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## PSP NEWS 2<sup>nd</sup> TERM 2003

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### Hullo, dear Colleagues!

The PSP has found a new home and we like it just as much as teachers do! We are very lucky to have found such a suitable place - if you don't know the Edith Stephens Wetland Park (ESWP), please come to visit - it will be good for your soul!

The PSP's AGM will take the form of a Joint Management Meeting (without a general celebration) this year. It will take place on Thursday 12 June. We followed the advice of our Advisory Committee, as we will be hosting two large functions this year:

- the Annual Mass planning forum at the start of the 4th term
- Certification Celebration towards the end of the year.

Amongst the exciting new developments on the programme this term are:

- Pilot partnership with ORT-TECH for support in Planning & Assessing Technology
- New focus on Science Investigations (LO1), to start this term.

Please see details in the programme. We wish you inspiration and joy in your teaching this term!

Mascha for the PSP team: Vagriuah, Nontsikelelo, Rose, Gcobisa, & Zowi



Vagriuah, Zowi and Gcobisa at the PSP's new front door

### THE PSP HAS RELOCATED TO THE EDITH STEPHENS WETLAND PARK

The PSP moved its offices to the Edith Stephens Wetland Park (ESWP) on 24 March and has settled into its new home.

The ESWP is a beautiful Wetland Park, which the City Council of Cape Town have transformed and developed from a previously unusable dumping site into a beautiful indigenous Wetland Park over the last 2 years.

The ESWP is strategically situated very close to Philippi, Guguletu /Nyanga /Crossroads and Manenberg /Havover Park and other needy communities and townships in the Cape Flats.

The long-term vision for the park includes furthering the interests of care and conservation of the environment, education as well as providing for community and cultural recreation.

This park has the potential to become an exciting meeting place of different communities and many organizations that foster its long-term vision.

We hope to share our pleasure, just to be in such a beautiful environment with the many teachers that attend workshops or visit the PSP.



## TWW@ WESKUS WYNLAND 2003 - 2005

### The PSP embarks on a new initiative - partnership in the West Coast

The EMDC West Coast / Winelands stretches about 400km from Paarl, Stellenbosch, Wellington through Saldanha Bay, Clanwilliam to Vredendal and is responsible for about 200 primary schools. Many of these schools are far from regular in-service education, teaching resources or follow up support.

This EMDC has taken the initiative and established a partnership with INSET providers: SDU, IMSTUS, ORT-TECH and the PSP to provide Technology, Mathematics and Natural Sciences support to all the grade R - 7 educators in the EMDC.

In line with the WCED's MST Strategy, this partnership project will begin to address the needs of educators in rural and remote schools.

Vagriuah Kariem, the PSP's Rural Co-ordinator will head up this exciting initiative for the PSP.

### THE 'HOEP' PROJECT IS ABOUT TO TAKE OFF

Now that the PSP is settled into its lovely new home, the HANDS-ON-ENVIRONMENT (HOEP) Project will soon start to take shape.

As usual, the PSP will consult with teachers, who are interested in the ENVIRONMENT and develop exciting activities for learners using the wonderful resources here, at the Park. This project will allow teachers to bus their classes of learners to the ESWP for hands-on experiences of the environment.

The National Lottery will fund this project. The first planning meeting with any interested teachers will be held on Wednesday 7 May at 2:30pm at the PSP office.



### SCIENCE INVESTIGATIONS 'new' challenge for primary school

The Natural Sciences Learning Outcome no.1 expects learners to conduct investigations for assessment purposes. There is no history of formal science investigations in primary schools in South Africa and as teachers have had little experience of how to let their learners conduct practical investigations in science, teachers have requested assistance and support from the PSP.

The PSP has started a process by calling together a forum of experienced science teachers, EMDC curriculum advisors and INSET workers to 'think-tank' and research the most appropriate approaches to science investigations at the primary level.

From this process the PSP will develop appropriate methodologies for teachers to try out various science investigations practically for themselves at workshops and later with their learners, with PSP support.

We hope to write up these investigations in the form of support materials for teachers.



Many, many teachers attended the PSP courses on Assessment last term.



**Our thoughts go out to our colleagues in education and their families who are either living with or have died from AIDS related diseases.**

### PSP AT SASOL SCIFEST 2003

Once again the PSP participated in the very exciting, weeklong science festival hosted by the Grahamstown Foundation.

Thousands of school children and adults took part and enjoyed the wonders of science and technology in various activities, ranging from weird to wonderful science experiments, participatory workshops, lectures and exhibitions. These activities dealt with topics such as: on and beyond our planet; how natural phenomena such as volcanoes, earthquakes, tornadoes occur; microscopic and large animals; structure, properties and uses of materials; energy alternatives and development in our country.

Nontsikelelo Mahote represented the PSP and ran 3 workshops on the 'Birds of Our Environment'.

She reports: "I had great fun sharing and letting participants explore the Share-Net / PSP Bird

Resource Pack with its hands-on activities about birds. The aim of the bird resource pack is to try and develop an interest in birds and to foster care and protection of the birds of our environment.

We would like to thank Songezo Lombo from the Grahamstown local community for managing the PSP exhibition so well and for helping school children with their 'SciPass' research on bird migration.

*A sincere thanks goes to my PSP colleagues for making it possible for me to be part of this wonderful event - "getting excited about science". I would also thank Sasol and all the other sponsors for all their efforts and contributions to this unforgettable festival."*

**Nontsikelelo Mahote**



### INDEPENDENT EVALUATION Moves into its last year

The Evaluation has been very successful thus far. We have gained useful information about teachers and classrooms and how learners struggle with de-contextualised tests in English.

In this last year the evaluation will tighten its focus on assessment: try to gain more information on what learners know and can do in science and gain information on how teachers assess in their classes - i.e. how continuous assessment is dealt with.

This is a burning issue and the information gained will provide useful insight for all stakeholders about how best to support teachers.

The PSP wishes to thank all the teachers very sincerely, who have / are / will participate in the evaluation activities.

## DOING LOTS OF READING AND WRITING IN CLASSROOMS

At the Annual Mass Planning Forum this year teachers decided to focus strongly on literacy skills and especially to consider the many ways that children can write; come-up with new texts; children can read, as well as try out new ways of reading.

We started with Foundation Phase teachers, and in Term 2 will begin working with Gr 4 - 7 teachers - and their children.

Marlene Rousseau is leading this literacy work with the PSP. During Term 1 she ran 3 courses with the Foundation Phase teachers of the PSP Cluster schools from last year. Each course ran for 3 days. Marlene hopes to stimulate our thinking and share ideas about what happens when children are learning. Each day she dealt with some modern theory and then went on to discuss writing activities that could be done in the classroom the next day.

Teachers were asked to observe their children learning to see how they respond, and what they say and do. children learning to see how they respond, and what they say and do.



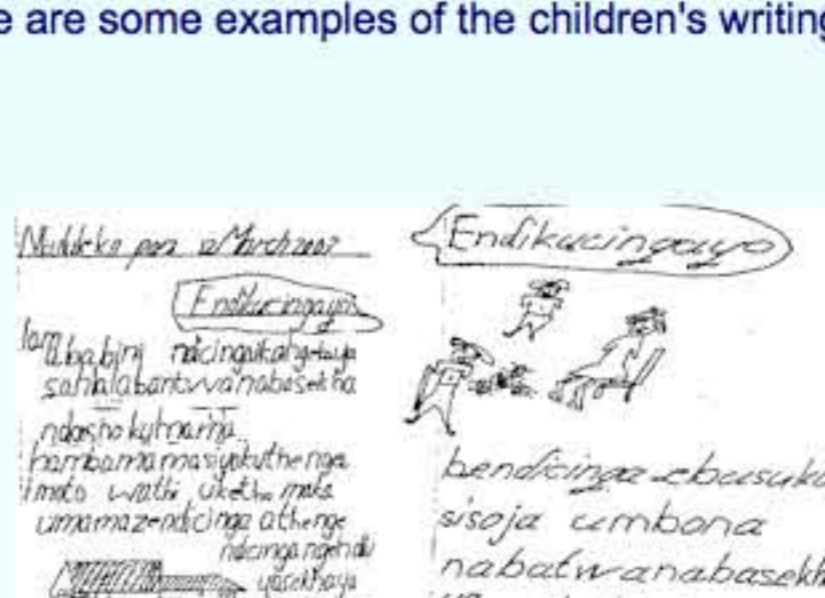
A Foundation Phase teacher shares her learners' work at Marlene's workshop

Thank-you to the many teachers who brought some of their children's work to the next session; this was most helpful as they could discuss their work in the course. During the year they will build-up portfolios that will show samples of the work that children enjoy doing.

Each afternoon the teachers:

- Thought and talked about meta-cognition (how children and adults think & learn)
- Prepared children for writing and discussed different ways of doing reading
- Looked at the Revised New Curriculum: what does it say?

Here are some examples of the children's writing.



### Grade 2 learners writing about what they are thinking

If you are a Gr 1 - 3 teacher, and you were not at the course, we hope this will give you ideas to try this with your children. Don't underestimate what children are capable of doing!

If you attended Term 1's course, we look forward to seeing you again this term. Remember: Marlene is very interested in meeting your children, and in working with them during one of your language lessons. She is able to do this in the mornings of the courses. Phone her to make an appointment! (PSP: 021 6919039) and 0829236013.

Please encourage your Gr 4 - 7 colleagues to attend the Gr 4 - 7 language course!

We invite all teachers of Afrikaans, Xhosa or English. Content teachers are also very welcome: as we say now-a-days: Every teacher is a language teacher . . .