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PSP NEWS

3rd TERM 2001

Western Cape Primary Science Programme, N.Y. 108, Uluntu Centre, Guguletu
 Box 529, Howard Place 7450 Tel: (021) 637 8179 Fax: (021) 633 2994
 e-mail: info@psp.org.za

MAIN FOCUS IN SCIENCE THIS TERM

Once again this term is full of exciting and very significant events and interactions with teachers.

An important new initiative is a workshop on developing teachers' knowledge on Astronomy as part of the Earth & Beyond theme in Natural Sciences.

Mr Gordon Bosch – a resource person with a special interest in Astronomy - has developed an excellent slide show on the solar system and the universe and we hope to use it in this workshop.

Please read the Programme of Courses very carefully for dates of this planning meeting and the workshop.

The PSP will be doing more school-based work this term, with teams of science teachers at individual schools. Read about that in this PSP Newsletter!

During September the PSP team will be helping to present the grade 5 OBE Training in Natural Sciences together with the WCED subject advisors – we hope these workshops will be beneficial to teachers!

Please contact us if you have a problem – we'll do what we can! Regards from

Mascha and the PSP team: Rose, Sandra, Vagriuah, Gcobisa, Charlotte, Zowi and Jean in the Boland

Teachers requested not to start with any new work while waiting for the new National Curriculum. So the PSP decided to work closely with science teachers in their schools (school based work) in order to support and strengthen science this term.

What we can do:

We will work with all the science teachers in your school to:

Session 1 (approximately 2 hours)

- Plan the science curriculum for a term using a process that can be applied to plan the curriculum in other Learning Areas

Session 2 (approximately 2 hours)

- Look at the practical ways of assessing in a classroom
- Deciding what tasks can be assessed
- Developing criteria to assess each task
- Developing a format and a method of recording the assessment
- Developing a suitable report form

The above programme is negotiable.

If your school wants to benefit from this process please contact Sandra or Gcobisa at the PSP. Tel: 6378179 by **Tuesday 7 August**.

HAVE YOU CHECKED OUT OUR PSP WEBSITE YET? www.psp.org.za

Please visit the site if you can – and tell us what you think we should add or change. It serves as a window for the world on the PSP!

BIRD RESOURCE PACK

Practical activities on Birds - kindly sponsored by WWF - SA for schools

Have you received a Bird Pack yet?

Schools can now receive these Bird Packs by participating in one of the 4 workshops on this resource pack.

For a school to qualify to receive a Bird Pack:

- At least 4 teachers from your school must participate in a workshop
- One teacher from each grade 4, 5, 6 & 7 (science or class teacher) must attend
- Choose any one of the following workshop dates to attend a workshop
- Contact the PSP office to book your school in at a workshop (Gcobisa : tel: 6378179)
- Closing date for booking is: Friday 10 August

BIRD PACK WORKSHOP DATES to choose:

- Tues 14 August 2:30 – 4:30 pm
- Thurs 16 August 2:30 – 4:30 pm
- Tues 21 August 2:30 – 4:30 pm
- Thurs 23 August 2:30 – 4:30 pm

VENUE: ULUNTU CENTRE

This Bird Pack has a variety of activities that can be used across the curriculum - in Natural Sciences and Language

GRADE 5 OBE TRAINING

Did you know that the PSP will be involved in the Grade 5 OBE training?

The WCED invited the PSP with other NGO's to participate in the planning and implementation of the Grade 5 OBE Training. This process included compiling the Training Manual and contributing to the support materials for all teachers.

Training (or Orientation) workshops will start in September 2001 and the PSP team are hoping to see many familiar faces at workshops.

We look forward to this important relationship with the WCED continuing to grow and flourish in the future.

AMESA CONFERENCE

During the first week of the school holidays I was privileged to attend the 7th National Congress of the Association For Mathematics Education Of South Africa at the University of Witwatersrand. Professor Kader Asmal opened the conference and teachers from all provinces attended, showing high levels of enthusiasm to learn from and share experiences with their colleagues, despite the freezing cold weather. The energy and camaraderie generated between teachers was the fuel that warmed everyone in all the sessions!

COME AND 'HAVE YOUR SAY' ON THE NEW DRAFT NATIONAL CURRICULUM

The drafts of the new National Curriculum Statements for the different Learning Areas were completed in June and handed over to the Department of Education in Pretoria. The next stage is for the Statements to be gazetted for 'public comment' in August/September.

The Natural Sciences Working Group would like to encourage as many teachers / organisations as possible to 'have their say' about the new proposed science curriculum.

The PSP invites teachers to a meeting to engage with, discuss and give feedback on these Statements (Intermediate and Senior Phases)

Wed 29 August – Uluntu Centre: 2:30 – 4:30

Dr Jonathan Clark will co-host the meeting with the PSP. We hope to make a formal submission to the Review Committee that reflects the teachers' views.

If you are interested, please try to get copies of the material from the PSP before the meeting.

We look forward to seeing you there!



My interest in attending the conference was to see **what** and **how** teachers in the other provinces were tackling Assessment Issues. Dr Anne Watson from the Oxford Brookes University in the United Kingdom and some teachers gave innovative assessment presentations and workshops, which were reflective of the assessment strategies that we developed at the PSP. It was great to see that we were all thinking about and doing assessment according to policy requirements but in ways that were suited to individual school needs. This position on assessment is also in line with the international literature on assessment according to the academic papers that were presented at the conference.

The conference proceedings are available for anyone to read at the PSP office. Dr Anne Watson has also given us a resource, which deals with **questioning in Maths** and wishes us all well in trying it out in science.

On reflecting on the conference I can see that the PSP's strategies of assessment are not only in line with policy requirements but also that we are using innovative assessment strategies that can be practically implemented in the classroom.

So come along to the PSP and find out for yourself as the proof is not in the pudding in this case, but the proof is in trying out our assessment strategies in your classroom! - **Vagriuah Kariem**.



Mr Soyeye from Zanemfundo Primary in his well managed classroom



Learners making a poster about forms of energy



Learners at Chumisa Primary finding out how much electricity different appliances use

GETINSET MINI- CONFERENCES OPEN TO ALL TEACHERS

Following from the very successful GETINSET conference for teachers in Malmesbury, it was decided to celebrate teachers' work at **two more Mini-Conferences** – one for Athlone and Mitchell's Plain teachers as well as one in the Clanwilliam and Vredendal areas.

All schools are welcome to attend the mini-conferences even if you are not a 'Getinset school'.

ATHLONE AND MITCHELL'S PLAIN DATE : Saturday 15 Sept. 2001 VENUE : Cape Town Teachers Centre TIME : 8.30am - 4pm
CLANWILLIAM AND VREDENDAL DATE : Saturday 18 August 2001 VENUE : Aurgsburg Landbougimnasium TIME : 8.30am - 4pm

SO COME ALONG TO SHARE AND CELEBRATE OUR LEARNINGS WITH GETINSET!



Miss Ninigiza from Chumisa Primary helping learners to find about sources of energy



BirdLife SA have sponsored this very useful resource book (105 pages) on ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION to all schools!

You are invited to attend a conference run by Sibongile Mokoena of BirdLife SA on this book, when you can receive your copy.

The workshops will run from 2:30 – 4:30

- Mon 10 Sept : Cape Town Teachers' Centre
- Tues 11 Sept: Mitchell's Plain Area Office
- Wed 12 Sept: Parow teachers' Centre

Please phone Gcobisa at PSP to book.

PSP EXTERNAL EVALUATION starting at last....

The PSP Evaluation will start this term with a pilot study and the help of 20 teachers from randomly selected schools. This will enable the evaluation team to shape the evaluation questions and methods and test the analysis techniques.

We will keep you informed.

Layout - Nicci Cairns