Experiencing Topography

Year 9 students Sophie, Sarah & Ellie hiking to experience topography during Middle School Special Week
Imagination & MECS

God can do anything, you know – far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams.” (Ephesians 3:20, The Message)

Does our school have ‘imagination’? I was talking recently to a friend who is also in education. We were talking about curriculum, timetables, programs and other things that often constrain our schools. We were lamenting the lack of imagination in many schools – the messy creativity, flexibility and open-endedness that sees innovation. It made me wonder whether MECS has ‘imagination’ – an acceptance of mistakes in order to learn, the desire to pose problems as well as solve them, the ability to visualise what may seem beyond reach, openness to what God might want to accomplish in and through our school community.

We live in an age where rationality rules; management is setting clear goals and objectives; behaviour is measured by specifying standards and performance indicators; programs are facilitated by careful planning; complex processes are broken down into discrete activities and skills. For efficiency and effectiveness, this is absolutely vital. How could a school run without them? However, poets, songwriters, artists, prophets and philosophers remind us that not everything in life can be measured or captured by reason. There must be room for imagination and mystery!

Theologian and writer, Eugene Peterson suggests that our technological and information-obsessed age has a habit of cutting imagination off at the roots. Too often it turns people into copycats and couch potatoes. Students copying slabs of information from the internet is one superficial example; a child sitting in front of mindless television is another.

Peterson suggests that we have been given a pair of mental operations – ‘explanation’ and ‘imagination’, and these are designed to work in tandem. “Explanation pins things down so that we can handle and use them – obey and teach, help and guide. Imagination opens things up so that we can grow into maturity – worship and adore, exclaim and honour, follow and trust. Explanation defines and anchors; imagination expands and lets loose. Explanation keeps our feet on the ground; imagination lifts our head into the clouds. Explanation puts us in harness; imagination catapults us into mystery. Explanation organises life into what can be used; imagination enlarges life into what can be adored.”

We need them both – explanation and imagination. However, schools often specialise in explanation and leave little room for imagination! Christian imagination often understands that God has purposes that exceed or even counter our expectations. Last year our school community rightfully celebrated and gave thanks for 40 years of God’s faithful provision for this community. In such events, I find myself admiring the vision and imagination of those who had faith in small beginnings; those who persisted in difficult times; those who thought big although the resources were few.

In our 41st year, what are we imagining for the future? Are we open to the surprises of grace, the messiness of creativity and the mystery of God who often disturbs our neat plans and ideas? Do we dare to dream and imagine new possibilities? Or are we content with what we have and who we are? We are reminded in Ephesians 3 that God can do anything. Are we open to what that might look like here at MECS? Join me in praying that we will be ready and waiting for the new thing that God might want to do in and through us in the years to come.

Narelle
MECS Principal

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Year 9 Service Elective

This term in our Year 9 Service Elective, we have been looking at ways in which people serve in their local community.

On Thursday May 22, we were privileged to have Phil from Bridge Builders, come and speak to our class.

Phil received an Order of Australia Medal earlier this year for his tireless work in the local community. Twenty years ago, he co-founded Bridge Builders - a not for profit organisation that engages with young people in the Yarra Valley area and aims to influence their lives by providing opportunities and events for young people to be involved in and to organise. He shared some exciting developments with our students: a huge multi-purpose facility built in Lilydale that will provide great opportunities for employment and businesses for our young people. It was an incredibly inspiring presentation for our students.

Sharon
MS Teacher
Reports
Teachers are working very hard at the moment preparing the written reports that parents will receive at the end of term. A huge amount of work goes into preparing reports that provide accurate and helpful comments about each child and their learning progress. We pray that teachers will be able to communicate clearly the insights that are necessary to see each child move forward in their learning. A key aspect of our partnership with parents is clear communication of learning progress, so can I commend these reports to you? When you receive them if there is anything of concern, please speak to the relevant teachers.

Independent Schools Victoria (ISV)
This week I will be attending two ISV events. One, part of a series of training events for new Principals, and the other, on increasing the professional capacity of our teaching staff. Whilst ISV represents vastly different independent schools – from the high fee paying ‘top end of town’ schools, right through to more moderate fee paying schools like MECS, they continue to be an effective and helpful organisation to all member schools. The quality of their teacher professional learning programs is excellent and they provide many services that are invaluable to the effective running of our schools. We are grateful for the positive relationship our school enjoys with ISV staff.

Enrolments at Ranges TEC
Ranges TEC are now taking enrolments for 2015. If you wish to enrol your child at Ranges TEC, please respond quickly as we would like to ensure that ‘founding school’ students get first priority. For further information go to rangestec.vic.edu.au or speak to Amelia, MECS Careers Coordinator. We would be more than happy to arrange a visit to Ranges TEC during school time if this would be helpful.

Transition Week for Year 10s
Next week our Year 10s will participate in Transition Week. This week provides an opportunity for students to focus on their vocational futures as they approach choosing their VCE subjects, and begin thinking about life beyond school. A variety of guest speakers and a visit to Box Hill TAFE and ACU are just some of the activities that make up this interesting and varied week. Thanks to Amelia, our Careers Coordinator, for organising and facilitating such a program.

Meeting our Politicians
In recent weeks, Gerry and I have had the opportunity to meet with James M, our local State member and Shadow Education Minister for Victoria, as well as Tony S, our local Federal member. In each case, we were able to raise important issues that have an impact on the effective running of our school. We welcome this opportunity to meet our local politicians and look forward to future conversations with them. As a school community, we continue to uphold them in prayer as they serve and represent the interests of their constituencies.

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The Ultimate Challenge
Our CS topic this term is ‘Food and Nutrition’. Our group (Brenton, Josh D, Josh v and Cameron) chose the challenging task of making a vegan cheesecake and a vegan hamburger that competes in taste with a non-vegan cheesecake and hamburger.

We took the whole day to prepare these meals and presented them to our teachers for the taste test. Jonny, Tim, Sue and Lance all gave us great comments so we think we did OK. The real test was when we took our vegan cheesecake to share with Bram and Ivy who happily gave us the ultimate thumbs up!

Cameron
Year 9 Student
**Free in-home testing**

Free in-home testing of your child’s estimated intelligence, memory, self-regulation and emotional and behavioural functioning is available if you are able to participate in the following research.

Research is being conducted through Monash University and the Melbourne Neuropsychiatry Centre to better understand the processes underlying self-regulation in school-aged children and any links to emotional and behavioural problems. A benefit of your child’s participation is that their estimated intelligence, memory, as well as their ability to self-regulate and their emotional and behavioural functioning will be assessed and the results will be provided to you within four weeks following testing in the form of a report. These tested areas of functioning are all important factors contributing to your child’s academic performance at school, as well as their ongoing social and emotional adjustment.

The research involves completion of three questionnaires by each participating child’s primary caregiver, which assesses their child’s temperament, ability to control their thoughts, feelings and behaviours and the presence and severity of any emotional and/or behavioural problems. Each participating child will undertake a 2 hour testing session that will assess their general verbal and visual skills, attention and memory. Testing can be arranged to suit, e.g. after school hours, on weekends or school holidays in your own home, or at one of our research centres if you prefer.

In order to participate children must meet the following criteria: 1) Be aged between 11 years 0 months and 12 years 11 months; 2) Normal, or corrected to normal, vision and hearing; 3) English as his/her first spoken language; 4) No history of a diagnosed learning disorder (e.g. Reading Disorder / Dyslexia); 5) No history of a brain injury or diagnosed psychiatric illness; 6) Not currently taking any medications that affect his/her brain function (e.g. psychiatric medications).

To register your interest or for more information please contact: Mr Jeggan Tiego, Phone: 0413 656 166. Email: jeggan.tiego@monash.edu

The research project has been approved by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Catholic Education Office, Archdiocese of Melbourne and Independent Schools of Victoria.

Flyers are available from the main office.

**Shirley**

*Education Support Coordinator - Kindergarten/Primary*

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**Interschool Cross Country**

The inter-school cross country day was poetic and amazing

Jonny and Lance travelled in separate buses and texted each other poems on the way home as a way of debriefing the magnificent day.

Here are some samples!

**Runners**

Sweaty runners pungent the air with vapours of their exertion

**Cheer Squad**

We clapped our hands
we lifted our arms
we shouted our voices numb
we ran with guts
we competed with grace
tough the weather was dull

**Mud**

Grunt and Groan
Stride and dash
through the puddles
just got splashed

**Under 15s**

The under 15 boys were good
they ran like the wind like we know they could
Jonesy grabbed gold by many a stride
Forbes in second was beaming with pride
Adam was bronze in a dazzling dash

meanwhile...

Shellhout stepped in doggy stash

Cheer Squad - Izzy, Beth G, Jacinta, Sarah, Beth C & Jenna

Daniel & Tristan

Beth, Indy Hurley, Isabelle & Emily

Emily, Kayla, Sarah, Romina, Caylen & Cailen

Jenna, Savannah & Beth

Last week in Cycle A Special Week, we had a full week of production rehearsals and back stage preparation, all in the lead up for our three big performances in week eight. This term’s Special Week has come and gone way too fast! I’ve enjoyed last week’s mixed up schedule - I found it was exciting to do many different things each day. For example on Monday I was in the theatrette most of the day rehearsing my lines, finding different ways to change it up, make my words and actions sound more convincing in my characters role. But the next day I was down in the classrooms, helping one of the teachers with some of the backstage efforts. Overall Cycle A Special Week was great!

_Astrid_

Hey my name is Tameika. I’m part of the dancing part of the Cycle A production. Last week in Special Week we had a lot to do. It was challenging to have production all week with the same people, but at the end it’s all going to be worth it and we will pull together and have a great production. I enjoyed working as a team with everyone and dancing was a great experience. Special week has stretched everyone and I truly believe that last week’s intensive practice time has brought everyone into their own roles and characters. Overall Cycle A Special Week was a blast, thanks to the teachers.

_Tameika_
Middle School Special Week
Cycle B

A few of my favourite things
(to the tune of a few of my favourite things)

Video cameras, scripts and storyboards galore
Learning how to edit, and oh so much more
Creative ending with fake blood to-boot
This is what you’ll find at a Cycle B shoot

Girls in white dresses with blue satin sashes
Boys in their waistcoats for 1900s fashions
Filming an ending to a picnic on the rocks
Why? Oh why? Did they take off their socks?

Special Week is now over
And I’m feeling sad
So I simply remember the films that were made
And then I don’t feel so bad!

Karissa
Cycle B Teacher
Last week all the Year 9 students did a range of different activities. We did some gardening, cooking and nutritional studies. We have also been studying topographic maps and climates.

Lance hosted a gardening activity to design and create our own mini vegetable patches. It was incredible to see how all the vegetable patches turned out; they look awesome! My group planted radishes, lettuce, broccoli, snow peas and an assortment of herbs. We learnt that each garden needs a focal point, for ours we made a chair like structure for the snow peas to grow up on and a path leading to it.

My village group made focaccias and dips to eat. We made capsicum, beetroot, hummus and tzatziki dips. Tim has been teaching Year 9 how to prepare and cook food during this term. He facilitates a community lunch every second week for Year 9s. Last week we had homemade baked potatoes with herb butter and caramelized mushrooms.

We explored the world of commercially packaged foods. McDonalds have recently broadcasted their ‘ask anything’ advertisement and we were asked what our opinions were, if it was a good or poor strategy they have come up with. We went to their website and had a look at several questions people have asked. There were mixed opinions about the health and nutritional values that McDonalds say they have, for example: “100% Australian beef”, and “pig fat in the soft serves”. We think you should have your own opinion about the myths of McDonalds so we urge you to check it out for yourself.

We have been involved in many seminars about the key features relating to food. Sue held a seminar about topography. We learnt that topography is the shape of an area of land, not just mountains but valleys and plains as well. We also studied the topographic structure of our hike the following day. We all knew the hike we were going to embark on the next day was going to be very challenging, long uphill distances with rocky terrain.

We started the hike in Montrose and slowly worked our way up to Kalorama.

We did this activity to experience topography and land types first hand. The hike was difficult and exhausting but incredibly rewarding once we came to the look out over the Yarra Ranges.

Special week was unbelievably satisfying, worthwhile and fun!

Paige & Sienna
Year 9 Students
Rental home wanted!
MECS/MERC/Oasis family requires a large family home, 5-6 bedrooms, from August. If you can help please contact Lee.

For Sale
7 fin ‘Heller’ column heater $35
6 fin ‘Heller’ column heater $30
Phone Tim & Elissa. Can be brought to MECS.

Free
Upright, white, 600mm ‘Chef’ electric oven. 4 working hotplates on top. (Needs new oven element, approximate cost would be $80.)
TV 68cm ‘Konka’ with remote.
Phone Tim & Elissa. Can be brought to MECS.

Calendar
2014 Term 2 Week 6: 2 June - 8 June
Thur 5 June
VCE Music Recital SS Theatrette 7pm
Fri 6 June
SS VCE Units 1 & 3 End

2014 Term 2 Week 7: 9 June - 15 June
Mon 9 June
Queen’s Birthday Public Holiday - School closed
Tues 10 June
SS VCE Unit 4 Begins
Tues 10 - Fri 13 June
Year 11 Exams
Year 10 Trans Ed Week (Wed until 11am only)
Wed 11 June
Montrose Fire Truck visit with Preps
VCE GAT Exam
Instrumental Recital 7pm (Surnames A-D)
Fri 13 June
BBQ Lunch for Year 10 Students
New Parent Dinner

2014 Term 2 Week 8: 16 June - 22 June
Mon 16 June
SS VCE Unit 2 Begins
Wed 18 June
Prep Mount Evelyn Shop Excursion
JP Connect Morning Tea 9am Staffroom
Thur 19 - Sat 21 June
Cycle A Production - Beowulf: User Friendly

2014 Term 2 Week 9: 23 June - 29 June
Thur 26 June
Reports issued
Fri 27 June
End of Term 2

2014 Term 2 Holidays: 28 June - 20 July
Sat 28 June
School Holidays Begin
Mon 14 - Fri 18 July
Year 10 Work Experience Week 1
Year 11 Work Experience
Mon 14 - Wed 16 July
VCE Prac Exams
Thur 17 - Fri 18 July
Year 12 Intensives

2014 Term 3 Week 1: 21 July - 27 July
Mon 21 July
Term 3 Begins
Welcome back Morning Tea 9am Staffroom

MECS COMMUNITY NOTICES
MECS does not endorse the products or services of any private advertiser. No responsibility is accepted by Mount Evelyn Christian School for the accuracy of information contained in advertisements or claims made by them.

Notices sent home this week and on Website

• Year 10 Excursion to AIA
• Kinder Connections June Newsletter