



PSP NEWS

THE WESTERN CAPE PRIMARY SCIENCE PROGRAMME



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Dear Colleagues and friends

EXCITING NEWS from the PSP is that we have appointed a new Director from January 2012 !

She is Ms Zorina Dharsey, from within the PSP !

The process of identifying and appointing a new Director was externally facilitated by an extremely capable organisation, and we are delighted with the outcome. You will get to know Zorina better in our next PSP Newsletter, which will feature her as the new Director of the PSP.

The PSP is searching for a new Senior Maths and Science Facilitator from next year. We have already embarked on a major head-hunt for the right person. Please help us think of the best person to fill this gap.

PSP ANNUAL MASS PLANNING FORUM

The PSP's big event takes place on **Wednesday 19 October at 3pm**. Our guest speaker is **GLEN VAN HARTE** and all teachers and principals are invited. Teachers will decide on the priorities for courses and PSP support for 2012. With many good wishes for the last term of 2011.

Mascha, Zorina, Rose, Gcobisa, Nadiema, Nocawe, Sandra, Nandi, Isabel and Viv.

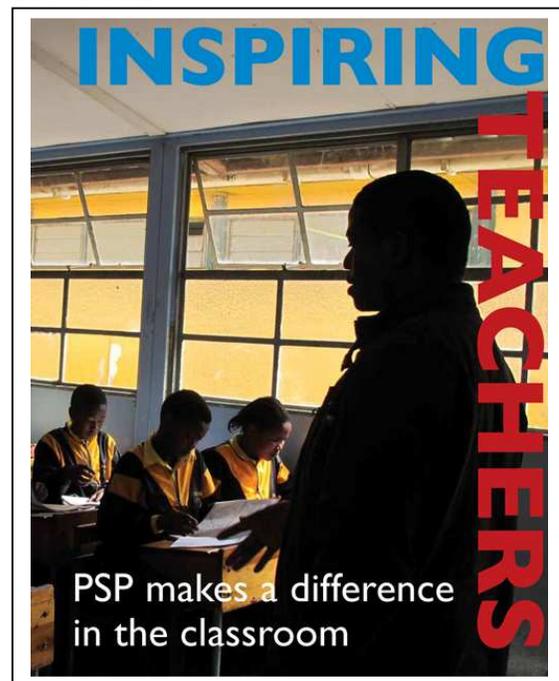
THIS ISSUE

- *PSP showcases teachers in Case Studies*
- *The magic of drawing*
- *PSP Environment Project brings children to the park*
- *Grade 7 NS workshops in the North District*
- *JMP & PSP feature on RSG*

THE PSP SHOWCASES TEACHERS IN CASE STUDIES

The PSP has developed a booklet of case studies of teachers that show evidence of how the PSP inspired and stimulated their work.

The short case studies featured in this booklet tell the stories of the exemplary teachers from their own points of view. Each of the teachers came to teaching Natural Sciences via different routes and with different educational and cultural backgrounds. Yet all attest to the fact that their involvement with the PSP enhanced their confidence, knowledge and skills whilst also stimulating their professional curiosity. These teachers have become important role models to their learners, their colleagues and their communities.



The latest booklet from the PSP tells how teachers were inspired to change their practice through contact with PSP projects through a series of Case Studies.

THE MAGIC OF DRAWING

With thanks to Ruth Versfeld

Learners in Grades R and 1 draw pictures to show their way of seeing the world and to develop their understanding of new ideas. Writing is slowly introduced. Learners in Grades 2 and 3 continue to draw and write more and more.

Sadly for many children, expressing themselves through drawing is used less and less as they progress up through Grade 4 and beyond. Drawing is all too often seen as something you do when your writing skills are under-developed. It may also be seen as an activity that is secondary to writing: We draw only when we want to illustrate a written piece or to make our page pretty.

Two Social Sciences courses at PSP last term included teachers from Grades 5, 6 and 7. They all discovered that drawing is a most marvelous teaching tool:

- Those who struggle with reading and writing can show their knowledge in a way that does not limit them.
- Drawing is a skill in itself - as with writing or any other skill, it is something we can develop.
- Great lessons can be learnt through drawing that cannot be learnt in any other way.

Here is an example from the Social Sciences course for Grade 5 and 6 teachers on "Ways of teaching about resources and environmental issues."

Topic: *Why have trees?*

What you need: ~ A sheet of paper (preferably the bigger A3) for each pair of learners.

~ A pencil for each learner ~ One pair of scissors.

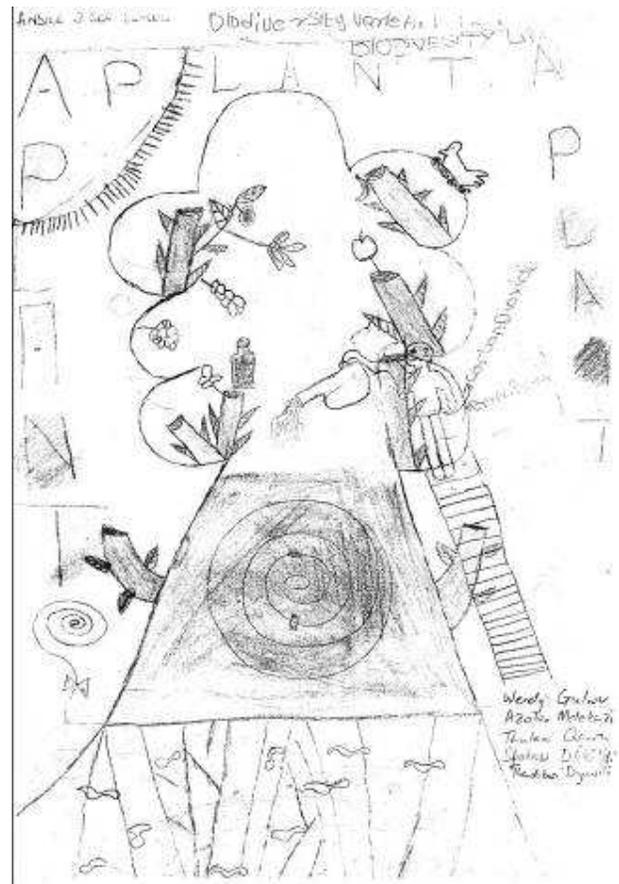
What to do:

1. Ask each group to draw a tree. It should be a big tree that fills the page. It must have roots.
2. Next they add to their drawings all the things that live in and around their tree. Remember that there is also life under the ground!
3. Ask them to draw in the different ways that people and other living creatures use their tree. (You can also tell them about "biodiversity" or how different things live together.)

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By now you should have drawings of detail and delight!

Let the children walk around and see the different pictures. Talk about the different animals and activities they have included and the uses of trees.



A tree showing the wide diversity of life that it sustains: Grade 5 learner from Andile Primary School.

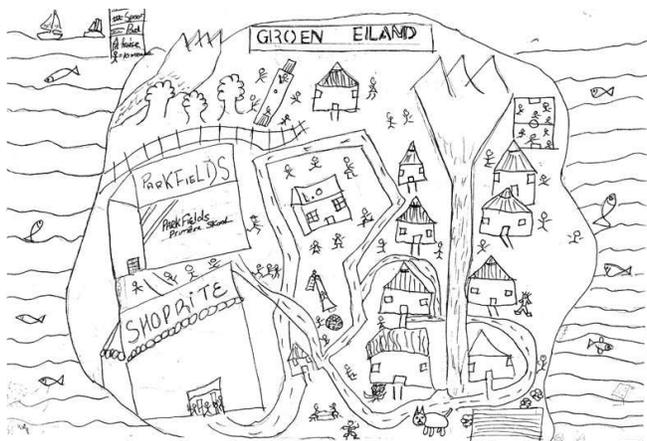
4. Next ... and this is the difficult bit... tell your learners that your job is to chop down their trees! Take your scissors and cut their pictures in half through the trunks. They will be upset, but this is what happens in nature.
5. Finally talk about it all:
 - ~ Start off by letting them tell you about their feelings.
 - ~ Talk about the reasons for chopping trees down (positive and negative).
 - ~ Discuss the results of deforestation.
 - ~ Look at ways that we can take care of our environment.



Cutting the tree down destroys the habitat of so many creatures - a wonderful graphic representation. Grade 5 learner from The Hague Primary School.

This is a lesson your class will never forget ... and all through drawing simple pictures!

The Grade 7 teachers attended a Social Sciences course on "Population growth and change." They drew islands and filled them with natural life. As their islands became more and more populated by people with their roads, buildings and activities, they used their rubbers to take away the plants and wild animals on their drawings! This too was a great lesson on the impact of development.



A wonderful drawing of an island, where most of the natural environment has been wiped out by development. Grade 7 learner from Parkfields Primary.

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PSP ENVIRONMENT PROJECT BRINGS CHILDREN TO THE PARK FOR INTEGRATED MATHS, SCIENCE AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

In the Hands-on-Environment Project teachers are invited to workshops to experience and think through the practical activities that they will co-facilitate with their learners, when they visit the park.



A group of teachers with their cuttings and mini hot-houses at the workshop on vegetative reproduction.



Grade 4 learners learning about vegetative reproduction and making cuttings during their visit.



GRADE 7 TEACHERS INVESTIGATE VARIOUS TOPICS IN LIFE & LIVING

Eighty-one Grade 7 teachers from the North District attended Natural Sciences workshops presented by the PSP on two Saturdays during the third term. The commitment of these teachers to their profession was admirable as the workshops clashed with World Cup rugby matches!

Teachers brushed up on their knowledge and skills as they worked through various practical investigations on topics in the Life & Living Natural Sciences content strand.



Teachers conducted an investigation on human variation through measuring pulse rates and representing this on graphs.



Looking at fertilization of the human embryo and how it determines the genetic make-up of individuals.

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During this investigation, teachers learnt that the pulse-rate is a significant indicator of one's state of health – weight / size / fitness / stress levels etc.

JMP & PSP FEATURE IN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS ON RADIO SONDER GRENSE



Anthea Adams prepares for the interviews in her RSG studio in Sea Point.

On the 10th of August Anthea Adams of *Radio Sonder Grense (RSG)* invited the PSP and MEPP to discuss the new **Joint Mentorship Project (JMP)** on her program "*Ons en die Onderwys*". Sandra Rossouw from the PSP and Esme Schmitt of MEPP both joined her for the conversation on air. We welcomed this opportunity to explain our work to a wider audience.

A week later Anthea invited Sandra to focus on the work of **PSP** and to explain to their listeners what impact the PSP can make in education.