VCE Drama - discovering Ned Kelly

Drama Students Jade, Riley & Zachary perform their Ned Kelly piece
The importance of a ‘growth’ mindset

I have a confession to make. Writing this editorial takes me way outside of my comfort zone. For as long as I can remember I have struggled with writing. My Year 10 English teacher told my parents at a parent-teacher meeting, “Jacqui can spell the words perfectly, but she can’t string them together”. Shortly after that meeting I gave up on my dream to be a sports journalist. I’m not kidding, I thought my future was in writing about cricket. Instead, I pursued university degrees in engineering and science, and I often tell people that “writing is not my thing”.

Last year I was challenged with this way of thinking when I read the book ‘Mindset: How you can fulfil your potential’ by Dr Carol Dweck. I highly recommend this book. Many of us believe our basic qualities and abilities are ‘carved in stone’. Dweck would say that if we think like this we have a ‘fixed mindset’ and are constantly trying to prove ourselves. “Will I succeed or fail? Will I look smart or dumb? Will I be accepted or rejected? Will I feel like a winner or a loser?”

Others of us see ourselves on a continuum of learning, or a pilgrimage of development. Those with this thinking are said to have a ‘growth mindset’ and believe their qualities can change and grow with application and experience. It is important to note that this is not suggesting that everyone is the same and we can all be developed into an intellectual genius. However, it does suggest that we can all learn and grow through perseverance and effort.

I get to see the outworking of mindsets every day. As a teacher of mathematics, I often get to hear people’s opinions of their abilities in the subject (whether I ask for them or not). Students, parents, fellow teachers and friends often tell me that “maths is not my thing”. Maths teachers will tell you that they spend most of their time working to improve the confidence of students. All too often students will say “I don’t get this. This is too hard” within five minutes of introducing a new concept. My usual response is “Have a go. Learning takes time”.

After reading Dr Dweck’s book I shared my new learning of fixed and growth mindsets with my Year 8 Maths students. They could relate to the fear of failure that comes from attempting a task that is outside their comfort zone. They spoke of feeling too afraid to start an art piece for fear that it wouldn’t work out; of not letting others read their creative writing; or of their brains turning to jelly when they have to do a test or examination. Not one of them had considered talking to a teacher about doing more challenging work if they continually achieved high scores in tests without really trying.

We discussed those people around us who are able to achieve big things with little effort. I mentioned that many superstars who seem to have ‘overnight success’ took years to develop their gifts. One of the students then surprised me when he quoted, from memory, a statement by basketballer Michael Jordan. “I’ve missed more than nine thousand shots in my career. I’ve lost almost three hundred games. Twenty-six times I’ve been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.” Our conclusion was that success is not immediate; it takes hours and hours of effort and practised. If we want to understand maths, we need to be prepared to do the revision, concentrate in class, and we need to stop telling ourselves that ‘it is not our thing’.

At MECS our understanding of success is not aligned with a worldly response. Parents, teachers and students actively work together in developing the gifts that God has given each of our students. We aim to foster a culture of effective learning where students are encouraged to be faithful followers of Christ. Our understanding of academic excellence is not about rankings or comparisons with others; instead we celebrate effort and faithfulness in learning.

In the maths lesson following my mindsets discussion with the Year 8s, one of the students who had missed the previous class, was getting frustrated with her work. She bemoaned that she couldn’t understand because she was not smart. Before I could respond, a chorus of “Fixed mindset! Fixed mindset!” echoed across the room. My budding psychologists explained to her that it wasn’t about being smart or dumb, or comparing yourselves to others, but it was about being open to learning new things even through struggle and failure.

It is one thing to encourage a growth mindset in our students. It is another thing to ensure we as parents and teachers are modeling and promoting this mindset as well. Do we praise our children for being smart, or for making an effort? How do we respond when a child asks for help with a subject we find difficult? How do our reporting systems promote growth in learning rather than judgment? How are we ensuring that we, as adults, continue to learn in our professions and other interests? You are more than welcome to join this conversation with me. Please email your thoughts and questions (or suggestions on how I can improve my writing).

Jacqui
Director of Teaching and Learning

Staff First Aid Training

For the past 4 weeks, each Wednesday evening another group of staff have been updating their First Aid level 2 skills under the expert teaching of Peter Beams (who as well as his many other skills, is a First Aid trainer!). At MECS we take the duty of care of our students seriously and we encourage our teaching and non-teaching staff to have current first aid training.

Every time your child is on an excursion or camp there will always be staff ready and trained to deal with any first aid situations that arise. Isn’t that good to know!

Melinda
First Aid Officer

Sharon & Sandra
Pete with Alison
Annual General Meeting

Last week, members of the school Association came together for our AGM. It was great to see so many familiar faces, and also welcome some new members. It was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate God’s faithfulness to our community over the last 12 months as we reflected on various aspects of the school’s operation. The 2013 Annual School Report was presented and I include below three extracts from my Principal’s Report to give you an insight into some of the highlights of 2013, and goals and challenges moving forward.

Significant Goal for 2014 - Professional learning culture amongst staff

Further to the goal mentioned above, teaching staff will continue to participate in professional learning activities, as part of a renewed focus on developing their skills in the craft of teaching. Some of these have been, and will continue to be, delivered by independent providers, but more effectively and importantly, we have begun to utilise the expertise of our own staff to teach and inspire each other.

Significant Challenge for 2014 - Introduction of Indonesian into the Primary School in 2015

We are excited about the prospect of introducing Indonesian into our Primary school in 2015. This decision comes out of the substantial work and recommendations that came from the LOTE (Language Other Than English) working group in 2013. We hope by Term 4 to appoint an Indonesian teacher to lead the implementation of this language.

Please go to our school website (Download Centre - Association downloads) if you would like to read all of the information presented in our Annual Report. More importantly, we would love to see more of you at next year’s AGM! Nicole, one of our Community Relations Officers, would love to speak to you about Association membership and the way you can partner with the school in maintaining our vision and passion for Christian education.

Highlights from 2013 - Unique learning opportunities

MECS continues to provide all its students with a vast array of unique learning opportunities. From Kindergarten to Year 12, the curriculum is designed to challenge and inspire young people of all ages to explore, understand and respond to God’s amazing creation. A highlight throughout the year for many students is the various camps they attend. Whether it is experiencing life as a student 150 years ago at Sovereign Hill, exploring the ‘nooks and crannies’ of the city of Melbourne, or the 18 day grand adventure that is the Centre Trip, these and many other off-campus experiences help students to realise that learning is not just restricted to the classroom, but happens out in the real world. Our integral approach in many areas of the curriculum assists students in understanding the rich interconnectedness of creation. We experience and respond to the world in a multi-faceted, complex way and our learning should mirror something of that reality. Our teachers work hard to develop our own distinctive approach to curriculum in order for our Christian beliefs to come through strongly in all that we do.

MS Leadership Day

A song sung in the Key of Middle School Student Leaders

Composed by Mr Jonny W
Performed by Paige, Kwame, Beth, Josh, Sarah and Cooper

There was a group (Middle School leaders)
A very leader-like leader group.
They say they wandered very far, very far,
Up a hill and road (to Mount Evelyn Charcoal Chicken)
A little shy
And keen to try,
And very wise, VERY WISE were they...

And on one day (last week Thursday),
One lucky day we met this way,
And while we talked of many things
(what we want to do this year)
Plans and dreams
This we began to see:
There is many a thing
We could do
But we made a plan (what we want to achieve this year)
Before we did return (back to MECS)
MECS Notes

Friends of MECS

Year 11 - Uneventful?

Year 11 - it seems to be for some an uneventful year leading up the last year of school. But do not fear, Year 11 brings two special things that only our year experiences. Although we may not have our own personalised Year 12 hoodies and prep buddies, study camps and Centre Trips, Warpiri or the POI (Philosophy of Ideas) subject, we still get to have some things to look forward to. This involves running the canteen and the event of the year - the Year 11 Formal.

As you may or may not be aware, the canteen in the Senior School is run by Year 11 Business Management students. The class are in charge of ordering stock, design, fixing prices for the products, accounting and selling the items themselves. This year the Café is called ‘Pulp Kitchen’. The Café is going very well, and we have just began selling hot food. We also sell things such as cold drinks, different items of confectionary, chips and homemade baked goods.

Although the Formal seems a long time away, we have already began planning and have formed a formal committee. We look forward to continuing to run Pulp Kitchen, as well as making plans for our formal.

Jordan & Ryan
Year 11 leaders

Lost Property

It’s mid term and already the Lost Property racks at school are full of lost and lonely items needing to find their owners. There is a great selection of jackets, hoodies, cardigans and trackies waiting to be found again. Please get your children to check the racks or come in yourself and see if you can find some lost treasures. All items will be kept until the end of term and then taken to the local op-shop if not claimed. Can I please remind parents to clearly label your children’s clothing (especially tops and sports gear), it makes it so much easier for us to return lost items.

Thanks for your co-operation,

Melinda
First Aid Officer & keeper of the lost property department!

Friends of MECS

Entertainment Books

Just a reminder if you are using your Entertainment Book from last year, it will expire on June 1, 2014. That’s less than two weeks away. Order your new book now, either at the main office or online at www.entertainmentbook.com.au/orderbooks/193f695.

Dollarmite Banking

Banking day is every Wednesday. There is a new competition during Term 2: simply make three or more deposits at school and you’ll be automatically entered into the competition. To find out more, visit commbank.com.au/deepseasavers.

Evelyn

Annual General Meeting

We had a fantastic turnout at our AGM last Thursday night. The meeting was held at Ranges TEC and we were treated to an amazing supper put on by their hospitality students. Director Phil gave us some insights into how Ranges is seeking to make a difference to kids who don’t thrive in a mainstream schooling environment.

The Board paid tribute to two retiring board members, Annamarie who has served on the board for six years and Ken who, apart from a short break, has been on the board for the better part of 13 years. We want to thank and acknowledge both Ken and Annamarie for their years of service and the contributions they have made. The membership affirmed the appointments of Bretlyn and Lisa to the vacant positions.

It was Sue’s last meeting as the Board Chair; she has done an incredible job leading the Board for many years. Sue will remain on the Board as a general member. New staff and parents were welcomed into membership with the traditional certificate and plant. Gerry presented the Financial report, Sue the Board report and Narelle the Principal’s report. Narelle has given more details of her report in Sketcher’s Scoop.

Thank you to all who attended.

Nicole
Community Relations Officer

Lost Property

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Thanks for your co-operation,

Melinda
First Aid Officer & keeper of the lost property department!
Prep Parent Night

The Preps had fun preparing chocolate and lemon balls, as well as their special ‘About Me’ booklet ready for their Prep and Parent Night last Wednesday. It was a special evening sharing the learning that occurred in Term 1 during our unit ‘God made all things and God made me’ before looking at this term’s unit ‘God gives us people who help us.’ We read through Psalm 8 and Psalm 139 together focusing on how precious and unique each Prep child is, as well as how great God’s love is for us. The Preps and their parents discussed some questions together and the Prep children were very excited to show their work to their Mums and Dads before they served supper to them. It was a great night and it was lovely to see so many parents there.

Rebekah
Prep Teacher

Preps and Community Local & Global

Preps have been exploring the concept of Community through our unit called ‘God gives us people who help us’.

We have looked at what families, lifestyles and homes look like in different cultures and how we are both the same and different to people locally and around the world.

The children have had a talk presented by Eva about people living in Bangkok, a talk by Gerry about the Solomon Islands, and a talk with Di about the children in the school at Gapuwiyak, an Aboriginal community in the Northern Territory, where her daughter Bek teaches.

The children were very interested to see powerpoint slide shows of each place, and to examine artefacts from each culture.

As our units seek to help children learn not only with their minds and hearts but also with a ‘hand’ response, it was lovely to be able to buy products made from people in Bangkok - providing much needed employment and income - through the Mother’s Day stall. The children were also able to meet some students in Gapuwiyak via Skype. This was a great chance for the students in East Arnhem Land to practice their English, and for our Preps to hear the answers to questions about life where they live. The children from this remote region were very curious about what our school was like outside the classroom. We hope that in the near future our Senior Primary Melt (Leadership) Team will make a slideshow and movie of our school, and the Preps will send some home made books about our school so that Gapuwiyak students can practise reading in English. The children were reminded that they could ask their parents to send children’s summer clothing that was no longer needed to the office to send up to the op shop run by some of the Gapuwiyak students we talked to. The proceeds and clothing from the shop are a huge help to their community.

These are very practical ways the children have been able to apply their learning, and be part of God’s work of providing for others in need.

On Thursday last week we celebrated having buddies who help us in our local community, in our school. The children set off on a perfect Autumn day on a scavenger hunt around the school, colouring significant parts of the school on their map. The Preps are blessed to have such responsible and caring Year 6 buddies, and it was a fun way to learn about our school and community.

Jan
Prep Coordinator / Teacher
Year 5 Goldfields Camp

At Sovereign Hill camp we had fun going bowling, going to the Sound and Light show as well as going gold panning. At camp, they had in-ground trampolines and a few goats and ducks. The food was amazing and we were so lucky to have such great cooks. This was a great camp and one of the best so far at school.

**Jasmine & Emmerson**

On our incredible camp we did many amazing things. One of our favourite things by far was the Secret Chamber gold mine tour. We especially liked our tour guide who was hilarious. This has easily been the best camp we’ve ever been on.

**Tom, Nathaniel & Nathan**

The lollies were the best we’ve ever tasted because they just melted in your mouth. The education session was really good, because some of the kids got to dress up. Gold panning was a highlight because we were so surprised at how many gold flakes we found.

**Tahlia, Jade & Skye**

At Sovereign Hill camp we enjoyed gold panning, experiencing the Secret Chamber, eating great food from our wonderful cooks, learning so much along the way as well as watching the $140,000 gold pour demonstration. Overall, this camp is easily the best school camp at MECS.

**Elijah, James & Marcos**

The greatest part of Sovereign Hill camp was easily the Sound and Light show. The best part of the show would have to be the battle scenes between the miners and the police. We also liked the lollies and the cooks did such an amazing job.

**Nick & Evan**
This semester VCE Drama students have been working together in teams to devise original ensemble performances in a non-naturalistic style. Last week these students presented their ensembles for an audience of staff, family and friends.

This year’s subject matter was Ned Kelly. The class visited the Old Melbourne Gaol and the Ned Kelly exhibition at the State Library as part of their investigation into the story of the Kelly Gang and also carried out their own research. They were encouraged to develop their own approach to the subject matter and to connect the story to modern Australia in some way. The Unit 3 performance focused on the question of whether Ned Kelly was a criminal, victim, hero or villain. One Unit 1 group presented the story of Ned Kelly using the format of various TV shows, while the other linked the story to the Schapelle Corby case.

Thanks to those who came along to support the students in their artistic endeavours and to Year 12 student Isaac (who completed VCE Drama last year) for assisting with sound and lighting.

Marlene
VCE Drama & English Teacher, MS Drama Teacher
Free Kitchen Appliances
I have an Easiyo yoghurt maker, a Lumina coffee grinder and a Breville rice cooker to give away. Please contact Amy if interested.

House for Sale
7 Longview Road, Mount Evelyn. 5 Bedrooms, 3 bathrooms. Agent, Ray White Croydon. www.realestate.com.au/property-house-vic-mount+evelyn-117025179. MECS grandparents, also in Longview Road, are hoping for good neighbours.

Destiny Rescue
There are an estimated 1.2 million children trafficked each year – That's one child every 26 seconds!

You can make a difference. Please drop by the Main Office to donate your spare change to the Destiny Rescue money tin. All donations will be used to support upcoming Rescue Movement concerts held throughout Australia.

Funds raised through these concerts will enable the Destiny Rescue team to build a rescue house in India, and will allow the team to begin rescuing & rehabilitating children who have been trafficked.

Cassie
Receptionist

Mount Evelyn Memorial Preschool Reunion
We are inviting all past and present students of our teacher Annette, who is celebrating 30 years of teaching, to come back to share in some great kindergarten memories.

Come by on Sunday 27 July from 1-4pm at the kinder. Sausage sizzle, drinks and photos. 24 Birmingham Rd, Mount Evelyn.

Japara House Classes
Japara House is running a number of classes in June including card making, home movies, Chinese cooking and creative writing. Prices and dates vary, bookings essential. Contact Japara House. For more information see japarahouse.com.au/Content/category/courses/.

Cycle A Production
Beowulf: User Friendly by Burton Bumgarner. Presented with special arrangement by Dominie Drama Pty Ltd

Beowulf-User friendly is an epic story of a group of Middle School students who are trying to pass their history subject. The only way these students can pass and get rid of the awful Mrs Gulch, is by re-telling the story of the oldest poem written in Old English - Beowulf.

Come see how this average group of Middle Schoolers take on the massive task of re-telling this ancient story filled with humour, warriors, heroes and miniature ponies.

Ticket order forms are available from the Main office. Tickets will be issued from Monday June 2. Tickets are limited, so get in fast! (Sorry for the misprint of dates in last week’s newsletter and for any inconveniences this may have caused)

When is it on?
Thursday June 19, Friday June 20 and Saturday June 21 at 7.30pm.

Family: $35 (strictly 2 adults and 2 children/concession or 1 adult 3 children/ concession, a total of 4 people on 1 family.

Adult: $15
Child/concession: $10

Notices sent home this week and on Website

- 4 Year Old Connect Morning Tea
- Year 9 Hike
- Trans Ed Week Letter
- Careers Newsletter Number 7