

GHILGAI NEWS MAY 2011



Ghilgai School

Front cover: "Life Along the Nile" Bethany, Class 3

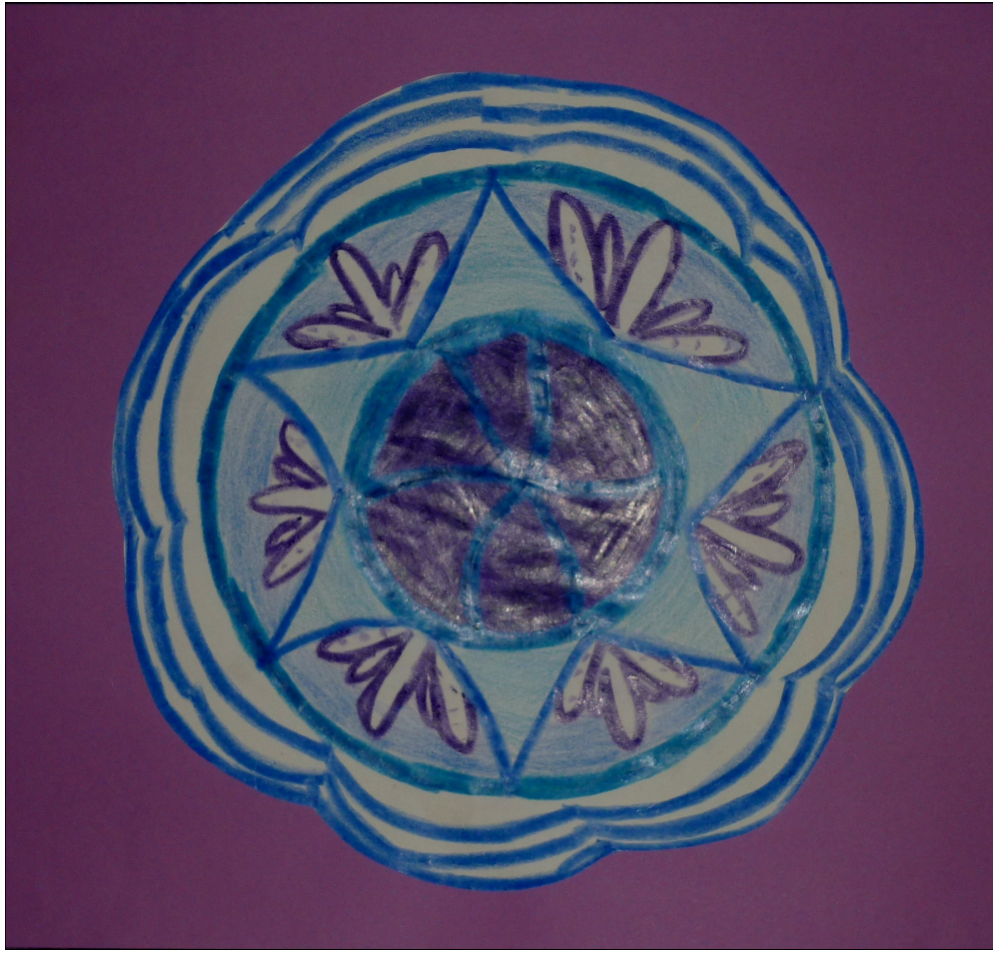


"A Train to Catch" - Maya, K/F

"One of our Magical Words" Audrey, Class 1



"Form Drawing" - Georgia, Class 5



"Mael Duin arrives at the Castle" - Shou, Class 2



"Thiassi and Loti in Jotenheim" - Khai, Class 4

KINDERGARTEN/FOUNDERS

It is always sad at the end of the year to lose to Class 1 the children one has grown so fond of. However, that experience was greatly compensated by the initiative, creativity and enthusiasm of the new Founders (mostly the Kinders from the previous year). They approached the sandpit in the summer with much industriousness. They built castles surrounded by moats, filled these with water and went on to make rivers, waterholes and lakes. It was obvious that the Kinder year had played into their burgeoning creativity.

This was followed by the building of boats, ships with sailors, many captains all vying for power and authority. However, arguments were all worked out amicably and the ship sailed on to other exciting lands. The ship's crew were well fed with fish and crocodile meat.

The new theme, "The Farmer and Harvest", was immediately perceptible in both indoor and outdoor play. Piggens were built, and farmers' huts, etc. A market was set up with abundant produce for sale. By this time the Kinders/floaters had joined us and were caught up in all the enthusiasm as well. Founder children began making mats, horse rugs, blankets for the dog, etc. These in effect were the terms given to the oblong piece of hessian on which they began their first stitches. They had a wonderful time. Each one was so different and so well done. They had reason to be very proud of their work. They were so successful that I thought they really did need a challenge and so our scarecrows with their patched coats are now coming into being.

Easter has come and gone. All the children loved making their lovely Easter baskets and chicks. We look forward to our next Autumn projects.

Of course, all this was accompanied with songs, rhyme and movement related to the various themes.

A lovely time was had also at the Collingwood Children's Farm. Thank you for everyone's participation.

Catherine has provided us with some lovely activities and storytelling. Her gentleness, thoughtfulness and time are much appreciated. Thank you, Catherine. Tarquin has also given abundantly. Her practicality, creativity, enthusiasm and care of the children are treasured and appreciated greatly.

A big thank you also to Lisa Bell who has planted out an Autumn garden with the children. Thank you for the time, materials and effort given. Also thank you to Megan for typing up our class list. In fact, thank you to all, for the support and co-operation.

Till next time,
Sue V-H

CLASS ONE

On the first day of term one Class One ceremoniously made the wonderful journey across The Hill and entered the Class One room through "the golden door", eyes alight in joyful anticipation. There they listened to Class Two students speak about the Wonderful Journey ahead. And on that very first day their deepest aspiration was nourished—"I will learn to Read and Write!" They did. In those first days they made a wonderful little book with delicious key words from a known story—sky, sun, wind, king.

Now we're well and truly on our way with golden bells tinkling as we make exciting discoveries, daily. We have a wide repertoire of Sounds drawn from Fairy Tale images and we have some vowels as well. The vowels we discovered hidden inside words like pip, hat, pot, and recently we ventured into writing some simple three letter words, with immense satisfaction. Our first sentence emerged for Mothers' Day—I love you. We've also had several nourishing Reading Occasions—familiar and loved rhymes—whose lines filled the entire blackboard.!

Our Number World is exciting too. We've each a wonderful treasure bag of stones and we sit in the round together counting them and moving them through little number stories. Neighbourhood scenarios, e.g. Get 12 pumpkins (stones), give 2 to the lady with the white cat, give 4 to the family on the corner ... how many are left? We've now nimble fingers that move these counters with ease, and agile imaginations that are beginning to move mathematically into various oral problems. We've explored the "finger numeral" (foundations of Roman numerals) and have just completed our modern digits. This paves for the working out of problems in a written form.

So that makes two wonderful mountains we've climbed already!

Craft with Sarah is a delight, our embroidered pot holders are done and the colours used in stick weaving are vibrant.

Eurythmy with Tina is a delight and a challenge—moving with poetry, with music. And working cohesively as a group.

Our Fridays shine with Music with Louise; Song, Dance. Discovering pitch and rhythm in gentle ways to provide a foundation for Musical Language.

And Phys. Ed. with Robert is just great. Fun games, new skills, satisfaction and challenge for growing physical bodies.

Each day our souls are nourished by Story—Folk Tales, Fairy Tales that speak to the inner being in wondrous imagery and foster growth in delicate ways. We gather around the candle and dream that we sit by an ancient hearth unhitched from the everyday, in tune with Magic.

Lots of drawing and clay/modeling that develop imagination and foster expressive symbolism and creative work.

'Tis a wonderful Journey—as I'm once more immersed in this sparkling realm of early childhood I too find much joy each day. Almost like a new life.

My thanks to Class One parents for great support. Thank you for the privilege of working with your beautiful children. Our thanks also to our wonderful specialists.

Love to all,
Ruth

CLASS TWO

Class 2 have started their studies in the Celtic realm this term. One of our stories is The Voyage of Mael Duin. This story is about Mael Duin's journey to many islands after he had sought advice from a Druid. We learn about the beauty and dangers of some of these islands. Throughout the story we are working on our English skills, continuing with sounds, extending our writing and comprehension. The children are especially excited about learning to read which we do in our fables class - reading aloud and in a set reading time.

Our Maths work has progressed to using all the processes. We are about to encounter our money block which we did touch on whilst preparing and selling our lemonade for the Autumn market.

Class 2 continue to work in different media. Last term we studied Native Indians of America. Here we made clay pots with patterns taken from this culture—pots we had seen in our stories and used in food preparation. We understood animals and festivals around food were important to this culture. We made the bark huts used for warmth and created a small mural.

Class 2 have made some wonderfully colourful items with Sarah in craft. Sport has also been exciting, enjoying our time with Robert in co-ordination skills. Other specialists have been visiting too, including Bev, Julie, Robyn and Stacey. All of the visits help contribute to a lovely community.

A big thankyou to Lyn and Michelle who continue to be there as we have a few spills and bumps! Thank you to Class 2 parents who continue to support our activities ... for all the lemons ... Joy picked and picked them! ... and to Sue who also had a tree effort!! And all very appreciated.

From Karen, Class 2 Teacher.

CLASS THREE

This first term we have dwelt amongst the Egyptians and along the Nile River. We have been inspired by the wonderful stories of the creator Ra who had only to name a thing and it came into being.

Thus our Nouns and Verbs were studied. Ra created the birds, the animals and the Mighty Nile. The Gods Isis and Osiris taught people to sow, reap, weave, farm. We created a wonderful mural depicting the Gods following the eye of Ra through the underworld as a test for the new pharaoh.

Egypt has been the basis for our maths work as we became scribes—we recorded tallies of mud bricks needed, we looked at place value—tens, ones. We next explored measurement—cubits and hands to modern measurements, using newly acquired rulers. The children measured many things; they even walked a kilometre, creating a map of the experience upon return.

The children were given their first assignments on measurement and were asked to create some mud bricks which we will use to construct an Egyptian worker's home. We are so fortunate to be able to visit the Tutankhamen exhibition, a wonderful addition to our studies.

We then went on to Journey with Wen Amon in search of wood for a new barque (boat) to carry the image of the god Ammon Re on its voyage down the Nile. Here we learnt to write the words from one to one hundred, even thousand. We will then tally a feast for Wen Amon upon his safe return.

Our class numbers have grown and we are so much enriched by our new friends to the class and by the others who support our work—Louise and her wonderful music, Robert and his games and sport plus help with other class activities, Julie with her lovely stitching and colour, Lisa with the much looked forward to Italian, Tina for the Eurythmy and Bev with her good cheer and class support.

We are also enriched by the support of the parents of the class and I thank them all for the many extras, from the help with organising excursions for the class to the lovely hellos in the morning.

I look forward to another wonderful term ahead.

Class 3 and
Lisette

CLASS FOUR

Greetings from the Green Room! Our year started with the Norse Creation story, and an exploration of various Norse form-drawings. This has been followed by stories of the various gods; Odin the All-Father, Thor the Mighty; Loki the Mischievous, the Fair Iduna and her apples, as well as several other characters.

These stories provided us with a point from which to revise grammar and introduce adjectives. The children produced some beautiful artwork with which to illustrate their work. (Khai produced an evocative drawing of Loki and his captor Thiassi, which is included elsewhere in this newsletter.)

From here, we moved on to a study of Time. Having discovered that two minutes can seem a very long time or very short—depending upon what one is doing—we identified the need to measure time. We tried old methods using shadows, candles and egg-timers before moving to reading a clock face. We also discussed the origin of the names of weekdays (connected with Norse mythology) and months.

We returned to the Norse myths at the end of first term. Many children were developing affinities with the various characters of the stories, which was of great interest to me.

In this block the children attempted written comprehension work for the first time, and learnt to identify pronouns and prepositions. More beautiful artwork was produced in this block, with the chalk pastel drawings of the Yggdrassil Tree being a wonderful way to finish the term.

Class Four also attended a performance of Mozart's 'The Magic Flute' in the Arts Centre with Classes Five and Six. This was an enjoyable day out, and a great first experience of opera for our classes.

This term Class Four as started work on another Norse story, the 'Kalevala', a wonderfully rich story from Finland.

Thanks to many people for their great work throughout the year. To Louise for her two weekly music sessions, Robert for P.E. and minding the oval, Michelle for visiting us, Tina for Eurythmy, Julie for craft and Lyn for everything.

Best wishes for Winter!

Paul

CLASS FIVE

Our Class 5 year began with revisiting the geography of Australia and applying mathematical work to our trip 'Around Australia in 12 Days'.

There was much to rediscover and revise, including learning about places located in the north, east and west in our Victorian state and also the map reading skills to work out scale and distance to calculate where to pitch our tents for the night. Rediscovering places on maps that had been visited over the summer holidays and how to dine out in Cairns on a budget of \$20. There were also car journey times and distances travelled and a trip to the Great Barrier Reef to timetable and budget.

Our Literature block introduced us to the stories from Ancient India, 'Savitri and Satyvan', as well as developing our written expression. We also visited a local Hindi Temple and we had Nilima (a past parent) as our guide and classroom guest. Nilima brought many saris and dressed some of the girls in a sari. She shared childhood Northern Indian games and spoke of festivals and deities and we also decorated our hands with original henna designs. We had mathematically dined out in the tropics of Cairns and then we were living amongst the rich backdrop of the isolated jungles of India where our paints depicted the colourful flowers and our written expression skills and grammar were enhanced.

We then looked, and looked, sketched and looked at the plants around us - some plants at ground level; some we eat; trees with their varied barks, leaves and growing shapes; plants that we use in many ways. We studied the botany of plants—parts of the flower, seed dispersal, root types and function, stems, leaves and photosynthesis. We also delved into the soil and the importance of a healthy soil, how plants are vital to us and how the soil structure is vital to plants. Our four types of seeds that we germinated allowed us to closely observe the wonder of a seed germinating and the new beginnings of a plant.

We completed the term's Main Lesson work with a block of work on graphing; the uses of graphing and how to interpret a graph.

Yet, a term's work is far reaching and goes well beyond the learning and discoveries of the Main Lesson—we continually practice our mathematical skills and reading, written expression, grammar skills throughout our weeks during Practice Time sessions. We have been enriched and excited with our Form Drawings inspired by our Indian block of work.

Julie has encouraged and guided us to create our own camel and thus a class herd of camels are being stitched, embroidered with accompanying rich saddles, and accompanied with young camels that would be worthy of both a noble Indian prince from ancient times or any camel train leader.

Our twice weekly sessions with Robert have had us taking part in a wide range of physical activities and skills; cricket was a class favourite (perhaps a blend of Ozzie and Indian passion for the game).

Recorder sessions with John have extended our playing repertoire, and the class have participated twice a week in music sessions with Louise who has included singing in Hindi, choral work, recorder and music theory skills.

In Eurythmy with Tina, we have moved/made wondrous forms and we work with harmony both to the spoken word of Tina's selected prose and to the accompaniment of the piano (thanks Doris).

We also enjoyed a city excursion with Class 4 and 6 to the Arts Centre for the opera of "The Magic Flute".

During our second term we have been developing our grammar and written expression with the Vedic story of the Ramayana, so many diverse characters who take up challenges, follow duty, exhibit great love, courage and loyalty and overcome many demons. These stories enrich our inner lives so that we may fight with courage our own battles as well as develop our formal literary skills.

In our following block we remeet old friends, Fractions. Yet, we are still in Autumn; much of the year's discovery is still awaiting us.

Our Walk to School Day will have Class 5 cooking pancakes for post walk breakfast; the money earned will be donated to the children of Talitha Koum orphanage in Kenya.

A combined camp with Class 6 is planned for later in the term.

Many thanks to those who work alongside us and to those who have gone ahead and given to us their insights , we are appreciative.

Thank you,
Veronica, Class 5.

CLASS SIX

I thought it would be a good idea to begin the school year with something solid and practical, and what could be more solid and practical than the earth under our feet? We looked at its origins, its construction, its changes over time and the reasons for them, and the weather patterns which affect our daily lives. It was an interesting block for both me and the class, and we produced some great graphics with our geological diagrams.

We then moved out to explore the Solar System and beyond; the relative sizes, shapes, positions and orbits of the various planets, as well as other space phenomena such as meteors, comets and asteroids. Some beautiful artwork ensued, with graphic explorations of light, texture and shape.

The history and culture of Rome was our next focus and we learned about its history, architecture, art, food and various ways of life for different sectors of the population. We noticed how profoundly Roman culture was influenced by the Greeks and just what influence Rome was to have on Western culture for the next two thousand years.

Still in Rome, we revisited some of our geometry from last year, brushing up on area and perimeter, looking at some of the different buildings in a city of the period, what they were used for and the ways they were relevant to Roman citizens. I am looking forward to our next geometry block, where we will explore some of the more illustrative aspects—tessellation, for example.

Another thing we're looking forward to is our upcoming Class 6 camp at Weekaway at the end of June. It looks as if our busy Class 6 schedule is now well under way.

Best wishes,
David and Class 6

As I stand on this lifeless sphere of the moon I wonder as a radiant figure rises overhead. Oceans of blue speckled with green and clusters of white swirling clouds look like a distant marble, so delicate as if it would disappear in a cloud of smoke to the touch. I wonder why humans are so fascinated with the moon when they have heaven under their feet. I am proud to call this thing of beauty in a sea of nothingness my home. It is a jewel sparkling bright in a black forest. It is truly a great honour that has been bestowed upon us to call this the home planet.

Asher Meredith, Class 6

EVENTS AND DATES

TEACHERS' WORK AFTERNOON

****12.30 finish****

THURSDAY JUNE 9

IN-SERVICE DAY

****student free day****

FRIDAY JUNE 10

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY

****Public Holiday****

MONDAY JUNE 13

TERM 2 ENDS

FRIDAY JULY 1

TERM 3 BEGINS

MONDAY JULY 18

IN-SERVICE DAY

****student free day****

FRIDAY AUGUST 19

MID-TERM BREAK

MONDAY AUGUST 22

TERM 3 ENDS

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 16

Term One Swimming

Class 2 and Classes 5 & 6 completed one week blocks of swimming and water safety activities in Term One at Knox Leisureworks pool in Boronia. Building on their 2010 Term Four lessons, Class 2 made huge improvements in their confidence and skill levels in and around the water. This was an encouraging progression in the students' development in the area of aquatics. Working in small groups in environments suited to their level of experience enabled the classes to make the most of the week of lessons. A lot of fun was also had!

Classes 5 & 6 will probably focus on their session at the water slide when asked about swimming this term, but their application to stroke development and life saving skills was fantastic. Divided into five small groups, the students worked on skills suited to their ability levels and all made great progression throughout the week.

Term Four Swimming

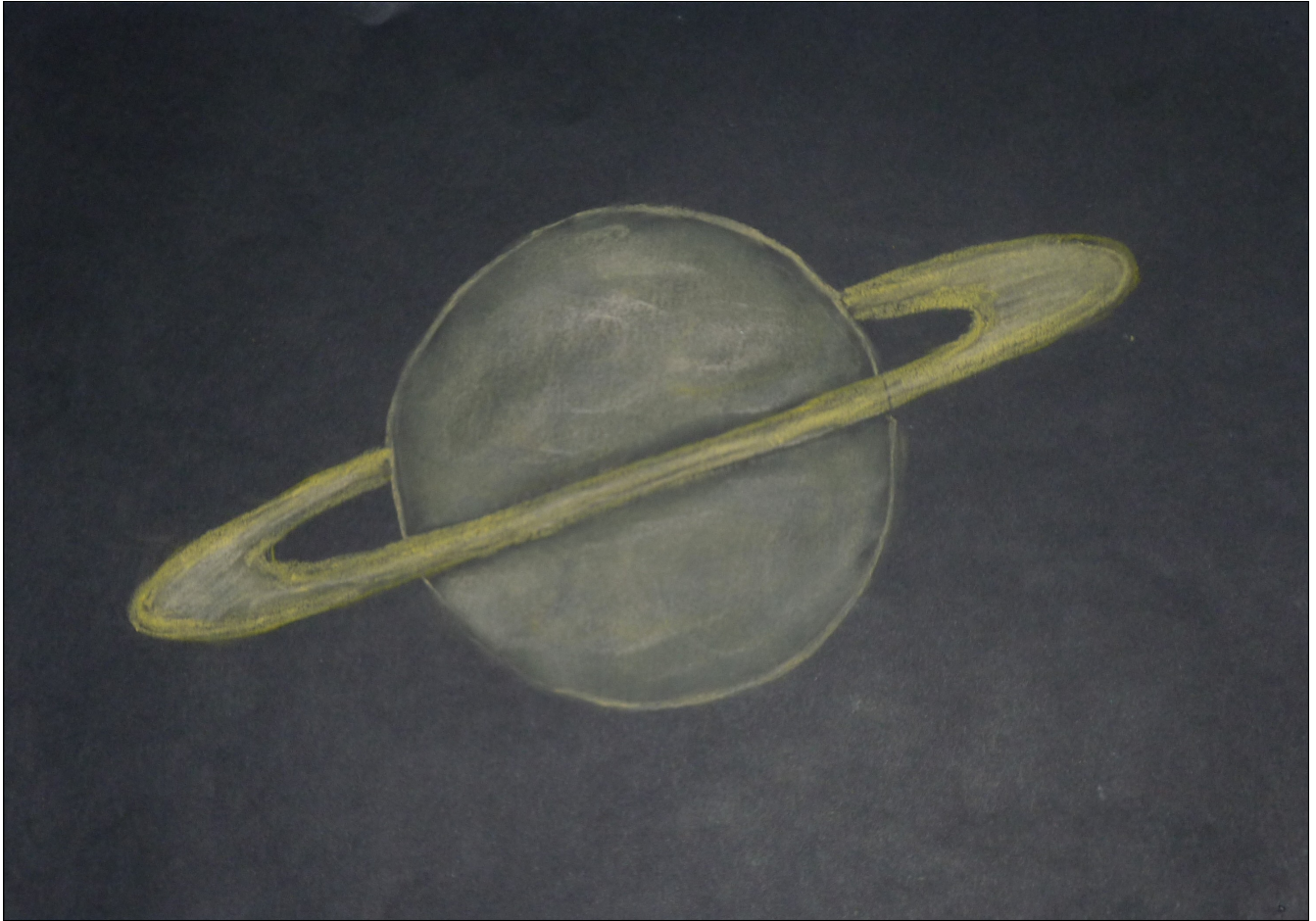
In term four, Classes 2, 3 & 4 will do a week block of swimming together, and Class 1 will do a week block of swimming. More details in Term Three.

Robert



"Dandelion" - Tomiah, Class 5

"Saturn" - Nicole, Class 6



"Eclipse" - Skye, Class 6



"Yggdrasil Tree" - Kyle, Class 4