

# GRACE CHRONICLES

Issue No. 2 | December 2021



## From the Principal's Desk

This is a time of the year when many schools have prize-giving ceremonies, celebrating children who have performed best in their grade or in particular subjects. At Grace Primary we choose not to have awards ceremonies of this kind, as these taint the learning atmosphere with a “winners vs losers” framework and interfere with genuine intrinsic motivations to learn and grow. We also recognize that our children have wide and varied interests and talents and will grow in these at different rates in their development.

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However, we do take time to celebrate the joys of learning and of our school life together and hope you will enjoy sharing in some of the highlights of our Fourth Term as you read the latest edition of our Grace Chronicles magazine.

It has been sad that COVID has once again interfered with our plans to end off the term as planned. It was not an easy decision to cancel our 'live' Christmas performance and our children missed the opportunity to present some highlights of their learning at the end-of-term class celebrations. However, we have learnt to trust the Lord in the midst of these difficulties and know that you will help your child process some of the missed opportunities of celebrations and good-byes at the end of the term. If nothing else, we have learnt to value our times of community and celebration much more deeply than ever before.

The end of the year has also come with some sad good-byes to teachers who have played such a positive role at our school in the past. We said farewell to Mrs van Staden at our Grade 7 Farewell Assembly which was a sad moment after 5 years of faithful and impactful service. Mrs van Staden has moved to Limpopo and will be replaced by Mrs Johns in the new year (see Staff News for more details). We are also sad to say good-bye to Mrs Haywood and Mrs Gosling who have been superb members of the team during the maternity absences. We wish them everything of the best as they move into a new season and trust that they will still keep in touch with us in the future. Finally, we regret to share with you that we are having to say farewell also to Coach Simon (Sport) and Mrs Kooyman (Junior Art). Coach Simon has been with us from the early days at Grace Primary and will be sorely missed by all. He and his wife are preparing to move to Gauteng next year and we wish them everything of the best in this new start. We have appointed Mrs Erin Rae to take over the Phys Ed and Sport next year and Sports Hub will continue under Coach Ross.

We pray that you and your family would have a very blessed Christmas and enjoy some much needed rest. We look forward to seeing your children refreshed and ready for the new year in 2022!

Karen Wood, Principal

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## Philosophy Corner: A Christmas Picture Study

Picture Study is a regular feature of our curriculum at Grace Primary. We prioritize these lessons because we believe that the works of great artists have a deep influence upon a child's sense of beauty and upon their power of seeing. They enrich the common sights of life and provide a deeper appreciation of ordinary things. Since we are in the season of Advent, this is a great opportunity to appreciate the Nativity story through the eyes of artists. Their visual representations of a familiar story help us to appreciate new layers of its magnitude and significance.



Look at this painting by the Italian artist, Giorgione called The Adoration of the Shepherd. It places the worshipping shepherds in their ragged garments at the centre, reminding us that we can learn deep lessons of reverence and awe from the lowliest members of society. Jesus did not enter our world through palace doors, but “rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness” (Phil. 2:7).

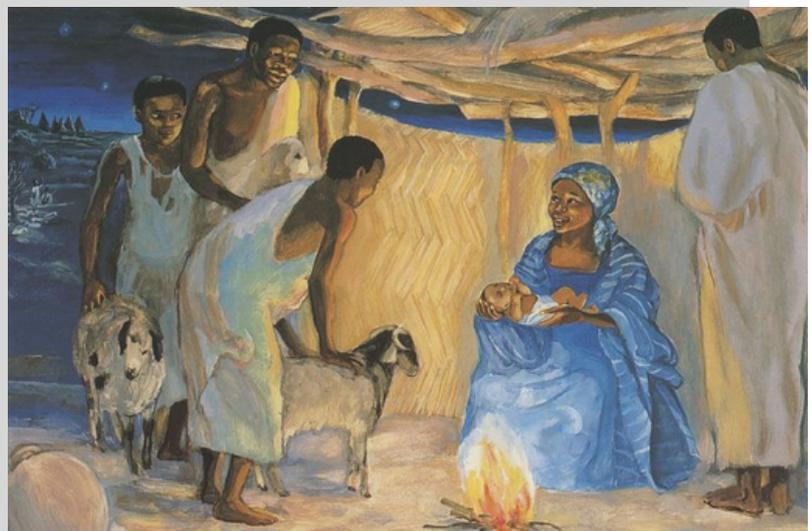
Similarly, his first worshippers were not people of rank or high society, but rather simple, rugged men who responded to the words of the angels and came to worship. In the words of a poem: “Humble before, humbled they went away; And told their tale to all who cared to hear.”

More recently, the Mafa Christians in North Cameroon acted out scenes of the Gospel stories and sketches of the plays were done by artists and given back to them. Here is one of their paintings of the worshipping shepherds. Again the scene is rustic and we notice the helplessness of the baby Jesus on his mother’s lap. At the same time, the newborn king is surrounded by a glowing yellow light, giving us an inkling that this baby is “a light to reveal God to the nations” as prophesied by Simeon in the temple (Luke 2:32).

It reminds us too of some words penned by Charlotte Mason of the Nativity:

“Nothing of all good things that have been made; picture, or world, or book, without Him came. Nor knowledge good for man can mankind know; but He vouchsafes [grants] it; He is all our light.”

Now look at these pictures on your own for a while and think about what you see. Slowing down to think and ponder is an important part of our spiritual devotion and can be a wonderful way of anticipating Christmas as a family together. So as you go into this holiday season, take time with your families to slow down and carve out spaces for joy, reverence, and expectation that will help you and your loved ones to draw closer to the humble King witnessed by the Christmas shepherds and the light of the world who reveals God to us.



## Events

### Sport's Day & Fundraiser Celebration

It was wonderful to be able to hold another Sport's Day this year with beautiful weather (including a breeze to keep runners cool!). As ever, the atmosphere was a joyful buzz of excitement as well as moments of sheer grit and endurance. Well done to all the class sprint winners; we have some speedy children at Grace! Special mention Josh van der Vinne who was the overall winner the long-distance race who completed in a fast time.



It was a joy for parents to be able to watch their children participate but also to be able to connect with one another again in a relaxed setting with time to talk. These opportunities for school families have been few and far between over the past couple of years. We were also treated to an impressive Karate display by the Kyokushin Karate Greenpoint Dojo as a reward for everyone's gallant fundraising efforts for the school since Easter.



Like so many other organisations, Grace Primary has been fairly hard hit by the knock-on effects of COVID-19, but the Lord has graciously kept us running, and also provided for items like the Chromebooks and library books through the generosity of so many school families. We are truly grateful. The final amount raised was an fabulous R49,520.86!!!

**GIVE FOR GROWTH**

### Grade 7 Farewell



On Friday, 26 November we said our formal farewell to the Grade 7 class. It's always an event of such mixed emotions - sadness for all, but also excitement about what the lies ahead and deep gratitude for strong friendships forged over the years and for so much wonderful growth. The children were encouraged by Board Chairman, Chris de Witt, and by Principal, Mrs Wood, to 'keep the faith' and to endeavour to make wise choices during this next season of their lives. Most of the learners are heading only a very short distance away, to Pinelands High School, so hopefully they won't be strangers to the school in the future! Thanks so much to Miss A for organising a meaningful event for all. We look forward to receiving the Grade 7 gift to the school - a mosaic bench for outside reception!

## Events (cont.)

### Christmas Concert

Over the last number of weeks, our children have been diligently practising towards our school Christmas concert called “Christmas Around the World”, planned to be held on Friday, 3 December at the Oude Molen High School hall. Mrs Meyer, our music teacher, had prepared a programme of Christmas songs from around the world to be sung by the different classes. Sadly at the last minute the “live” performance could not go ahead as planned due to the sudden spread of the COVID fourth wave - which made its impact felt in our school family in the days running up to the performance. However, all was not lost, as thanks to Mrs and Mr Meyer, the concert was turned into a video production that will be shared with all our school families as soon as it is ready. Parents were still able to come and watch their children perform, but in smaller class groups with plenty of spacing and ventilation. Well done to all involved in making it such a success - not least the splendid singers!



We also used this opportunity to ask parents to donate Christmas items to the St Thomas' Heideveld Preschool. Thank you so much to all our school families who generously donated stationery, books, games, toiletries and sweet treats to the children in this school.



## STAFF NEWS

As mentioned in the update from Mrs Wood, the end of this year has been a time of some sad good-byes to Mrs van Staden (Gr 5), Mrs Haywood (Maternity Post), Mrs Gosling (Maternity Post), Coach Simon (Phys Ed and Sport), Mrs Kooyman (Junior Art) and Beauty (our school cleaner). We have appreciated their dedication to Grace Primary over the years and wish them everything of the best as they go on to new areas of service and growth.

At the same time we look forward to welcoming back our two teachers who have been off on maternity leave, Mrs Grobler (Gr 1) and Mrs Gregoriades (Gr 4). We also welcome Mrs Johns who will take over the Gr 5 post next year. Mrs Johns comes with 11 years of teaching experience in Grades 4 - 7 as well as 3 years experience as an HOD. She resigned her post at St. Josephs in Rondebosch to stay home with her children for a year, but is looking forward to taking up a full-time position again.

Mrs Terry-Ann Johns  
Grade 5 Teacher



Mrs Stoll will be taking the Junior Art (Gr 1-3) next year and a new Senior Art teacher (Gr 4-7) is currently being appointed. Sadly, we are also saying good-bye to Coach Simon who has served our school faithfully in the area of Sport and Phys Ed over the last six years. Coach Simon is preparing for a probable move to Joburg and we will sorely miss him at Grace Primary next year. We are pleased to welcome Mrs Rae into this position and look forward to her involvement in our school next year.

We also look forward to welcoming Mrs Caroline Togaraseyi as our first Aftercare Teacher and Bukelwa Nzambane who will take over the cleaning position from Beauty next year.

## Marketing News

This term we were excited to be able to release three new marketing videos. The first is a one minute social media video that we'd love parents to share freely with their family, friends, neighbours and colleagues! The second video is a longer one with our Philosophy Director and school Co-Founder, Mrs Judy McComb, talking about the educational philosophy that underpins all that we do at Grace Primary. The third is a short video of some testimonials from some children, parents and a couple of teachers. We pray that they are a useful tool in helping people understand more about who we are and the excellent quality of education that is offered by the school.

A big thank you to all of those who willingly took part in the videos!



## Glimpses of Grace

In this edition of our school magazine, we would like to focus on some of the local content that we have explored in our curriculum this term. While the breadth of our curriculum means that it includes authors and cultures from around the world, we also take care to introduce our children to important local personalities and stories.

### Grade 1:

This term the Grade 1's explored the History of Pinelands. They learnt how our suburb developed from a flat, open, sandy space to a farm, to a prison, to a forest station to the Garden City suburb that we know today. We ended the term with a walk in the Central Square area where the first homes were built. Starting at no 3 Mead Way, the oldest home in Pinelands, we walked to the foundation stone in Central Square and talked about the games that the first children would have played in Central Park. We then walked past the first church, the first school, the original post office building, the old police station (now Ou Meul) and town hall and ended up enjoying some Steers ice-creams! Thanks to Takudzwa and Emihle from Grade 7 for helping as escorts on this walkabout.



### Grade 2:

The Grade 2's were introduced to African Music and Instruments in their Composer Study curriculum this term. Two of the instruments they learned about included the Hosho (a shaker) and the Mbira (which is a thumb piano). As a practical outworking of their learning they made some Hoshos and Mbiras in class - have a look at their creations.



### Grade 3:

This term the Grade 3's learnt about the life and art of George Pemba in Picture Study. Noah Chitsike wrote the following written narration in response to what he learned:

“George Pemba was born in South Africa in a town close to Port Elizabeth. His dad was called Titus and his mom was called Rebecca. His first school teacher said art was a waste of time but his mom encouraged him and he kept doing it. Later he moved to another school and there his teacher encouraged his art. One day, George hurt himself so he had to go to hospital. In hospital he painted a picture of an old man and the man asked him “how did you paint my soul?” One of the special moments in George’s life was when he won first place in an art competition. One of the paintings we studied was called “Homeless”. In the picture are four people, one man, one woman with a baby and a small boy all looking sad because they are homeless.”

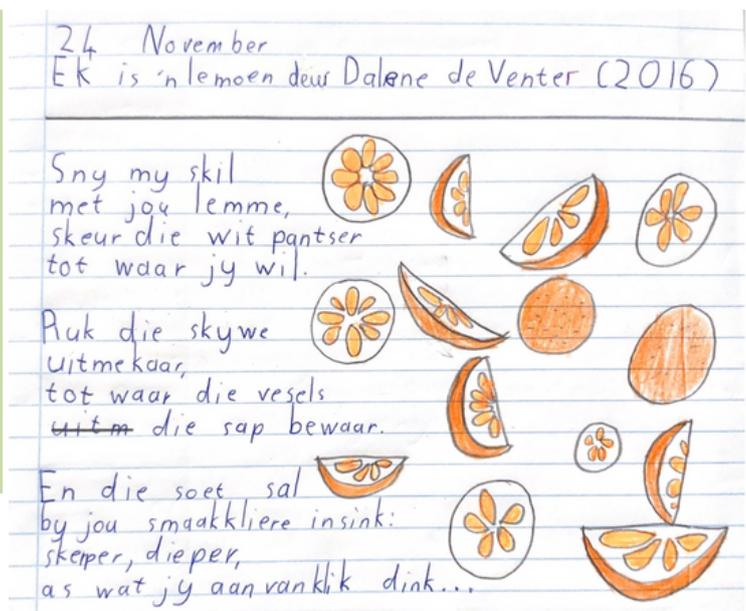


### Grade 4:

The Grade 4's learnt about Johnny Clegg in Composer Study this term. They loved being introduced to the White Zulu, who together with Siphosiso Mchunu pioneered a new kind of music in South African and the world which merged African and Western sounds. The Grade 4's were interested to learn that the band name Juluka was taken from the name of Siphosiso's bull, the head of the cattle herd. Johnny and Siphosiso felt they were ahead of South African music and so named themselves accordingly!

### Grade 5:

The Grade 5's learnt an Afrikaans Gedig called “Ek is 'n Lemoen” by Dalene de Venter. Amy Trimble copied and illustrated the words of this poem for us to enjoy as well.



## Grade 6:

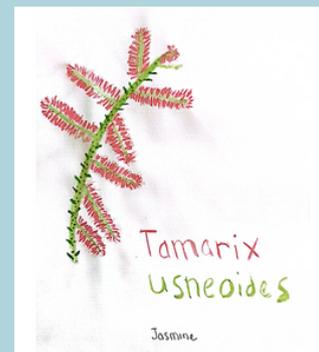
The Grade 6's learnt about Miriam Makeba in Composer Study this term. Below is a written narration by Adam Le Roux on her life and music:

Miriam Makeba had a very hard life. When she was 18 days old, her mother was sent to prison for selling illegal beer, and because no one else could look after her, she had to take Miriam with her. When she was older, she joined the choir and was a very good singer. When she was 17, she had a son and they lived with his father, but they were abused so they ran away. The Manhattan Brothers heard about Miriam and invited her to be their lead singer. She later went to America, but the apartheid government did not let her back to South Africa for over 30 years. Everyone liked Miriam's music. One of her most popular pieces was Pata Pata, which was popular around the world. Another popular song was Qongqothwane, which most white people could not pronounce, so they called it the 'Click Song'.



## Grade 7:

During the year, our children explore the natural surroundings of the school and learn the names of some of the plants. During their Nature Study time, they sketch these plants. Look at these beautiful paintings done by the Grade 7 class of the flower of the tamarix tree that grows outside the school.



## Increase your word power! – Christmas Words

This year we have introduced a new “word of the week” for both junior and senior grades to increase their vocabulary in a fun way. Some of our words have related to our school habit and others to current events. For example at the time of the local government elections, our “word of the week” for the senior grades was “ballot” which refers to a system of voting secretly and in writing. Did you know that this word comes from the Italian word ballotta, which means “small ball” in reference to the gold and silver balls used to cast a vote in Medieval Venice?

Over the last couple of weeks, each grade has chosen a Christmas word or expression. Have a look at some of these in our Christmas word tree below:

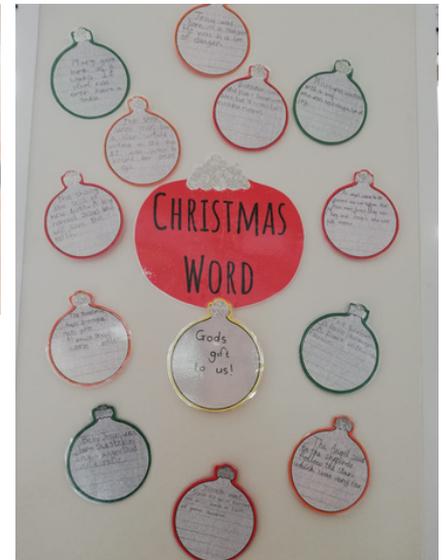
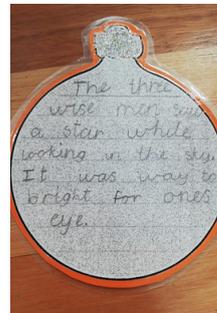


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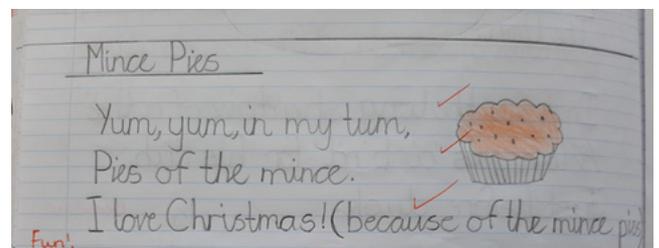
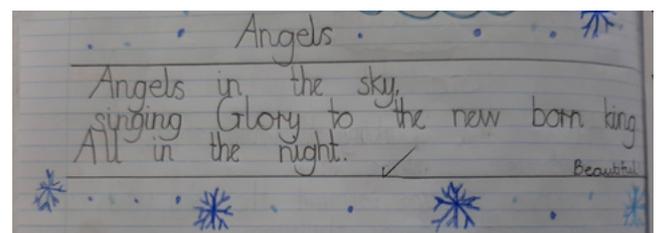
**Grade 1:** The Grade 1's chose the word "manger" as their Christmas word. A manger is an open box to hold food for animals. The word comes from the Old French mangier, meaning "to eat". Have a look at some of the pictures the Grade 1's compiled to illustrate their word.



**Grade 2:** The Grade 2's each chose their own Christmas word and used it in a rhyming couplet. They wrote their couplets on a bauble shape to make a decorative class poster. Have a look at their beautiful creation.



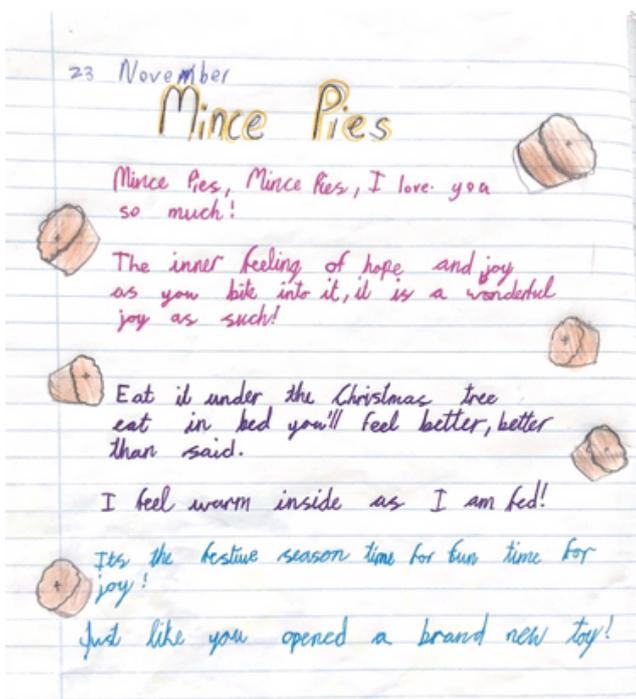
**Grade 3:** The children in the Grade 3 class each chose a different Christmas word and wrote a Haiku based on their word. The haiku is a Japanese poetic form with a particular structure.



**Grade 4:** The Grade 4's also each chose their own Christmas word. Eliora Tregenza-Hall chose the word 'snowflake' and wrote the following poem:

"Snowflakes are pretty and they are white,  
They are not heavy, but they are light!  
They fall down from the friendly old sky,  
And when they melt I say Oh my!  
When I feel them it is cold,  
It's worth more than silver and gold.  
It falls down in shapes and sizes  
But it disappears when the sun rises."

**Grade 5:** This poem about Christmas Mince Pies was written by Riya-Ray Alfino. Did you know that Mince Pies were originally filled with meat, such as lamb, rather than the dried fruits and spices mix as they are today? There weren't really such things as puddings back then, as sweet ingredients were expensive and hard to come by. Along with imported dried fruits, spices were one way for the wealthy to show off about how much money they had and would be served at special occasions such as Christmas.



**Grade 6:** The Grade 6's looked at some Christmas idioms and did some comic decorations of them.

One idiom was "The proof is in the pudding" which means that the success of something can only be judged by testing or using it. It ties to Christmas in that pudding is definitely the highlight of the Christmas feast.



A second idiom was "It would be like turkeys voting for Christmas" which is used when someone accepts a situation that will have a bad outcome for them.



**Grade 7:** Below is another lovely poem about mince pies by Skyla Lindeman:

Oh, how I love mince pies,  
Though they taste better with fries  
They truly are a cutie  
Even if they are very fruity  
Most people don't like them  
But if you only try them  
You will learn to love them

## Excursions

All our classes have continued doing a variety of excursions this term. We believe that excursions are an important aspect of our children's learning as they provide first-hand experiences of historical places of interest or the natural world or some aspect of industry/craft. We have featured each of these excursions on our Facebook page, so will just feedback on two of these excursions below.

### Grade 1s at the Waterfront

This term the Grade 1's went on an excursion to the Waterfront and were treated to an interesting, historical walking tour led by Lesley Cox from Culture Connect SA. The Grade 1 History curriculum includes a short history of some of the key heritage sights in Cape Town, including the Waterfront, so this excursion was planned to extend their learning in this area. Although the weather report had threatened to be damp, the morning turned out to be perfect for a walkabout and both teachers and children enjoyed this time out. It started at the Table Bay Hotel and finished at the Zeitz Mocca Museum with many interesting stops along the way. Amongst other things, the Grade 1's learned how the breakwater had first been built by prisoners housed at the old Breakwater Prison and how different things had looked then compared to now. They saw where prisoners had first been taken by boat to Robben Island and looked at the statues of the four Nobel Peace Prize winners from South Africa at Nobel Square. They also learned about the development of the Silo District in recent years which preserves its heritage as a place where grain was stored for the early farmers. A real highlight was to see a group of seals playing in the harbour water!



### Grade 6&7 Camp

Our Grade 6&7's were full of anticipation for their annual school camp which took place in October this year. Generally this camp takes place in the first term, but due to COVID restrictions in place at that stage, we were forced to delay the camp to October. The children left on a bus together on Wednesday, 20 October with their sleeping bags and clothing packed for two nights away from home. The camp was hosted by the Scripture Union team at Rocklands and includes a wide range of team-building activities and outdoor adventures. Some of the highlights were archery, axe throwing, early morning hikes and even a surprise baboon visitation that got all the children excited indoors. Outside of the schedule, there was time for swimming, jumping on the trampoline and night-time games of "stalk the lantern". Our children came back full of memories of some wonderful shared experiences but also very tired from both excitement and some late nights!



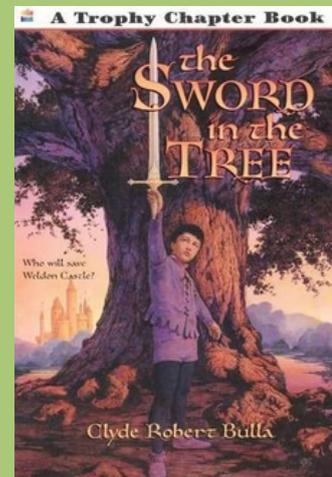


## Book Reviews

We encourage individual reading in all our classes throughout the year and enjoy hearing back from the children with regards to the books they have most enjoyed. This term we would like to feature two book reviews:

Malachi Burt, Grade 3

“My favourite book is *The Sword in the Tree* by Clyde Robert Bulla. I like it because I like History and the characters in the book are real people from History and this book is realistic. There is one main person in the book by the name of Shan. He meets a lot of other people but I like Shan the most. The part I like best is when his father died and his uncle wants to take the sword which means he is king, but it should go to Shan. I really liked this book and would recommend it.”



Kiara Spencer, Grade 5

Kiara has read 74 books this year as part of our Reading Challenge which shows her love for reading! In the excerpt below she shares what she enjoyed about the book called *Rainbow Garden* by Patricia St. John.

“This book is about a girl, Elaine, whose mother has to go away while she goes to the country. At first she disliked the family she had to live with. Then she took a long walk and found a house she thought to be abandoned. She plants flowers in the garden and takes a rainbow shell. She hopes the others will like it so she can feel more welcome. But when she sees an old man outside and a robber at the house which belonged to a family on holiday, Elaine didn’t know what to do.

I liked this book because it was exciting, adventurous and very enjoyable. It was also written in a very interesting way to help captivate readers to continue reading.”



## Focus on Habits

This term we have focused on two habits, first the habit of **truthful and uplifting speech** and later in the term on the habit of **personal initiative**. We were so blessed to have some of our parents share inspiration on these habits in our school assemblies.

Kate le Roux (mother of Adam and Julian) involved the children in a dramatic enactment of a poem she had written on the habit of uplifting speech called "Taming the Tongue" inspired by James 3.



This poem really hit home and challenged the children to "measure their words" seriously. This stanza in the poem was particularly striking as we are constantly aware of the power that the media plays in shaping the habits of our thoughts and speech:

And something else: the things you hear  
 Stay in your mind, don't disappear  
 Do you hear it on YouTube, on TV or a song?  
 Things people say that you just know  
 are wrong?  
 Do you listen to people whose tongues  
 are not tame?  
 Do you hear them say rude things, misuse  
 Jesus name?  
 The words that you listen to matter, no doubt  
 If good things go in, good things will come out  
 So kids, remember the power of your tongue  
 It's no excuse that you are young

In the second half of the term, Mildie Sole (mother of Isabella and Zoey) shared on the habit of personal initiative. Mildie created a beautiful birthday party scene, introducing some delightful "party guests" who brought gifts to help us understand how to take personal initiative for God.



These gifts included:

- Cheerfulness which reminds us that in every situation we can choose our attitude and response. Proverbs 15:15: "For the despondent, every day brings trouble; for the happy heart, life is a continual feast."
- Responsibility which reminds us to take initiative responsibly, always exercising self-control and care for others.
- Curiosity which reminds us that there is much to be discovered in the world that God has made and to respond with great initiative to these gifts.
- Hardships which remind us to depend on God in all situations and to remember that He can use them for the good of His children. Our initiative does not need to be dampened when hardships come because we know that the One we serve is faithful.

