



CURRICULUM NEWS

Year 8, Semester Two, 2014

This is the final edition of the Curriculum News for 2014. This year was our year of review which involved all facets of the school being investigated, analysed and reviewed in terms of both efficiency and effectiveness. This process occurs every four years and includes the focus areas of; Student outcomes, student engagement and school resources. Ideally this leads to the development of strategies and targets feeding into our School Strategic Plan which is our key steering document for the next four years and the Annual Implementation Plan. I am very pleased to say that the review has led to continual improvements to our curriculum which will be implemented as part of our 2015 curriculum program. It is also very timely to acknowledge the important role that you as parents play in terms of the partnerships with the school and the support that assists in meeting high education outcomes for your children. This support and cooperation is imperative to prepare the future generation to be successful and responsible citizens, as well as effective learners. The following items are from our Faculty Leaders and contain information about what our Year 8 students will be completing this semester. Lastly, the article of interest relates to improving students in the skill of using and organising homework for the best results. This is an essential ability in all years of schooling, especially as their workload increases and the volume of information increases as they move into Year 9. It is very important that all students endeavour to build their capabilities in this area. I would also like to wish all our Lalor families a very safe and enjoyable holiday break.

Ms Kaylene Kubeil

College Curriculum Leader, Years 7-10

ENGLISH - In English students begin the semester immersed in the novel 'Trash,' a novel about three dumpsite boys. As the novel is loosely based on real dumpsites in the Philippines, students have explored this world of underprivileged people and how corruption develops within governments. Students wrote essays and creative responses.

In Term Three students will also be working on issues that appear in the news, extending skills they started developing in Year 7 in terms of persuasive language. And as is the case at all levels of English, students will be expected to complete an Oral Presentation presenting a point of view triggered from the work they did at the completion of Term Three, on a news media. The second semester for our Year 8 students has a more creative element in terms of the type of texts covered – in Term Four the focus is on 'Horror'. Students will be given the opportunity to complete creative writing, using their imagination after completing work that shows how horror is presenting the context of film and television.



EAL (ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE) – The Year 8 EAL class have had a fun and challenging term. They have studied the film "Wall-E" and learnt about film techniques and production elements. Students also studied the novel "Trash" and focused on plot and key characters. The students have worked well independently and collaboratively and have made good progress in developing their reading and writing skills. The year 8 EAL class has been a pleasure to teach. I have thoroughly enjoyed teaching and discussing issues in class which have helped us to learn more about the world and each other.

LITERACY SUPPORT - The school provides Literacy Support at Year 8 for those students who, as a result of recommendation, AusVELS level and On Demand testing, are deemed to require support to improve their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. This is dependent on student progress during Year 7.

Year 8 Literacy Support classes are smaller than the average class size, allowing the teacher to provide more direct support to the student. Students in Literacy Support classes are taught skills to equip them to comprehend a range of text types from across the curriculum. They are taught to compose texts, with a particular focus on the mechanics of language: vocabulary, spelling and grammatical structures and features. In Term Three students completed activities that were designed to increase their comprehension skills of the English language in context, and their ability to compose various text types. Term Four will continue to build on this understanding with further activities that support the core studies.

NUMERACY - Students started the Semester looking at measurement and geometry focusing on finding areas of different shapes and applying the skills to real life situations including areas of gardens and houses. This has allowed the students to use the skills in real life situations to solve problems they may be faced with outside of school. The problems will then be developed to include angles in triangles, quadrilaterals. This will allow them to develop their measurement skills using compasses and protractors. This also included an investigation to plan their own theme park which utilised not only their idea of scale and shapes but also budgeting and financial maths. Students then moved on to looking at real life data and explaining the patterns it shows. This can be looked at home with any data that is presented in the media about what the patterns and trends of the data are. Students then move onto coordinates and focusing on plotting points and drawing shapes using their coordinates. This has allowed them to look at grid references and finding objects on maps. This can be reinforced by using the Mel ways at home and finding different routes and places of interest. In term 4 the students will study probability with particular focus on scenarios they may be faced with including simple games where probability is involved. Revision can also be supported by regular use of Mathletics to reinforce the ideas covered in class.

MATHEMATICS - Students have covered a number of topics this Semester including developing their understanding of Linear Algebra looking to solve non numerical problems. They have then taken these skills and applied them to linear problems including graphs. This has also allowed them to describe graphs and explain the relationships. This can be applied to any graphs and can be practiced with graphs in different situations. The students then moved onto Probability developing their understanding of the chance of situations occurring using cards, dice and real life situations. Students then moved on to Measurement looking at area, volume and surface area allowing them to recall their skills before their assignment. Students have completed an assignment on designing a theme park where they have had to utilise not only their measurement skills but also their numeracy skills of budgeting and financial maths to sure they are getting the best deal possible. Students will then move onto statistics and rates and ratios. The analysis of data can be done in many different situations where patterns and trends can be found. Students will then move onto Coordinates focusing on plotting points on all four quadrants. They have been linking the work done in algebra and linear equations to the Cartesian planes and developing graphs. Revision can also be supported by regular use of Mathletics to reinforce the ideas covered in class.

HUMANITIES – History - As part of the new Australian Curriculum, students have begun Term 3 by looking at medieval history. Students have studied key concepts of society such as feudalism, exploration and discovery by looking at a range of civilisations in Europe, Asia Minor, Asia, the Americas and Oceania. The newly titled depth studies have seen students investigating the Ottoman Empire; exploring the origins of this once great empire and its strengths, weaknesses and core values. Students were assigned an inquiry research assignment which encouraged them to look more closely at Ottoman daily life, leadership, religion and cultural achievements.



In Term 4 students will begin to study the intriguing Black Death that spread through Europe and also the civilisation of feudalism in Japan. These units will allow students to study a range of primary and secondary sources and build on their essay writing skills.

SCIENCE - In this semester of Science the Year 8s have been mainly focussing on the Biology area of this study. They have looked more closely at cells, with a specific focus on their structure and function. A highlight was the use of the microscopes to really explore the cell and its components. Body Systems was the next topic which involved looking at how the body is structured and the organisation of different cells into different systems. Students were able to relate this to their own body and how it functions. The highlight of this unit was the Sheep Heart Dissection. This Biology focus will finish with a study of the growth and reproduction of different organisms; including looking at life cycles, plant and animal reproduction, as well as seed germination. The semester will finish with the topic of energy during which students will learn about the different types of energy, its transfer. Lastly student will all undertake an Inquiry Task focussing on the use of more environmentally energy sources.



HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION – What a year it has been so far in Health and Physical Education. This term has seen the Year 8's become actively involved in practical activities including Table Tennis, Volleyball and various Football Codes. The students have made a fantastic effort in all of these sports showing plenty of great teamwork and enthusiasm to participate to the best of their abilities. In theory classes, students covered the units of "Nutrition" and "First Aid". During Term 4 students will focus on the topic of "Health Resources in the Community" and "Benefits of Exercise". In practical sessions students will be introduced to the basic skills of European Handball, Netball and Tennis. All students are reminded that with the arrival of term 4, you will need to bring and wear your hats!!!!

ART and MUSIC – In year 8, students study a semester each of Art and Music. In year 8 Art, students concentrate on building up their skill levels in painting, drawing, and printmaking as well as mixed media. In Music, Year 8 students learn how to play a Mozart piece 'Eine Klein Nachtmusik'. There are Arts related theoretical tasks that students complete to complement their practical work.

FOOD TECHNOLOGY – They have been building on and refining their skills from the previous year in year 7, enhancing their prior knowledge and developing a passion for food. They have completed a range of topics such as investigating a range of key foods, cooking different recipes and evaluating ingredients using sensory descriptors. They are gearing up so that they can make informed choices about what they eat. The students have been able to learn how to modify ingredients to make a recipe healthier and also incorporate that into an assessment task. Some of the recipes that have been included in this semester have been the Lamb and Leek pies as well as the Savoury Scroll assignment. The assignment was based on a design brief which all year 8's completed where they had make the dough and filling from scratch, the range that they made was fantastic as there were so many options. The food cooked at this level requires more skill from the students and really tests their culinary ability. It has been great to see a lot of enthusiasm from the students at both year levels this semester.

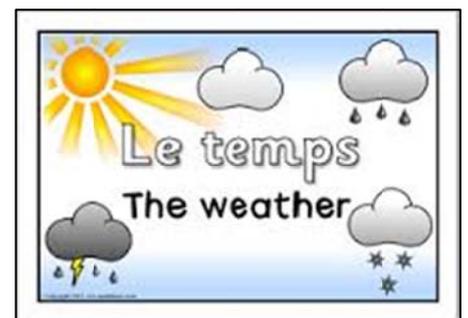
DESIGN TECHNOLOGY – The students in our Year 8 classes have built on the skills and techniques developed in Year 7. They have constructed a model boat from acrylic plastic which were on display in the general office area. They learnt skills in sawing with a coping saw, grinding with the belt and disk sander, filing and thermo bending. Their second project was a pencil box with a sliding lid requiring skills in measuring, cutting with a tenon saw, chiselling, assembling with glue and nails, sanding and varnishing. The third project was a copper repousse using a range of copper tooling techniques. All production activities, drawings and evaluations were recorded in their log books using evaluations in line with Blooms Taxonomy. Safety procedures were an important part of the program. The students were required to complete a research assignment on Plastic Materials. Most of the assignments were completed by the due date and to a good standard. Many projects were completed to a very high standard

LIBRARY RESOURCE CENTRE - The Victorian Premier's Reading Challenge which began last February has ended recently. We were pleased that 6 Year 8 students met the challenge of reading 15 or more books in 2014! Their achievements were celebrated at a special lunch party held in the last week of Term Three.

Teacher Librarians continue to support students with the research aspects of their assessment tasks. Please encourage your child to use two of our subscribed Internet sources: ***World Book Online*** (this electronic source is based on the printed copy of World Book encyclopedia) and ***Online Referencing Generator*** (this website will assist students in producing a correctly formatted bibliography). Instructional handouts are also available from the Library.

LANGUAGES - MACEDONIAN - The topics covered by the Year 8 Macedonian class are History and Culture of Macedonia, Ilinden and Macedonian Weddings. Students are able to focus their grammar skills on prepositions, and tenses. As part of the cultural topic students write a biography on Ilinden and also create a traditional Macedonian wedding and present it to the class. The Year 8's are also going along to a Macedonian restaurant so they too can practise their speaking skills.

LANGUAGES- FRENCH - The Year 8 French students began the term by designing and writing menus in French, following their unit of work on food in Term 2. Students then studied expressions and vocabulary relating to sport and weather, practising their pronunciation skills through short dialogues, as well as via their reading test, which focussed on the four seasons. Grammar associated with these areas of study were also learned, such as the use of the preposition "de", the "definite and indefinite articles", the verbs "to make" and "to put", as well as "information questions" relating to sport and leisure activities.



Students also practised their listening and oral skills via brief conversations with their peers and their teacher. They were formally assessed on these areas of learning with short semester tests.

A few students participated in the Alliance Francaise Poetry Competition and some of them were awarded "Very Good" or "Excellent".

All Year 8 Language students were treated to a captivating performance by an accordionist and mime artist during Language Week in the latter part of the term.

LANGUAGES – GREEK - The students studying Year 8 Greek completed an extensive unit on Ancient Greece where they looked at the different clothes, houses, education systems theatre and art of that historical period. Links between the Greek and English languages were also made. All students researched an ancient Greek play and created replica vases. In term four students will be studying Greek food. We will make menus, write up recipes and, of course, taste a variety of Greek foods.

LANGUAGES – ITALIAN - The year 8 Italian class were challenged this term with completing their first unassisted orals. Students had to describe a student from overseas, discussing where they live, the languages they speak and also their hobbies. Areas that were covered in the personal identity topic of ‘Dove abiti?’ Where do you live? Students were able to broaden their cultural knowledge by planning a real life trip through Italy. Next term the focus will be on transport and ‘il cibo’, Food!

HOMEWORK – A WORLD FULL OF DIFFERENCES

Homework is an inescapable part of school life. It helps to build knowledge and tests your organisational and time management skills. There are two keys to mastering this world.

1. During term time, remember that **there is never such a thing as no homework.**
2. There are lots of different types of homework. Each type needs its own approach.

NO HOMEWORK? NO WAY!

Homework is more than just assignments and exercises set for the night. Homework includes any part of mastering a subject. On nights when you have no specific written tasks, you could really use some of that study time to:

Catch up on subject reading (eg. the next chapter of the novel for English), or re-reading the notes from that day’s classes to check that you understand everything.

- From this, make a list of follow-up questions.
- Re-write/re-organise notes. Your class notes may be messy. Taking a half hour or so to tidy these into charts, tables or headings produces notes much more useful for exam and revision study.

1. TYPES OF HOMEWORK

There are many different types. For your planner, work out the time and strategies needed for each. Here are the main types:

- **Short exercises** such as a Maths problem, a subject worksheet or a few questions in English or History. These are often expected to be completed for the next class.
- **Projects and Presentations** – these are usually larger and in sections. You may be handed out instructions well in advance in order to prepare over a long period, including some class time.
- **Group work** – these can be tricky to organise because each group member may have a specific task to complete. Try to build in time for the group to consult and work together.
- Revision sheets – in preparation for exams and tests.

Now you are ready to design a brilliant study planner that will work for you. (Adapted from School Diary, LSC pg. 90)



Key Learning Area Leaders - English – E. Bruno and J. Stephens, EAL – R. Medcalf, Humanities – C. Miller, P. Leos and J. O’Hara, Maths – M. Brennan, Science – S. Russo, Arts – C. Koronowicz, HPE and Sport – M. Magnano, Technologies – S. Matzke, Languages – V. Pugliese & Library Resource Centre – S. Graetsch

