



PSP NEWS 3rd TERM 2008

Western Cape Primary Science Programme; Edith Stephens Wetland Park, Lansdowne Road, Philippi 7785
P.O. Box 24158, Lansdowne 7779 ☎ 021 691 9039 Fax : 021 691 6350 e-mail: info@psp.org.za www.psp.org.za

Greetings, dear Colleagues in this cold weather!

The two-week July 'holiday' was certainly not a holiday for our PSP Facilitators! Together with many teachers across our country, PSP facilitators participated in the National SAASTE Conference and then immediately after, ran a week-long Natural Sciences follow-up course at the CTLI.

We are very happy to report that our facilitators were warmly received in all the forums and shared their excellent knowledge and skills with many teachers in all the forums. We are very proud of them!

Please remember to BOOK your place in advance for the exciting PSP courses coming up this term. Use the booking form in the programme (OR ON OUR WEBSITE) and fax it to the PSP, please! Enjoy this term! Mascha, Gcobisa, Nthabi, Ntsiki, Nadiema, Sandra, Rose, Viv, Vava and Zorina

THIS ISSUE

PSP launches its new website

The National SAASTE Conference

Excellent course: Child Development for Senior Ph.

Follow-up Course at the CTLI

The Red-knobbed Coot slowly returns to the ESWP

Boland Celebration of Planet Earth & Beyond



We have just built on a small extension to the PSP Office – thanks to the City of Cape Town

THE PSP LAUNCHES ITS NEW WEBSITE

www.psp.org.za



Western Cape

Primary Science Programme (PSP)

We have re-vitalised our PSP website after many years. We now have lots of current information on our work, including reports, as well as past information on offer. You can look up the History of the PSP since 1983 and also view most of our previous PSP Newsletters dating back from 2001. The PSP has come a long way!

We hope our website will become a place where teachers can find excellent, relevant information and resources and where they can also link with many other wonderful sites that offer enhanced educational resources.

This is the initial website. We will add to it and extend it as time goes on. In future we hope you will be able to download all our materials.

We would love to receive your comments and suggestions. Please check it out at:

www.psp.org.za



PSP'S COURSE ON CHILD DEVELOPMENT & NUTRITION FOR SENIOR PHASE TEACHERS

In June the PSP ran a very successful three-day course on CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND NUTRITION for grades 7, 8 & 9 teachers from local primary and high schools. This course was facilitated by Dave Pinchuck, an Educational Psychologist who was head of the Athlone School Clinic.

The main topic in the first part of the course was "How to help learners to build their identity". Dave stressed it is the main task of youngsters from about 12 years onwards to build their identity.

To do this successfully adolescents need the help of adults with high values who are good role models. During identity formation the youngsters must establish a good moral code, understand their strengths, work on their weaknesses, learn to form good relationships, make good choices, and develop a plan for the future.

Teachers shared personal life experiences with their colleagues. They also developed strategies to help strengthen their learners' sense of self.

The second part of the course was facilitated by a Pharmacist and Nutritionist, Beatrice Rabkin. Her course focused on the effects of certain *processed food* and *food additives* on the behaviour of youngsters. She stressed that foods containing refined carbohydrates, artificial flavourants and colourants, can have severe effects on youngsters. These foods can cause hyperactivity, aggression, inability to concentrate in class and can have long term health effects. She also stressed that part of identity formation means helping youngsters to make good choices. One of the fundamental choices in life is to choose healthy food.

This is the first time that teachers have requested a course on the topic of IDENTITY FORMATION. We hope to repeat it again next year.

FOLLOW-UP COURSE FOR NS TEACHERS AT CTLI

During the second week of the holidays, the PSP ran the Follow-up Course for I Phase Natural Sciences teachers at the Cape Teaching and Leadership Institute (CTLI).

Again all four PSP facilitators were involved and the teacher response was overwhelming.



Keith Scheepers presenting at the CTLI while learning about the Evolution of horses.



Nadiema and the skeleton during the module on Skeleton, Muscles and Movement.

Comments from teachers:

"Excellent work. Practical involvement of teachers. We are actually doing the nitty gritty and our little knowledge is enhanced at last".

"Extremely valuable, informative and 'alive'. Truly a think tank! More is done within a week than in a whole term!"



Nomthandazo Dyantyi investigating the pitch and volume of Sound.

PSP A STRONG PRESENCE AT THE NATIONAL SAASTE CONFERENCE

All our PSP facilitators participated in the National SAASTE Conference at Wits in Johannesburg during the holidays. The PSP featured strongly as our facilitators presented 2 workshops, 2 presentations and were filmed in 4 short Zero-Cost Equipment demonstrations. A record number of 680 delegates attended and all facilities were stretched to capacity!

Comments from the facilitators were:

- A conference of this nature is a wonderful opportunity to open up a world of new ideas and contacts for many teachers. It gets them out of their isolated classrooms and awakens them to the wider horizons of serious professional development.
- Many teachers expressed appreciation for the hands-on approach in the PSP presentations.
- PSP facilitators used REAL and concrete equipment eg live earthworms, real clay, materials to make models of the earth etc for all delegates to work with.
- A 'fan club' of teachers followed all the PSP presentations around!

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- The topic of Evolution stimulated us into excited curiosity to find out more. It also exposed how little knowledge we have on this.
- It was gratifying to see how other people approach investigations - and added new ideas.
- Our exhibition of PSP materials attracted very good responses and strong interest in the work of the PSP.

Congratulations to the SAASTE Committee for pulling off an excellent National Conference.



A teacher at the PSP display at the National SAASTE Conference



Teachers observing and touching a real, live earthworm at the SAASTE Conference

BOLAND Celebration of Planet Earth & Beyond with schools, WCED and ABSA



This picture shows the display of Rawsonville Primary with teachers and George Gibbs from ABSA (left). The SAO also gave a wonderful demonstration.

The Boland Cluster schools exhibited their learners' work on Planet Earth & Beyond in Worcester at the Celebration in June.



Officials of the Cape Winelands District, together with reps from ABSA and the PSP.

RED-KNOBBED COOTS RETURNING TO THE ESWP

If you see a medium-sized black bird with a white bill swimming on open water it is probably a Red-knobbed Coot (*Unompemvana /Unomkqayi*). Most teachers have seen these birds on the pond. They are common waterbirds throughout South Africa. They

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have two red knobs above their bill which become enlarged and darker when they are breeding.

We have counted over 300 birds at the ESWP when they are not breeding.

These birds need open water and build their nests on vleis or dams using floating and submerged water plants (like reeds or waterweed). They are herbivores and eat water plants, grass and seeds.

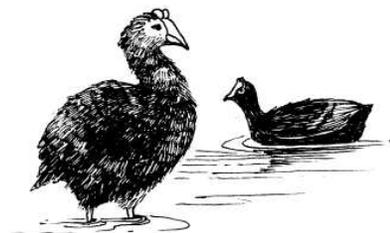


Red-knobbed Coots

If their open water habitat becomes reduced they are forced to leave to find other suitable water. When the terrible water hyacinth invaded the ESWP's retention dam, no open water was available and the coots all left.

We sincerely hope the CITY will continue to take out the water hyacinth at ESWP. As the hyacinth is removed and more open water becomes available at ESWP, we should see the coots returning.

Thanks to Doug Harebottle: ADU of UCT.



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