

PYP MIRROR

from..



The Aga Khan Academy, Hyderabad

From the Head of Academy

Dear parents and members of the community,
 As I write, we are fast approaching the end of Term 3. The DP2 students have completed their mock exams and are busy with an intensive revision programme. The DP1 students are coming to grips with the demands of the IB Diploma Programme and are currently grappling with the early stages of their extended essays. The Grade 10s are preparing for their personal projects, making subject selections for the Diploma and preparing for this important transition. The remainder of the MYP students are working hard to develop their skills-academic, social and physical. In the Junior School we have been treated to a marvelous musical, Book Week and then Maths Week. In addition the Senior School just staged the musical 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat' while continuing their busy schedule of academic, social and physical activities. Schools are always busy places and particularly residential schools. AKA, Hyderabad is clearly as busy as any school on Earth. This is one of the reasons that make them such engaging and wonderful places to be. We are all privileged to be involved in nurturing young people to become the very best that they can be.

I write above to highlight how busy a place the schools are and how important each and every activity is. During the course of this year, I have become alarmed by the number of school days which some students are missing. The reasons given include weddings, family celebrations, departure for holidays and others. My concern is that these students are missing vital time in the classrooms. Learning is best built over time when concepts and ideas can be presented in different ways and discussed, described and investigated with variation. This allows all students with different learning styles to access and retain the concept, ideas and implications of the material. Time in school is essential if this is to happen successfully. As a school, we rely on having sufficient time to deliver our demanding curriculum. We plan for it and all students' progress depends on it. It is essential that students miss as little school as possible. As a result we are implementing a new policy whereby if a student misses more than 5 days of school (not including for those for illness or unavoidable reasons) we will not promote that student from one academic year to the next. The parents of students in this positions are expected to meet with the Principal and Head of Academy to determine if their son or daughter will or not be promoted. Please understand and support us by making sure that your son or daughter is always in school.

Can I take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy holiday and to say how much I am looking forward to seeing you all over the course of the next few months?

Dr. Geoffrey Fisher
 Head of Academy

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Great start to 2015

From the Junior School Principal

Once again, the Junior School has had an amazing and busy term. We started off with the Science Fair when we saw many parents who came to learn about students' individual inquiries and interesting science projects. We had also started rehearsing actively for Jack and the Beanstalk, with auditions for lead roles and sing-along sessions on Fridays.

The much awaited school breakfast and afternoon snack for day students started in February. The three-way conference held in February was well attended by JS parents, who are now better informed of their children's strengths and areas of growth.

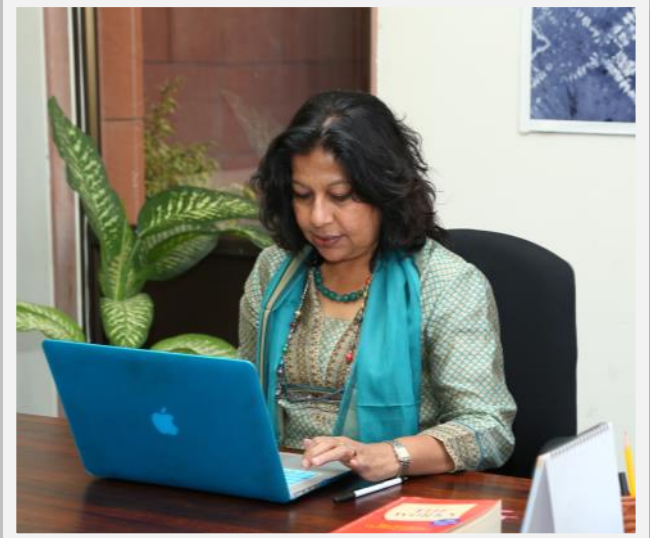
The junior school opened its doors to interested parents from all over Hyderabad when we had our first ever Open Day – the classrooms and the surroundings looked and felt spectacular.

There were frenzied activities leading up to the musical held on 28th February, with regular rehearsals in the afternoons for several days. All the preparation and practice paid off and the musical was a resounding success. The music and the songs are still ringing in our ears!

In the midst of all this, we managed to celebrate International Mother Language Day, Holi, Book week and Maths week with great excitement and enthusiasm. We also managed to squeeze in a fun sleepover for Grade 6s. I must thank Mr Aaron, Mr Ravi and all the PYP teachers who participated in this event to make sure the students had non-stop fun.

I wish to welcome back Ms Sophia who has returned after her maternity leave. In true spirit of the IB, it not just the students who are learning at the Junior School –we had several teachers attending IB workshops, and undergoing weekly professional development in the form of book clubs and sharing best practices.

Have a restful break and we shall see the JS students on Tuesday 7th April 2015 for another exciting action-packed term. Please make sure your children are well rested, well fed and well read during the holidays!!



Latha Kumar, Principal

Junior Academy The Aga Khan Academy, Hyderabad



It is not just students who are improving their English language skills in the Junior School. Teachers are also

Book club goal is to read, read, read!

improving their reading, writing, speaking and listening thanks to a Book Club that has been initiated by English Support Teacher, Ms. Lisa. The Club began in the second term when teachers were tasked with reading either *Sold* or *Parvana's Journey*. They had a series of activities based on both books which required them to practice their English writing and editing skills.

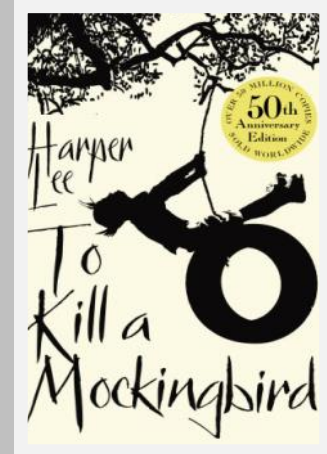
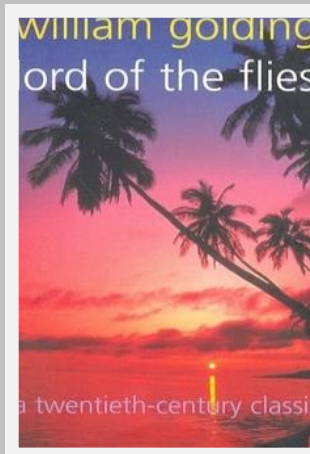
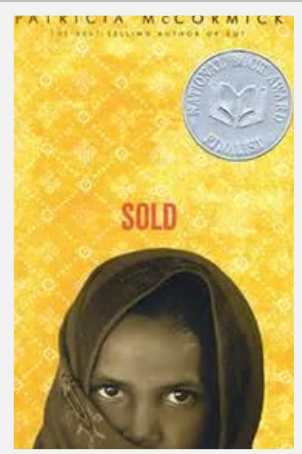
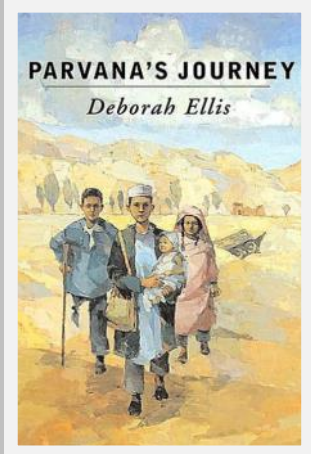
The Club continued this past term with the reading choices being *To Kill A Mockingbird* and *The Lord of the Flies*. Some of the teachers found the books challenging, though the rest were able to persevere and complete their novels.

Momentum is already building for the term four Book Club with teachers having decided that they will read and discuss poems this time around.

As we constantly require students to read, write, speak and listen it seemed only logical that this type of professional development should occur for teachers as well.

While this is a new program, and on reflection some things are working well and others not, we will continue to fine tune the process. But the end goal remains the same and that is to encourage teachers to read, read, read!

Lisa Gervais
ESL specialist



Maths! Maths! Maths! For a week, this was probably one element prevalent in the Junior School from March 9 to 14, 2015. All the junior school teachers got together and suggested some exciting ideas for the Maths week. The purpose was to celebrate Maths in the PYP and to enhance the Mathematic confidence of students. It was indeed a huge success as the students actively participated in every event. Eventually, hearing "We love Maths!" from students was like music to the teachers' ears.

On the first day, students created interesting games on the Maths concepts they are learning in the class. After listening to Ms Naini's ideas during the assembly, students designed a variety of games like board games, puzzles, story problems, estimation games, feely bags and kinesthetic games.



The second day of the week reached the next level of excitement as the students got to visit other classrooms where the teachers had set up fun-filled Maths centers outside their classrooms. The corridors were buzzing with positive noises as the students hopped from one class to the other.



All the Junior School parents were invited for the 'Maths Mela' on the third day. It was most likely the students' favourite day of the week as they got an opportunity to do some Maths activities with their parents. All the parents were filled with praise for the students understanding of Mathematical concepts. They also liked being in the classrooms and getting a feel of how Maths is approached in the PYP.



Junior School Maths Week



The week ended with another Maths thriller as all the students took part in grade wise 'Maths Races'. They were divided into mixed groups and each group was asked to solve the critical thinking word problems located in different parts of the junior school building. What the students liked the most about the race was that each student was able to participate in the activity.

Archana Prashar
PYP Coordinator

Choir a continued success story



This year the AKAH Junior School students have moved one step ahead in developing their singing and playing skills. They have involved themselves in different kinds of extra-curricular music activities. Students from Grade 3 - 6 are now part of the Junior School Choir. It takes place every Thursday morning from 8:20 – 8:45 a.m. The choir students learn songs in different languages other than Hindi and English, such as Bengali, Oriya, Telugu, Gujarati, etc. The focus is also on making them familiar with the basics of Indian classical music. For this they will be learning one Indian classical raga which will be accompanied by Tabla played by a few JS students. This will make them confident in performing in any kind of special assembly or inter-school competition or school concert. During the concert which took place in November, 2014 the students sang songs in Hindi and Bengali which were much appreciated. The students have shown utmost interest in being part of the JS choir and they have been keen in learning and performing songs in various languages. Presently, there are around 60 – 65 students in the JS choir. It is hoped that many more enthusiastic students will engage themselves in these kinds of activities in future. They will perform with confidence and make their parents, teachers and the Academy proud.

Subhadip Sarkar

Music Teacher

I went to attend a Workshop on Inquiry at the Oberoi International School, Mumbai from 20-22 February 2015. I was pretty excited since this was my first regional workshop. The workshop leader was Ms Anjalika Sharma, PYP Coordinator and Head of Primary School at Sreenidhi International School Hyderabad.

Workshop on Inquiry

The session started with a very interesting inquiry based activity. There was also a fruitful discussion on inquiry based classrooms and strategies. We were encouraged to express our understanding about traditional classrooms and PYP inquiry based classrooms through drama, storytelling, art and poetry. This was a very interesting and innovative session.

My understanding of Inquiry is that it is not bound by simply asking questions and gathering information. It is more about wondering, experimenting, making connections, classifying and analyzing.

We started the second day with concepts. We were divided into four groups and each group was given two concepts. Different types of activities were done using these concepts as examples, we had to frame questions using these concepts, inquire in depth to find the most suitable answers. Through these activities we understood that inquiry based teaching and learning is a very engaging and challenging task wherein not only the teachers but even the students are fully involved in the process.

The second half of the day was spent on a very exciting field trip to Linking Road, Bandra. The excitement was all the more because we were going shopping in some very interesting markets. When the bus dropped us on Linking Road we had to take interviews, we only had the central idea and the inquiry cycle with us! Using the central idea and the inquiry cycle we interviewed people from different walks of life like roadside hawkers, auto rickshaw drivers, cops, college students and many more. We understood how you can explore and learn through real life situations which are more vivid and informative than mere book knowledge.

The third day was spent by sharing the unique and interesting field trip experience and exposure with the various groups which were scattered all over Linking Road. Each and every experience was interesting and unique in its own way.

I am immensely satisfied with a very interesting, informative and enjoyable workshop experience which will help me to guide and teach students through a more informative and engaging inquiry based classroom environment.



Sushmita Banerjee
Hindi teacher

Book Week

Book week March 2nd -5th 2015

Book week activities exploded in a hive of activity with a treasure hunt for all the PYP school on Monday morning, after a short assembly to reveal the activities in store for the week. Directed by clues the younger students dispersed to different areas of the PYP school using their powers of reason to find the next destination. The older students needed specific feedback and facts from different members of the PYP community to complete their fact sheets. All the students and staff enjoyed the frenetic activity and were much appreciative of Ms Lisa's efforts to make this activity a wonderful success.

Other activities included buddy reading with favourite books brought from home and a book fair for the purchase of new books and drop everything and read times.

The highlight of the week as usual was the 'dress up as a book character day' at the end of the week. The students and teachers showed their flare for imagination as they decked themselves out in all their finery for the occasion.

Alison Zinsli
Reading specialist



It all started when the Grade 5's were watching a video about how primary grade students from another school decided to equip the classroom with solar panels in order to make their learning environment a green one.

"Hey, guys! Why don't we do the same thing?" exclaimed one student.

"Instead of doing it for our school, why not do it for another school that needs it more than we do?" suggested another.

As the students excitedly exchanged ideas, I sat back and watched them slowly take over the reins of our classroom. After the dust had settled down, I asked permission to speak. "Solar panels are expensive," I contributed. Silence.

After a few minutes, I heard a tentative voice speak out: "I know we can do it, ma'am."

And they did!

Since that day, they have been actively campaigning for their cause. Persuading people to contribute is one of the hardest skills I know. We teach students how to use the language of persuasion. I did a double-take when I realized these students did it so naturally, with utmost ease. Through sheer hard work, I am proud to declare that Grade 5 A and K collectively raised over Rupees 40,000! We plan to work with the Ms Lisa and Mr. Rajan from the Outreach Program, along with parent volunteers, to survey nearby government schools. The students will decide where they want to invest their money. Some parents emailed us to remind us that there was more work to be done. I agree! How much wattage can Rs 40000 buy? Is it enough? Is our action of contributing to the school sustainable? (As batteries need to be renewed once a year). This project will continue well after the unit has ended.

A caveat from my end: do they need our help at all? We will move ahead keeping all these questions in mind.

The Grade 5s have made us proud. Their grit, enthusiasm, critical thinking skills and creativity have shown us how powerful action can be if instigated by the students.

Isn't it amazing how great little ones can be?

Fives in Action

Naini Singh
Form Tutor 5k



International Mother Language Day: where words celebrate culture!

“Language is the road map of a culture. It tells you where it’s people come from and where they are going.” – Rita Mae Brown
International Mother Language Day provides a chance to celebrate diversity, increase understanding, and engage in dialogue. International mother language day started with a survey to know various mother languages spoken in our academy and on Monday 23rd Feb 2015 we celebrated IMLD.

Students spoke in assembly in their mother language about their families and traditions, some of them recited a poem in their mother tongue and Aviral told the “*Jack and the Beanstalk*” folk tale in his mother tongue. A few students dressed themselves in their traditional attire too.



As we celebrated IMLD we realized that it's a great time to celebrate, speak, and learn our mother and home languages. As mother language offers a framework for transmitting values



and knowledge that strengthen a sense of belonging to both local and global communities creating a more peaceful, inclusive and sustainable world.

Vidhya Palath
Form Tutor



Friday activities are the most exciting part of a students’ life in The Aga Khan Academy, Hyderabad. It is a fun way of learning different activities and to interact with different teachers of the Junior School. Through these activities students enjoy and also get a break from their regular classes. Like the previous year, activities happen in the last lesson on Friday but unlike last year the pattern of these activities has changed.

Friday Activities

Activities that are offered this year are drama, dance, Telugu, sewing, cooking, animation and carom, table tennis, outdoor games and yoga with creative projects for grades 1 to 4 instead of sewing. Students were given a choice until last year to choose their activity term-wise but this year all the activities will be held for all the students during an academic year. These activities were designed keeping in mind the student’s choices and the requirements of the IB curriculum such as dance, drama and an additional language. So in alignment with our curriculum, students will learn and enjoy “ activities by our students are as follows:

“Cooking was fun. I learned to make a sandwich, aloo chat and coconut laddoos...Mmm...Yummy,” Aahil 3K

“We learned a few words in Telugu like ‘Aela unnaru,’ which means how are you?” – Ayan 4 A

“We enjoyed the Drama activity, wish we could have it for longer” - Kasthuri and Aarthi 6 K



Anjum Budhwani
Form Tutor



The first camping ever, at the Aga Khan Academy

Grade 6 students pioneered the overnight "Camping at School", at the Aga Khan Academy and enjoyed a newfound independence away from home in close company of classmates and teachers. Friday, school was a lot different from other school days, as it started with a splash of organic colours to celebrate Holi in the junior school and a lot of anticipation for the camp in the evening. The students were buzzing with excitement as they were strutting about flaunting their camp attire and bag packs.

The evening was packed with activities like 'Water Polo', 'Soccer', 'Campus tour', a round of 'Kho-Kho' and the most special 'Bonfire'. A quick downpour of rain dampened our spirits for awhile, but the roasted marshmallows, the songs and dance around the fire helped us forget it in a jiffy.

The horror stories were narrated by some students. Sleep was the last thing on their minds as the students wanted to stay awake and make the most of the remaining time.

The main emphasis of the camp was to have students living together in a safe, healthy and stimulating environment. They experienced living away from the comforts of home, spent quality time with friends and teachers, and enjoyed the simple camp pleasures within the safe environs of the school. The camp aimed at fostering a community bonding where students adjust to new routines and learned to be emotionally independent.

The students made us proud with their organisational skills and pitched in every moment with cooperation and team spirit to make the event a success.

Arpita
Form tutor



Revamping the playground

Oh! What fun it would be to have a painted hopscotch and snakes & ladders in our playground? A conversation like that over lunch with my colleagues has re-

sulted in this project.

The middle school students joined in to help me finish this gigantic job! Just like the students, I was apprehensive as well as excited to start this work. The thought of having a huge snakes and ladders game board in the play area thrilled me but at the same time the effort it would take to finish the job and Hyderabad's weather worried me a little. Pushing all those thoughts away, my students and I stayed positive and began our work with sweeping the tiled area, freeing it from dry leaves and dust. Students then sketched the basic skeleton or line drawing on the floor. After deciding on the colour schemes they divided themselves in groups to start painting the floor. Filling in areas carefully and painting onto the lines, writing the numbers – the students did it all!

After finishing painting and giving a few final touches, students waited patiently over night for it to dry completely. The next day they were all out with their dice! Although it was essentially made keeping younger children in mind, many middle school students as well as teachers are enjoying playing in the junior school playground now!

Isha Joshi



आगा खान में हिन्दी की भिन्न-भिन्न गतिविधियां



Hindi Kavi samelan



Holi celebration



Poetry summative assessment for Grade 6



A visit to PYP exhibition-
Oakridge International School,
Newton Campus

A visit to PYP exhibition-Oakridge International School

Our six graders had the opportunity to visit the Pyp exhibition hosted by Oakridge International School, Newton campus. It was an interesting visit as the display was wide spread with almost 25 different stations focusing on different strands of the theme "How the world works".

Students visited the different cultural stations put up in the classrooms using various forms of art and different props to convey their understanding and message to the people about recycling and reusing things for a sustainable world.

The students were engrossed in the different board games, quizzes, models, experiments, data analysis presentations to think deeply about their practices of using materials for sustainability. The whole display was thought provoking and offered many approaches to problem solve things.

It was a good exposure for the students as they are working towards their own PYP exhibition.

Mubeen Safura
Team Lead and Form tutor



Junior School Musical - Jack and the Beanstalk

The Commons was alive with the sound of music on Saturday evening as The Junior School

entertained a large audience with the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. All the children sang, danced, acted or recited as Roald Dahl's poem was brought to life by a colourful kaleidoscope of stage set, costumes and a gigantic beanstalk.

The impish Jack, the worried mother and the overpowering Giant led a helter skelter story that included market sellers, a circus act, and a wide range of accomplished dancing from every age group including an amazing dancing cow.

The memorable and exciting songs told the story and moved at a great pace whilst the overture, played on every imaginable classroom instrument, set a worthy first for the Aga Khan Academy students.

An enjoyable evening was had by all!

Nigel Jackson
Music Teacher



Newsletter Team

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