



Newsletter 12 2018-19

Friday 23rd November 2018

Dear Parents and JIS community

JIS staff Professional Development days – 16th and 17th November

The staff and I had a really useful 2 days of professional development training last weekend. We used some of our ‘in-house’ experts to create some workshops and discussions related to some of the targets from our School Development Plan and also from initiatives currently being trialed within school. We look forward to further developing many areas of the school in the coming weeks and months.

We have reviewed our initial use of Class Dojo and have agreement on consistency from all staff as to how we proceed to make sure that the school community can have clear expectations and understanding. We also had an excellent presentation from Fiona Merrill regarding outdoor education and forest school. As a school we are full committed to using our ideal location and access to make sure our students get plenty of exposure to the outside world and can connect with nature – after all: *‘you cannot learn to save what you do not love!’*

ESSPA lunch – today!

A big ‘thank you’ to ESSPA volunteers for their help at lunchtime today in providing everyone with a different choice for lunch.

Around school:

P5 had a great morning out at Green Hub in Tai Po on Monday – check out the photos on Class Dojo – School story – posted by Mr Cheung.

P1 were busy at Kadoorie Farm this week on Tuesday morning.

Everyone came back with a plant and lots to tell about plant lifecycles and much more.

P3 were off to Tai Po Waterfront Park for some exploring this week as part of their new unit of inquiry

CUHK student interns workshops for P3 and P4 classes. On Monday our 3 CUHK student interns did some short workshop activities for the students of P3 and P4. The students join JIS for 2 days per week in term 1, as an elective from their Psychology studies. They created some excellent brain / thinking activities for our students. Many thanks to Jonathan, Natalie and Jocelyn.





Learning at JIS – from Cath Wan PYP Coordinator

This week, I will address the third most popular request on our survey:

Mathematics

At JIS, will your child learn to add, subtract, divide, multiply, solve equations, tackle algebra, measure accurately, know how to tell the time and all those important mathematical skills they need for everyday life and for higher education?

Absolutely yes!

Our curriculum has been cross-referenced with the IB and National Curriculums from the UK, Australia and the US.

But, in addition, we also expect the students to:

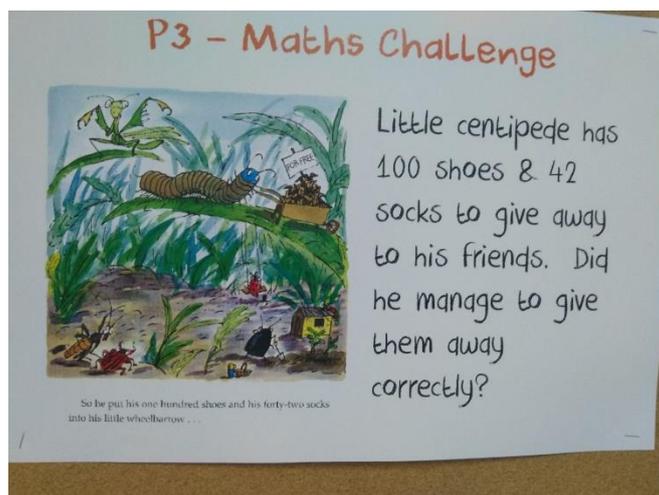
- Understand what they are doing
- Apply their mathematical skills to authentic situations
- Develop a love of mathematics

This does not happen through rote-learning; it happens through a mixture of experiences designed to help students understand mathematics conceptually; problem solving challenges which require students use different strategies and stretch their thinking. Number sense is developed through activities that are fun and engaging: happy brains learn, bored brains switch off, scared brains are pretty much incapable of learning. It is quite obvious when a child has learned mathematics by rote learning and by learning a set of strategies in a passive way (see my article on critical thinking a few weeks ago). This is an example which I have seen many times: you ask a child a series of facts: 3×4 , 8×7 , 2×8 etc. The answers come fast and accurate and you may think that this child has a good level of mathematics. Then you ask 18×9 . A child who has not developed their understanding may say: “I haven’t learned that one yet.” (I have heard that exact phrase from students arriving at JIS). Or they will ask for pen and paper so that they can do the algorithm. A child who has got a conceptual understanding of how multiplication works may say. “Well, I don’t know that fact but I can figure it out. I can split 18 into 9 and 9, so I’ll do 9×9 which is 81 and then double it.” Or...I know that 18×10 is 180, so 18×9 will be 18 less than 180. I’ll take away 10, then I’ll take away 8. Understanding has enabled them to manipulate numbers and extend their learning.

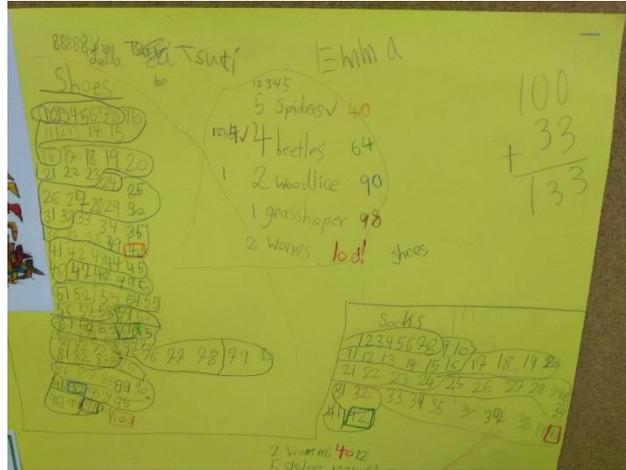
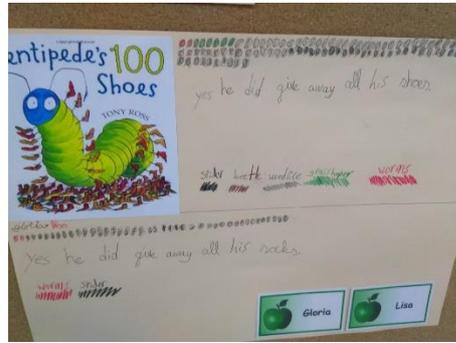
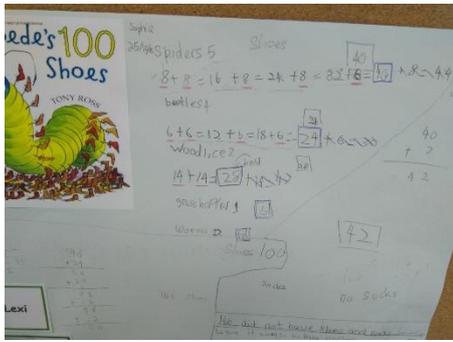
I like to think about developing mathematics, like baking a cake and icing it. If you ice the cake before it is baked, you will end up with a big goey mess. If you push for speed before a child has understanding, it all falls apart later in their education.

This is backed up by countless reputable studies. I will put some links to some at the end of this article. In the meantime, here are a few snapshots of classroom practice which support understanding, application and a love of mathematics.

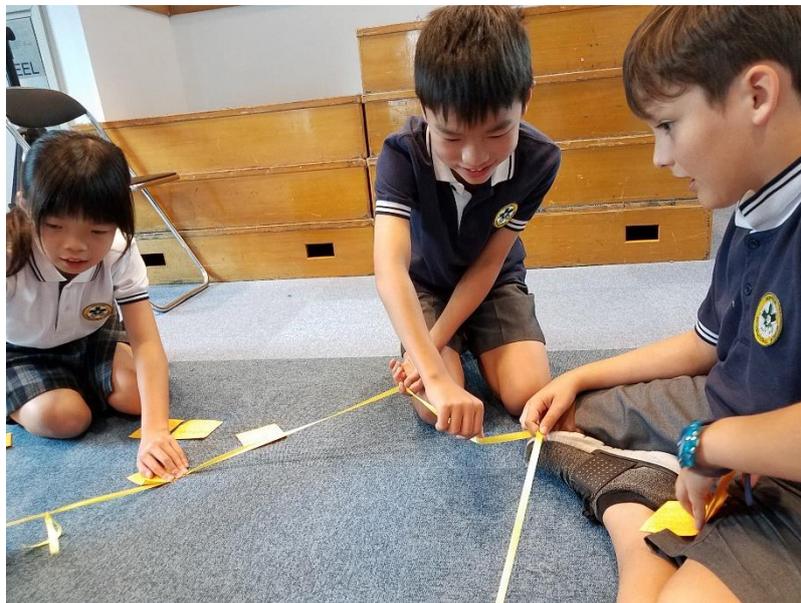
P3s read the book “The Little Centipede”. Straight away the student are interested. An open-ended problem is presented:



Students solve the problem in multiple ways. Some use algorithms, some use pictures and diagrams. No strategy is superior to another. Students compare and learn from each other’s strategies.



P5 are exploring angles. They work together to produce shapes with set criteria – ie. a shape with one right angle, 1 acute and 1 obtuse angle. They then go on an angle hunt around the school. Because of the hands on nature of these tasks, rich discussion ensues. Some children notice that the clock hands make different angles as they go around - is there a pattern to these? Another child wonders whether all right angled triangles also need to have 2 acute angles. This is set as an optional challenge. A student comes up to me in the playground the next morning. Not only has she figured out the challenge but has thought deeply enough to provide me with an explanation about why this must always be true. Mr. Cheung is a big fan of the 'convince me' game which means his students are used to explaining their thinking and proving that they are right!



Sports Day- 30th November - next Friday afternoon – 1:15pm – 3:30pm

Please make sure you are familiar with all the information sent out already for Sports Day next week

Venue: HK EDU Sports Stadium – Yau King Lane, Pak Shek Kok, Tai Po – just behind the school towards Providence Bay.

Start time – arrive around 1:15pm. Student will leave JIS on buses from 1pm. Warm up dance around 1:25pm

Closing ceremony at 3:40pm

Parents and community members are very welcome to come along and support. Please make sure all class teachers know how students are getting home after the event. The event is finishing beyond normal school closing time and bus arrangements should have been made by sending in the reply slip to school.

There will be a bus leaving the stadium to return to JIS for staff and some students already pre-booked.



The JIS sports afternoon is always a fabulous event and we look forward to seeing everyone next week to cheer on the Dragons, Pegasus or Phoenix houses – Red, Blue and Yellow!

Diary updates:

Don't forget: JIS Sports day next week on Friday 30th November

Events for the week ahead at JIS –

Week 15– 26th – 30th November 2018

Monday 26th – Reception class and P5 buddies go off to Tai Po Kau forest a.m.

Tuesday 27th – JIS Board of Directors meeting – Mr Walton to attend

Wednesday 28th –

Thursday 29th –

Friday 30th – Sports Day afternoon at HKEDU sports ground – starting at 1:15pm onwards

ICHK newsletter from our partner secondary school this week: click [here](#)

Wishing everyone a very enjoyable weekend and some fine weather for next Friday afternoon for sports day.

Simon Walton
Principal