

Science Newsletter Semester 1 2019

A whole semester through, it has certainly been a busy time in the Science room! In first term we were engrossed in all things force and electricity and experimenting with how objects move. In second term it has been all about chemicals and exploring materials in our world.

The students have completed various investigations into these concepts by using the scientific thinking process. I am very impressed with their progress in improving these skills so far this year! We start with asking questions and making predictions about what we think the answers might be. The older students are then able to pose a hypothesis to investigate. Then it is time to experiment! We have worked a lot on designing fair tests to experiment, which involves planning to ensure that the test is done fairly for accurate results. After testing, they must record the results and we have lots of discussions to evaluate what it all means! Just like all great scientists, the students often find themselves wondering with MORE questions to investigate!

It has been such a pleasure to design a program that often results in a lot of excitement from the students. Their enthusiasm to participate in investigations and use the scientific process puts a smile on my face every day!

They were especially excited to get into Chemical Sciences in term 2. We started the program with the 'Elephant Toothpaste' experiment. They were so engaged and worked hard on providing detailed predictions and results. It really got us thinking about how different substances and materials work together and why we use them. I love that we can get so much learning out of something that is really a lot of fun!

We have finished the term in Year 1/2 with using appropriate materials to build a small 'hovercraft' that could hover for 5 seconds. We played 'I Spy' to investigate the properties of different materials and then built our crafts to test! We discussed making the test fair for each hovercraft and then off they flew!

In Year 3/4 we did a similar investigation looking into materials used for different purposes in the environment. They then had to use appropriate materials to design and build a miniature house to withstand a natural disaster! Some houses were tested in a 'flood' where we filled a container with water, some houses were in a cyclone replicated by a hairdryer and others were tested in an earthquake where we shook a box. The students were so eager to see if their designs work and I was very impressed to see they did an excellent job! They selected materials and combined them to suit the purpose, designed and completed a fair test for each house and reflected on how we use materials and the impact on the environment.

The Year 5/6's completed their term by applying all the knowledge we have amassed into cooking! We looked at what happens when substances create mixtures, the solubility of various materials, the change in state caused by heating or cooling and the irreversible changes of cooking and burning. Following a recipe, the students predicted what changes would occur at each step and then investigated the changes by cooking the recipe. Of course, we completed it by eating the finished product!

Next semester is set to be just as busy, if not more! We will be starting Earth and Space Sciences in Term 3 and finishing with Biological Sciences in Term 4. We also have National Science Week coming up next term and hopefully the students will be participating in some fun events to highlight the importance of Science in our lives. With some nicer weather coming back in Term 4, I hope we will venture out to our vegetable garden a bit to look at living things and the environment.

I hope the enthusiasm remains as we continue our adventure this year!