Kensington Primary School

Term 4 Overview 2016

Year Level : **3-4**

Dear Parents,

This Term Overview provides you with a brief outline of the curriculum the students will be focussing on this term in classroom programs. Other key information and important dates are also included.

INQUIRY : BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES (Friends or Foes)

Big Idea: Living things, such as plants and animals, have life cycles.

Key Questions:

- The world is made up of living and non-living things.
- There is a relationship between living and non-living things.
- Living things depend on the environment and each other for survival.

Key Understandings:

- How do we classify living and non-living things?
- How are the life cycles of plants and animals similar and different?
- How do humans influence life cycles?

Within this unit of inquiry, students will explore the reciprocal relationship between plants and animals, as well as consider the human impact upon the environment. Students will be encouraged to "think like scientists" and follow the scientific process, which involves: generating questions, forming hypotheses, researching/conducting experiments, collecting and analyzing data and reconsidering their hypotheses in light of new understandings. The KPS garden will be a great learning resource for students to examine plants and insects with the eyes of scientists.

LITERACY

Reading:

Within reading, students will be focusing on identifying the structure and features of texts, particularly using non-fiction texts, to support our scientific inquiry. Students will be guided to notice how information is organised and expressed as this impacts on the reader's ability to make sense of it. Students will explore how text elements such as: headings, subheading, contents, glossaries indexes, specific vocabulary, photographs, annotations, diagrams and graphs function to communicate information.

Students will also work on developing their understanding of cause and effect. (The **cause** tells **why** something happened. The **effect** tells **what** happened). By being able to identify cause and effect relationships within texts, the students will be able to build their understanding of the "how" and "why" of events and natural phenomena.

The processes of skimming and scanning will also be taught.

Skimming is one of the tools you can use to read more in less time. Skimming refers to looking only for the general or main ideas. It can help you "get the gist" of a text.

Scanning involves close reading and attention to detail. Scanning also speeds up the reading process as you are not reading the entire text. When scanning, you are only looking for a specific fact or piece of information.

Writing:

Creating explanation texts, will be the focus of our writing program this term. Explanation texts give information about a subject that you are interested in and would like to know more about; they contain factual information about the subject and highlight cause and effect relationships, e.g. how insects and plants are involved in the pollination process. Students will be explicitly shown how to transfer what they have learnt about the structure and features of this text type into their own writing.

Features of an explanation text:

- uses facts to explain something
- gives details about a topic
- does not contain personal views
- is usually written, but can also be presented orally (spoken).

Structure of an explanation text:

- title
- general statement to define or classify the topic
- a series of paragraphs is used to describe different features of the topic (sometimes these paragraphs are organized by using subheadings)
- each paragraph needs to have a topic sentence, followed by 2-3 facts or details.
- a succinct ending statement about the topic.
- visual features such as pictures, photographs, diagrams or charts

Speaking & Listening:

Being able to explain their thinking to others, is key to clarifying students' own understanding, as well as providing valuable opportunities for students to learn from each other. In term 4, we will continue to provide many opportunities for students to listen and contribute within class and small group discussions, modelling the importance of respecting different perspectives. Speaking with/to others in a clear, confident manner, with appropriate tone, pace, pitch and volume will be supported through situations such as Reader's Theatre performances, maths reflection times and inquiry presentations, for example, explaining what their group discovered through conducting a science experiment.

NUMERACY

Number

In term 4, students will investigate fractions and decimals within in a range of contexts and represented in a variety of ways. Students will build their understanding of the most common way of thinking about fractions, as 'parts of a whole'.
E.g. Equally sharing a pizza between a group of people.
While the part-whole idea describes a common use of fractions, it is not the only meaning.
Fractions as a number positioned on a number line can be thought about through measurement.
E.g. 50cm as half of 1 metre
Groups of discrete (countable) items from within a larger group of items can also be considered as a fraction of the whole group.
E.g. 3 cupcakes as a quarter of a batch of 12
Connections to decimal fractions as made through the understanding of tenths and hundredths.
Students will be encouraged to express fractions using a variety of representations such as area models, diagrams and fractional notation.
Fractions can be authentically discussed at home through the acts of cooking and sharing food together.

Statistics & Probability

Within the statistics and probability component of the numeracy program this term, students describe different methods for data collection and representation, and evaluate their effectiveness. To do this they may need to formulate targeted questions that enable them to gather the data that they are seeking, and decide whether a bar graph,

pictograph or pie chart best communicates their collected data. Data displays may be created with and without the use of digital technology. In the process of exploring chance, students list the probabilities of everyday events using language such as: impossible, unlikely, likely and certain. They undertake chance experiments (such as rolling a dice multiple times or selecting items from an opaque bag) and identify when events are independent (the prior event has no effect of the subsequent event), or dependent (past events changes the probability of future events occurring).

OTHER EVENTS

14 Oct - Cricket Carnival
Weeks 5, 6, 7 - Science excursion to Mount Alexander Secondary College
28 Nov - 9 Dec - Aquatic Education Program
15 Dec - Moving Up Day

***Student Diaries - Parents please check and sign your student's diary each weeknight to verify that they have completed their 20 minutes of home reading. Thank you**