

Drawings by Pietro, Riccardo, Alessio, Giulia, GR.2

# GREETINGS

## NEWS SHARING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

By Eugenia Papadaki

Dear parents and staff,

We are in the third and last term of this school year and the calendar looks just a busy with important events coming up. Here is some news and important information I would like to share with you in this newsletter.

### ECIS membership visit outcome

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, we have heard about the outcome of the membership visit from The European Council of International Schools(ECIS). I am pleased to share with you that our school has been granted full ECIS membership status. This means that our school has met the criteria of the visit. Below is a summary of the ECIS report written by Mr Kevin Page, the ECIS inspector who visited our school on March 4th.

“The school has clearly moved to embrace internationalism through its programme, languages taught, as well as the units of inquiry developed for the PYP and the curriculum development for MYP.

Not only through the documents, but also in discussion with the staff it is clear the school has worked hard on its path to excellence. It is a process of continual review and development and this is evident in all that the school is involved in. For a small school much has been devoted to the continual improvement process and planning time is set aside to fulfill this goal.

Clearly the ECIS membership visit and the PYP Authorisation have galvanised the school into making sure they can meet all that is expected of them by both organisations.

The school will be working to enable more staff to have first aid training.

The school complies with very stringent local laws for food and the facilities for the lunches are very well kept.

The school works to a tight budget and controls are in place to make sure the budget guidelines are adhered to. As a small school care and attention to financial detail is imperative and I felt reassured that this was the case. I reviewed the school budget and noted that the school did not have any financial concerns.”

April 19th, 2010

### PYP Authorization visit, May 4, 5

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Open Day, May 8

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Bimbò May 27-30

The above three events are going to keep us very busy during this month. Mrs Mary Marjerrison has written in previous issues what the PYP authorization visit will entail. As this newsletter is being prepared, we, as a school are frantically preparing for it!

Open Day May 8

After our successful January Open Day we have decided to organize and run our May 8th Open Day along the same lines. We will need our student members of the advocacy group to be present from 9.30 am to 12 to help out with the tours; some children will be selected for the curriculum show case activities and will be expected to attend from 9.30 to 12 o'clock. Please inform us if your child is unable to attend. If you know of any friends who might be interested in enrolling their children at our school or at our summer courses, please encourage them to come along to our next Open Day.

Bimbò May 27-30

On May 27-30, our school is going to participate at the BIMBO' event. This is an important event organized by the Monza Council at the Autodromo di Monza where for four days a full program of exiting activities are going to be offered to children, families and schools of local territory. Our school will take part in two different ways; some of our classes will take a school trip day out on Thursday 27th or Friday 28th and spend the whole

day there. On all four days our school will be part of the activity program as well as have our own stand for promotional and publicity purposes.

Summer courses: This year's summer course will run from June 14th to July 23rd. We are pleased to announce that Sarah Danks and Nikita Potter from England, who spent a three month teaching practice period in our school last year, are going to come back and teach the first two weeks of our summer school. We are planning parallel short courses with sports and arts foci and enrolments are already open. If any of our parents are interested in signing up for the summer school, we would recommend that you do this as soon as possible as the courses do fill up very quickly. Please do check our website or call into the school office for more information. New Spanish teacher for Lower elementary

We are pleased in welcoming Mrs Myriam Lafuente as the new Spanish teacher for Grade 1 and Grade 2 classes.

This is what Mrs Myriam is writing on her professional profile:

"After teaching more than five years in Spain I moved to Singapore with my Italian husband. In Asia I got a really international experience working with people from all over the world in the International School of Singapore. Asia is also in my heart because there I had a beautiful experience when my daughter Monica was born..She is learning Italian and Spanish at the same time without difficulties.

I am very proud to be part of this school. I love teaching."

### **Congratulations to Angela on her wedding**

On April 6th, Angela Aliano, our Monza school secretary, got married. Our warmest congratulations go to her and her husband.

### **Bilingual Education**

**Addressing a frequent parent concern: "what happens when a new child joins the classroom? Does this affect the quality and pace of teaching and learning?"**

We often get asked this question and it is normal that parents wonder how the arrival of a new child may affect the teaching and learning in their child's classroom. On the other hand our admissions policy states that we, as a school, admit children on our

program, regardless of linguistic ability or background. New arrivals are placed in their respective age group class and if placement involves grades 2 upwards, children's ability in the two languages will be assessed prior to admission. This is done in order to identify any potential language support the new student may need after joining our program.

In the past three years our school has been hiring extra language support teachers who have been offering this kind of support to both children and teachers. It is also school policy not to withdraw children from the classroom to offer them this extra support.

So, what impact may the arrival of a new child have on the learning process of the other children?

When new children arrive in class teachers know that they have to differentiate teaching and learning. This is a common classroom teaching strategy that most teachers are familiar with since they need to differentiate their instruction all the time.

Children often offer themselves to become "translators" or helpers of the new child, building up in this way their own confidence, their skills of being empathetic, caring, good communicators.

Teachers organize their classes in mixed ability groups when new comers find themselves working alongside supportive classmates.

It has been our experience that with these strategies in place, new comers do not delay or interrupt the normal teaching or learning process.



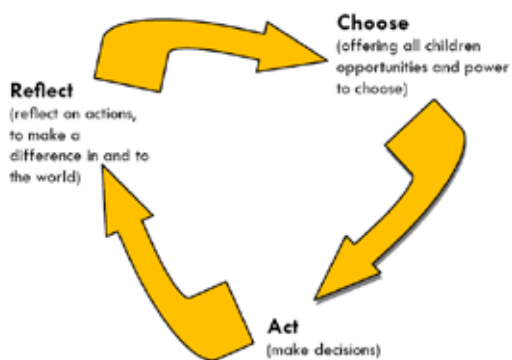
# PYP NEWS

## TAKING ACTION

By Mary Marjerrison

*“Knowledge changes attitude. Attitude changes action. Action changes the world.”*

How can we help children to develop **responsible attitudes** and to also take **thoughtful and appropriate actions that can make a difference?**



In the transdisciplinary curriculum, we help children realize that their actions follow a cycle.

Grade 2 teacher, Chiara Colombo, reports that **Stella** at the beginning of the Unit of Inquiry, “Tell Me A Story,” discovered that the class was going to write stories. At home, she prepared and illustrated a book with a story she invented. She brought it to school and showed her classmates.



Many children across the school are excited about protecting the environment. **Grade 1** had their unit of inquiry on recycling and asked the transition class if they wanted to participate by recycling. The students in transition were really excited to recycle in the classroom, and even created a classroom job called recycle assistants. The class made signs and labels of what should be recycled together. The children helped each other recycle all the paper and rubbish in our classroom. During the last week of school, Grade 1 put on a show called, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. **Cecilia** in Transition really grasped the 3 R’s and what they mean. That afternoon, Cecilia noticed a plastic plate

was not recycled in the proper bin. She pulled the plate out and said, “We can reuse this plate! We can use it for paint; we can use it for collage.” Cecilia really took action when she thought of different ways we can reuse the materials rather than just recycle them. Gina commented on how well Cecilia spoke in English, too!!



**Simone Bassi** made a connection between his Preschool 2 Unit of Inquiry, “ReMida,” with Preschool 1’s unit “My Friends and Family.” He collected plastic bottle tops to contribute to Preschool 1’s ongoing project for construction of wheelchairs for the elderly.

“What have you done to my son?” **Noel’s** mom asked one of his teachers, Kerry Palmer-Long, recently. “What do you mean?” Kerry asked. Apparently Noel, who has never been even the least bit interested in grocery shopping, was now adamant that his mum could not go shopping without him. When she asked him why, he replied that he could not tell her, but it was a test. He wanted to watch ‘how well she did the shopping’ and compare her performance to his dad’s. He then said that he would give her one clue and that was, plastic bags!!! It would seem that he would like to check that she does not use plastic bags, but takes her bag instead. Noel’s sister Filipa was very upset that she would not be able to see his class performance about *Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle*. Noel suggested that he could take home his costume and a copy of the script, and that he and the family would put on a play for Filipa to see!

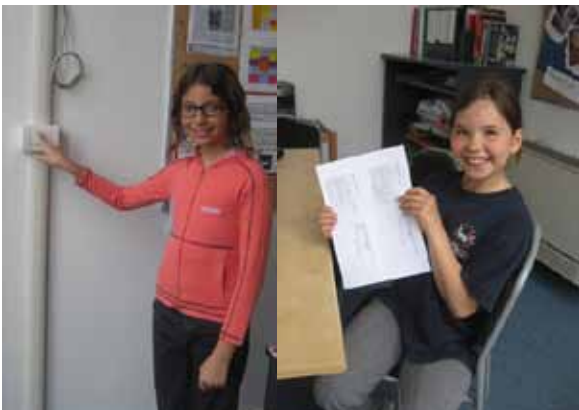
During the practicing of our play about the Waste-a-Lot family, **Guglielmo**, on a trip to the supermarket, pressed his mother to buy some reusable bags to help his family to reduce the amount of plastic bags they consumed. His mother told us how happy she was that he did so as now she can shop with a clearer conscience! During the development of the class play, **some children** even brought the characters from the story into their imaginative play.

**Adriana** has been keeping a watchful eye over everything that is thrown into bins in the classroom. On more than one occasion she has reminded the class members to recycle or reuse. On one occasion she shouted from the other side of the classroom, "Wait! That can be recycled!" a line that came directly from their play.

The Grade 3-4 children have been studying resources in their Unit of Inquiry, *It's a Limited World*.

**Elena Ruby** said that, "because we were talking about this unit on recycling, at home I decided to reuse some paper. Before, I just used normal white paper."

**Cecilia** says that now she switches off the lights when they are on. "In the morning when my dad or mom don't remember to switch it off, I do it."



**Federico** has made some changes in his his use of resources. "I began to throw away things in the right bin. When I was at home, I turned off the lights when I worked on the computer."

Some children have begun to develop new habits at home, like **Elena** who says that "because I didn't remember every time I threw the paper or plastic in the same bin, but now to remember, I wrote plastic and paper on the bins to remember."



The Grade 8 children studied World War I earlier this year. In their study with Marina Caleffi, they investigated the relationship between technology and war, and the different ways to represent it through poems, memory, songs, pictures, and images. **Sara**

recorded an entire file full of beautiful songs speaking about and against the war. She downloaded music and texts, so that she could use them with her classmates.

**Umberto**, after working in their unit on the Marketplace with Mr. Alex, decided that he didn't want his mother to purchase Nike shoes for him because of the way that they are made. Later he realized that it didn't make a difference because most shoes are made in that way. This Unit of Inquiry resulted in several children changing their shoe buying habits as a result of better understanding the world as a marketplace.



During a Preschool 2 study of ComeStai?/ How Are You?, **Leonardo Avetrani** and his mom were traveling in Africa. While there, they toured a local school in a small fishing village. At the school, on display, were posters of what the children were studying... After looking carefully at them, Leonardo turned to his mom and asked, "Perchè non stanno studiando i sentimenti? Noi a scuola studiamo i sentimenti."

Another Preschool 2 child, **Ruben Retner**, while on a skiing vacation practiced counting and addition, using a strategy similar to one he used during the Unit of Inquiry, Come Stai?/ How Are You?. He was counting the numbers of people in each car of the ski lift and adding them together.

Keep in mind that ACTION...

- is VOLUNTARY. Children take their own INITIATIVE to choose, act, and reflect
- represents a balanced PERSPECTIVE
- usually begins in a SMALL way, often coming from the child's real concerns and commitment.
- arises from children's own EXPERIENCES
- may need adult SUPPORT
- involves having CHOICES

## VOICES FROM THE LIBRARY

Dear Parents,

I hope you had a nice and relaxing time during the Easter holiday!

In those days, our libraries grew up a little bit : they have been proudly enriched by the hundreds of books Eugenia brought back from the Bologna Children's Book Fair.

And, of course, also the spaces changed a bit. Monza library now has more space for children to sit or lay down and relax while reading a book, as well as in Villasanta, where a new reading area has grown, with sofas and pillows, where children will love to spend their time!

So, come and visit our brand new resources and reading-learning environments!!!

See you soon...

Valentina Valenti

## UNIT OF INQUIRY

### REMIDA

By Hollyce Yoken

How can we teach very young children about pollution?? Here is one way. We created a large lake filled with paper fish. We discussed how clean the lake was and imagined all the fish swimming around, happily and healthily. One by one, we each threw a piece of garbage into the pond and removed a fish each time. We noticed that the dirtier the lake became,



the less fish could survive. After all the fish had disappeared, we then took a large plastic bag and did a group clean up of the lake. As each piece of garbage was removed and the lake became clean again, a fish was entered back into the lake.

This activity supports an understanding of these traits in the PYP Learner Profile: Thinker, Knowledgeable, and Principled.

We can understand that we are responsible for the pollution of our environment, but we can also take action to clean up our environment and restore it to its natural beauty!!!!

Next we are collecting and graphing the amount of garbage our class alone generates in one week.



### GRADE 5 EXHIBITIONS

By Alex Sampson

Grade 5 are currently engaged in preparing their end of year exhibition. They have all chosen their own subjects of inquiry and decided how they will present the results of their investigations.

There are five groups,

Arrianna, Vicky and Alessia are investigating the relationship between humans and machines and the benefits and problems that arise from our dependence on technology.

Ale Varisco, James and Edoardo are investigating the relationship between humans and the climate, and considering the ways in which weather affects how and where we can live as well as inquiring into our own ability to affect and change the weather for good or for ill

Ale A, Davide and Umberto are investigating the weird

and wonderful world of genetics and how they work in all living things. They are investigating the mechanics, methods and advisability of genetically modifying organisms.

Allegra, Gaia and Federico are looking up up and investigating the universe in which we live and our relationship with these distant phenomena from both scientific and a mythological viewpoints, astronomyology if you like.

Giacomo and Lorenzo have investigated the development and history of the engine and its effect on the way we live, individually and collectively. Not to mention its effect on the environment, climate and Iraq.

The students are all thoroughly enjoying the time they spend working on this and are looking forward to mounting thier exhibtion in the Palestra at Villasanta on the afternoon of Thursday 20th May 2010, from 13.45 onwards.

### COFFEE SODA

By Nathaniel Katz

*Advertising can be a tricky and manipulative job.*

**Design brief:** To find the beverage most objectionable to children, to study it, to study how it is advertised, then... create a manipulative advertising campaign that will attempt to make this objectionable beverage attrac- tive to children. The choice beverage? Coffee!

**Investigate:** Look at advertisments for coffee, look at advertisments for things that we love, compare and con- trast. **The Plan:** a delicious solution... Coffee Soda! **Create:** Students created coffee sodas, and an assessment scale for testing its quality. This was accomplished through studying the history of coffee and its importance in the marketplace. Then using those criteria toward creating their new beverage. Interim assesment: A taste test. Next, students designed the bottles for the cof- fee soda to make them attractive to young consumers with a plan to build model bottles (unfinished). Finally, students will construct a website advertising the new coffee soda.

Technology skills developed during the unit: HTML, internet research; Drawing skills developed during the unit: Drawing 3-dimensional forms.



### LEGS

By Umberto, Grade 5

(During Book Week, Dr. Pat Ryan, the storyteller, spent an afternoon with grades 3-5 at Villasanta. He presented a riddle to the children that inspired Umberto's story)

Two legs sat on three legs eating no legs. Along came four legs and took no legs away. Two legs threw three legs at four legs and four legs dropped no legs. Two legs had no legs again.

Giles was a man that lived in a small and ancient house made of hay, in the country. Giles was a farmer, he wasn't very rich but he could afford things like wooden stools and things.

One day he was sitting on a stool eating an oyster and a pink panther peeked in the front door and licked her lips with appetite.. Giles got the fork and stabbed it in the oyster's body. The panther creped into the house's kitchen, she prepared the jump and then jumped with all her force, with an almighty bound she leapt onto the table and with her mighty claw she got the oyster and took the oyster out from Giles' fork and ran in the living room.

Giles jumped off his stool, got it into his hands and even he ran into the living room and when he found the panther he threw the stool at her; the panther opened her mouth to shout "ouch" and the oyster fell on the floor. Giles ran to get the oyster and got it. Giles was very happy to have the oyster again, he went in the kitchen and ate the oyster.

The pink panther limped away with a back leg all hurt and even though she was sad she understood stealing food was not the right thing to do.

## GRADE 2 STORIES

by Dafne Sagrati

Once upon a time there were six-thousand stars and a moon. They were training chickens.

One day, a very clever chicken played a trick on the moon and one of the stars. The moon and the star got very cross, so they gave the chicken a time-out in an inflatable room, but the chicken pecked in the inflatable wall and ran off.

So they put it in a cage, but the chicken saw a piece of metal and a hammer and built a key, opened the lock and ran away.

The moon and the star put it under the clouds, where we are. The chicken took a ladder from a farm and went back on the clouds.

Then the moon and the star decided to hide it in a hole in the wall. But the chicken took some bits of wax, made the hole slippy and crawled out.

The moon and the star were fed up with this story, so they eventually decided to train the chicken. With the training, the chicken became tame and they all lived happily ever after.

by Giulia Meregalli

Once upon a time, there was a puppet called Pappo.

One day a fairy came and turned it into a human. Pappo was not behaving, so a dragon came and ate it up.

In the meanwhile, the fairy changed a strawberry in a red dress and a blueberry in a blue butterfly. The butterfly saw Pappo inside the dragon's tummy and killed the dragon to marry him.

Pappo promised he would never misbehave again. The fairy was so happy about this, so gave the red dress to the butterfly.

## REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE

by Kerry Palmer Long

Our last unit of inquiry, The Three Rs led the students to take lots of action. Noel was particularly keen. He has been watching his family like a hawk; checking what they throw away and whether or not they put it into the right bins. He has also insisted, even when they family go out for the day, that they take their rubbish home so that it can be recycled and not thrown into the public bins that are not for recycling. Furthermore, he has told his mum that he will be testing her at the supermarket. He did not specify exactly what he was going to test but hinted that it was to do with the amount of plastic bags she got for the shopping.

Talking of plastic bags, Guli's mum said that he insisted, one Saturday, that she buy some reusable bags from the supermarket and they have been using these ever since.

Aside from that, the children regularly check what is thrown into the classroom bin and they soon reprimand any offender who might miss a chance to recycle or reuse something. This has also happened in Transition. We invited both Transition and Grade 2 to join us in our campaign by putting bins in their classes to separate their rubbish. Following this and their teachers' discussions about it, one child removed a plastic plate from the classroom bin and told Gina that they should reuse it for something else before finally throwing it away.

Giorgio has also taken a real interest in saving water. He told me the other day that after the class has finished washing their hands at lunchtime, he always hangs back so that he can check that the taps have all been turned off.

It really has proven to be a highly inspiring and behaviour changing experience for the kids.

# DOCUMENTATION

Atelier documents– April 2010

by Laura Fumagalli

## CREATING

(Making paper)

Elisa, Francesca, Charlize, Giorgia, Cristiano, Thomas, James, Eleonora

Francesca: “Paper comes form the trees, and the trees are there to make the city prettier!”

James: “I know, I know, the trees are put on a truck, I saw it! ,

Bits of newspaper were left to soak in water, then mashed and sieved.

Elisa: “The words in the newspaper will be tiny after!”

Thomas: “They will go away,”

Giorgia: “Maybe, they melt in water!”

The new sheet obtained with this handmade procedure, was pressed and decorated with leaves and flower petals, colour spots, natural flavours, grains of sand, ginger powder and nutmeg .

Cristiano: “Shall we put some perfume?”

Giorgia: “Actually, I want to put gold sparkle on it!!!!”

The dough was used to create round, egg and irregular, showing that paper can transform and change looks and function.

Francesca: “We can make a nice drawing on this sheet... , when it’s dry!”

