

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents

3,5,7 Tests

Today's date is February 16. In exactly three months time on May 16, we begin the first of the Year 3, 5 and 7 tests of literacy and numeracy. You may remember that in 2008, Qld did not perform as well as we ought to in these tests. This year there is a push for improvement across all year levels and in all tests. The goal of every school is for each student to get 3 more questions correct on each test compared to the results last year. Our teachers will be working hard to produce these results, but it is also my role and yours to try to maximise the performance of all our students. So I am issuing a **12 WEEK CHALLENGE** to all Year 3, 5 and 7 students to have them practise the skills that are necessary for good results. Each week, I will pick one element to concentrate on. This week's focus is spelling. Below are the 2008 results, and as you can see, there were several words that caused great difficulty – *special, oxygen, properly* and *pour* for Year 3; *disappointed, opposite, oxygen* and *astronauts* for Year 5; and *equipped, recognise* and *immediately* for Year 7. All these words were in sentences but spelt incorrectly, eg Please opun the door (Year 3); Seven is my lucky numba. (Year 5) and I heard a different vershion of the story (Year 7). So the spelling task for each year level is to learn the 20 words in the appropriate list below and next Monday, our teachers will test them in the same manner as the 3,5,7 test items from 2008. I'll give parents feedback in this newsletter next week as to how we went in Week 1.

The 3,5,7 test strategies from the school's point of view include:

- Our own 12 week plan
- Our present Yr 3, 5 and 7 students sitting last years tests for practice
- Our teachers sitting the Year 9 Maths test (to familiarise them with the difficulties in doing these sort of papers)
- Analysing last year's weaknesses so we can specifically target them this year.
- Students practising the writing of narratives (which will be on the 2009 test)
- A focus on spelling and sentence structure across the board

2008 Results					
YEAR 3 Words	% Correct	YEAR 5 Words	% Correct	YEAR 7 Words	% Correct
like	90	swimming	92	since	85
open	73	number	90	lizard	80
brown	64	friends	81	taste	77
swimming	67	great	78	climb	80

YEAR 3 Words	% Correct	YEAR 5 Words	% Correct	YEAR 7 Words	% Correct
around	55	competed	49	version	72
friends	54	popular	46	consumed	73
cracked	48	vanilla	48	marathon	68
great	38	muscled	21	fitness	61
barked	41	astronauts	17	description	58
complained	26	opposite	18	poisonous	38
wheel	37	shoulder	56	overwhelmed	35
helmet	40	button	52	antique	30
seat	56	effects	32	disappointed	27
special	8	volume	81	announcement	18
could	57	millions	74	community	68
animal	40	oxygen	15	equipped	9
present	46	properly	30	previously	56
little	64	since	62	surgery	31
millions	29	lizard	57	mischief	30
oxygen	3	climb	61	recognise	26
properly	7	taste	56	immediately	13
match	32	version	41	secluded	19
loudly	20	marathon	37	athletes	36
hoping	35	fitness	36	substantial	28
pour	11	disappointed	8	performance	61
Average	42%	Average	50%	Average	47%

This Week's Challenge Words

Year 3	Year 5	Year 7
fight	address	tremendous
point	disappear	appreciate
morning	whisper	rumour
broke	annoying	evaporate
torch	thousand	interpret
spray	knowledge	patience
gentle	probably	atmosphere
noise	mountain	research
knife	thief	circumference
centre	weird	dictionary
child	trouble	resign
watch	replied	author
church	weather	thought
giant	furniture	participate
clapping	gnaw	interrupt
house	creature	exercise
making	laughter	conceive
birth	decide	feature
you're	written	persuasion
daylight	though	international

Wet Weather

While it's great to have the heavy rain, it makes school operations a little difficult. Pick up and drop off times are particularly tricky but I noticed plenty of common sense and consideration and we had very few problems. In fact, Friday was the calmest and most orderly traffic in the car park this year. I thank all parents for their efforts in this area. On very wet days, we run our 'Wet Weather' procedure whereby all students stay in class for breaks and only leave their rooms to go to the toilet. It makes for a very long day but it keeps everyone relatively dry. The heavy rain also highlighted the areas where we need covered walkways and we are working towards having all these in place. The Prep walkway will be completed by the end of June and we should have one joining 'E' Block to the Office by the end of the year. For your information, 150mm of rain fell on the school on Thursday and Friday and another 25mm on Saturday. It was much needed but very inconvenient.

Bushfire Appeal

I'm sure we would have all foregone the rain if it could have fallen on Victoria last week. The enormity of the tragedy has touched every Australian and many of us have donated money, goods or time to help. We think it appropriate that we respond as a school, so on Wednesday we are having a fund raising breakfast and a free dress day to raise money for the fire victims. All parents are welcome to attend and I hope we end up with a substantial sum to send to those most in need.



Mark Fisher
Principal

FROM THE LIBRARY

Bookclub Issue 1 is due this Friday, 20 February. Please send all orders, together with payment, to the library for processing. Payment can be made by cash, cheque or credit card. If paying by cheque, please make cheque payable to Taigum State School. If paying by credit card, instructions for this are on the back of the brochure. Orders are then returned within one to two weeks.

Student borrowing – all students are encouraged to use a bag for borrowing library books. For safety reasons, it is recommended that students in the lower year levels do **not** use a plastic bag for borrowing.

Kind regards
Theresa McArdle
Librarian

SCHOOL BANKING

We need a volunteer to be the School Banking Coordinator. If you are interested in taking on this role, please contact the office as soon as possible.

Victorian Bushfire Appeal Wednesday 18th February 2009

Taigum State School Community is having a fundraising breakfast starting at 8am. We will be selling bacon and egg sandwiches for \$2.00. All parents and care givers are welcome to join us. This is our chance to pull together and dig deep to offer our support to the people of Victoria. If you wish to make a monetary donation you may do this on the day. We will have a donation tin on the table.

As well as the breakfast, it is free dress day. All students who arrive in free dress are asked to make a gold coin donation for the privilege.

We are hoping to do our best for the people of Victoria and we look forward to seeing you all on Wednesday for brekky.

Education Tax Refund

Keep receipts for the Education Tax Refund

With a new school year just starting, it is important for parents to make sure they keep their receipts to make the most of the Rudd Government's \$4.4 billion Education Tax Refund. The Education Tax Refund will provide some much-needed relief to help families meet these costs, with refunds of up to:

- \$375 per primary school student; and
- \$750 per secondary school student.

All families with school children who receive Family Tax Benefit Part A will be eligible for the Education Tax Refund, which will be paid to families from 1 July this year. Provided parents keep their receipts, the Education Tax Refund will apply to some of the most common back-to-school items, including:

- laptops;
- home computers and associated costs;
- home internet connections;
- printers;
- education software;
- trade tools for use at school;
- school text books; and
- stationery.

For details of who is eligible and what you can claim:

<http://www.alp.org.au/media/0109/mstres220.php>