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PSP NEWS

4th TERM 2001

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Hullo, dear Colleagues!

This last term of the year will once again prove very busy for all teachers as they help their learners prepare for tests / exams and as they plan their work for next year.

Successful implementation of OBE requires different planning processes. Many schools are currently grappling with trying to develop a realistic, practical planning process. School staffs are sitting in teams and Learning Area groups to come up with good plans for 2002.

We applaud these efforts! If the plans are not perfect at first, remember everyone is learning how to do this and - as with all skills, will also improve with practice. The PSP has been working with some schools on this task. See the article on 'PSP School-based Support'.

In this PSP News we recommend that teachers visit and make use of some institutions that offer excellent experiences for learners, which can be incorporated into Learning Programmes for 2002.

The PSP would like to thank Ruth Versfeld, who co-ordinates the HSS support for the excellent courses and Excursion for teachers, which she ran this year. (See her report on the outing to the Bo-Kaap Museum in this PSP News). Teachers have found it very stimulating and useful.

We wish teachers success with all the activities in the last 8 weeks of the year, after which we wish you a happy and restful Christmas holiday Warm regards,
Mascha, Sandra, Vagriuah, Rose, Gcobisa, Charlotte, Zowi and Jean.

PSP CERTIFICATION DAY 2001

All the teachers, who qualified to receive the PSP course Certificates (i.e. those who attended 100% of the courses) have been invited to our Certification Day on Wednesday 17 October, at Uluntu at 2:30pm.

We congratulate all these teachers, who have shown great commitment and dedication to improving the education of their learners. The teaching profession can be proud of you! The Principals of the schools involved have also been invited to share in the celebration with the teachers.

BOLAND TEACHERS: Certification Day for Boland teachers will be on Tuesday 27 November 01 at P.J.B. Cona Primary School at 1:30pm.

Reminder to check-out the PSP website : www.psp.org.za

We will be updating it continuously.

The PSP recommends a visit to the Cheetah Outreach Programme. It is a wonderful experience! Scroll for details.



BIRD RESOURCE PACK follow-up for feedback

After 6 workshops with 183 teachers, where 77 primary schools were provided with Bird Resource Packs, the PSP will follow-up to obtain feedback from schools on the use of this resource in the classroom. Zynoe Patience, who was the main presenter of the workshops will contact the schools this term.

Our thanks go to Mr Patrick Mkapuza from Vuselela Primary, who co-presented these workshops with Zynoe.

SAILI used the Bird Resource Packs as part of their activities at their Science and Maths Camp with 50 grade 7 learners during the holidays in Betty's Bay. They were delighted with how the learners enjoyed and learnt from the activities. At the camp the learners also visited the penguin colony.

These Bird Resource Packs were funded by the WWF SA



Patrick Mkapuza co-facilitating at a Bird Pack workshop



From Controversial Topics to the Bo-Kaap Museum

During the Third term the PSP ran an HSS course on 'Teaching Controversial Topics' for Grade 6 and 7 teachers. This sparked many debates and discussions:

- Should we try to be unbiased or neutral in our teaching? Is this possible?
- Where is the bias in these pictures or on the 'fact sheet' about tea?
- What should we be doing with the old, apartheid monuments?
- Why don't we have peace? Why do people move?
- What do we mean by 'culture'? Does culture divide us or bring us together?

It was these last questions and a presentation on the Bo-Kaap by Faez Tassiem, a participant on the course, that prompted an idea to visit the Bo-Kaap and its museum.

The Bo-Kaap is on the slopes of Signal Hill, overlooking the city of Cape Town. It has a long history of slave and European settlement. Many people were forced to leave with the Group Areas Act in the 1950's. Muslims, who were classified as 'Cape Malay' were allowed to stay. Today the character of the area is changing again as others move in.

Gcobisa organized two mini-busses and others found their own way to the museum. Fariel Bassier, the curator at the museum, found that we were no ordinary tour group! We asked really controversial questions: Why is this museum only about Muslims when all sorts of people have lived in the Bo-Kaap? Were the Muslim people favoured above other 'non-European' groups by the government? Why? Doesn't this museum give a rather static and unrealistic view of Muslim culture? We ended up talking about how the museum should be re-designed and about the kinds of things they should put on display. Faez then took us to the Auwal Mosque in Dorp Street. This was a first time inside a mosque for nearly all of us. He told us about what people do here and a bit about his religion. We then walked up the hill past the oldest house in the area (1762) and to the Tana Baru Cemetery. Here we learnt about Muslim burial customs and discussed our own attitudes to death, saints and ancestors.

At the end of our visit Fariel said that this was the most interesting group he had ever had in the museum. We had got him thinking again about the things that really mattered. Imagine the thinking that these teachers are now encouraging with their learners! **Ruth Versfeld**



Social Sciences teachers visiting the Tara Banu Cemetery



The MTN ScienCentre invites teachers to a guided educational visit of the MTN ScienCentre from 2-3pm from Mondays to Fridays.
For Teachers' visits contact: Pumeza or Vanessa at : (021) 529 8100

INVITE THE CHEETAH TO VISIT YOUR SCHOOL !



'Shadow' (cheetah) visiting at a school

The Cheetah Outreach Programme is available to visit your school. Their education officers will present a half hour interactive slide show on the Cheetah and its uniqueness within the cat family, and then give learners an opportunity of a once-in-a-lifetime encounter with a fully grown adult male Cheetah, "Shadow" at your school!

The aim of this organisation is to increase awareness of the plight of the Cheetah and its long-term survival in its natural ecosystem. Children will undoubtedly play a significant role in conservation in the future. The Cheetah Outreach Programme has developed an excellent programme to let children have personal contact with this beautiful wild animal.
Contact: Dawn Glover:(021) 8091188 (office) 082 872 4007 (cell)

PSP SCHOOL-BASED SUPPORT

A number of schools have requested help from the PSP with planning their science curriculum for 2002. Sandra and Rose have started by working with all the science teachers in individual schools and in some cases with the whole staff. Over a period of several afternoons they unpack the whole curriculum from grade 1 to grade 7 and develop it according to the learning outcomes, which includes the assessment. In this way we assist the teachers to develop a process of planning, which can also be used for the other Learning Areas. Teachers have found this process useful and we hope to support more schools in this way.

PSP INDEPENDENT EVALUATION

After many months of planning and consulting, at last the PSP Independent Evaluation got under way with its pilot study during the 3rd term.

Prof Cliff Malcolm made a random selection of 20 grade 5 teachers, who very kindly (together with the principals) welcomed one of the evaluation team to visit their school and work with them there.

The PSP has not had any feedback yet - Prof Cliff Malcolm is still analysing their information - but teachers and principals agreed that the way in which this pilot was conducted was different from most other evaluation studies. This one included the teachers in the administration and marking (or coding) of the little science tasks. Teachers were present all the time and they gained immediate feedback and insights about their learners. In fact teachers told the PSP that they found it an enjoyable experience - some have asked to be included again as they believe they develop new skills from working with Prof Cliff Malcolm.

The PSP is very grateful to these teachers and the principals for their generous co-operation and support. Prof Cliff Malcolm's letter of thanks will follow shortly.

We will the WCED will give it's final approval of the whole Evaluation soon.

Open day for Xhosa speaking educators at Two Oceans Aquarium - Wed 24 Oct 2001

The Two Oceans Education Centre would like to invite schools to a Principals' Open Day on Wed 24 October from 15:30 onwards. All principals and a senior teacher are invited. They will receive information on the Aquarium's programmes and see the new SFF mobile unit, which is available to visit schools. There will also be a guided tour of the education facilities of the Aquarium.

Please RSVP to book your place.
Gail Morris:Tel: 4183823 Or Fax : 4183952

Latest PSP Resource Materials for teachers available at the PSP office...

