we were all made in God's image. We should all love ourselves in every way. Thank you Coach Simon for the lovely talk.

Joanna Joy Jack (Grade 6)

I have really enjoyed the talks that different teachers have had with the girls. I have especially enjoyed Coach Erin's last two talks with the girls, where she talked about the way girls think of themselves and how it's so different to what others think about us. I find these spaces a time where I can add my thoughts without anyone judging me. I like how the teachers answer the questions we have, especially about growing up.

Anna-Grace, Izzy and Amy (Grade 7)

Talking with women who have experienced growing up and teenage-hood has been helpful, especially that they are fellow Christians and are able to share Bible verses and Christian-based advice. Preparing ourselves for what lies ahead, we will always remember that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (Philippians 4:13).



Max the 'School Cat'

One of the unexpected daily visitors to Grace Primary this year has been a neighbourhood cat, Max. He is regularly seen on the school grounds or in the park with the children on most sunny days and seems to have a severe case of FOMO – one day even following the children into the church hall for assembly. He is often spotted sunning himself in new hide-outs and has crept into the hearts of many of our children (and teachers!).



Playground Challenges

Our children have enjoyed using the new wooden playground equipment (made by Miss A) to take a brain break between lessons and occasionally to engage in some fun challenges. This term some of the children competed to see who could balance the longest – and evidently the winners reached 200 counts!



Grace Family Bonds

One of the wonderful advantages of a small family-sized school is the opportunity it gives to grow natural relationships between children of different ages. We spotted our Grade 7's listening to junior classes doing their Afrikaans reading one day under the tree.

Bok Fridays

While we were certainly not unique in celebrating 'Bok Fridays' over the last couple of weeks during the build-up to the World Cup Final, our children certainly loved entering into the 'gees' and supporting our team. Imagine their excitement when they received an unexpected visit at a recent assembly by Stormers rugby player Nama Xaba, who inspired them with his own rugby story and his deep Christian commitment.

