Celebrating Indigenous Culture

Melody doing Fish Painting during the JP Indigenous Incursion
Rich Literacy in the Primary School

According to the ‘Dictionary.com’ app on my phone, ‘rich’ means various things, including the obvious ‘great material wealth’ but also, ‘made of or containing valuable materials’ and ‘magnificent and sumptuous’, ‘abundant and productive’ and ‘containing a large amount of choice ingredients’.

It is more these later definitions of ‘rich’ that we refer to when we aim at MECS Primary to provide a rich literacy program for our students.

How do we provide for our students a program full of choice ingredients, that is sumptuous (awesome word!) and abundant and productive?

As with all of his creation, God calls us to ‘discover’ literacy in all its fullness; to explore it and to use it. We naturally encounter and use literacy in almost every moment of our lives – we want our students to be purposeful and explicit in gaining a deeper understanding of what literacy is and how they use it.

So, what is ‘Rich Literacy’? We, as teachers, want to make sure our program is indeed ‘rich’ and that we are achieving what we set out to. It’s a work in progress and, in order to tackle it, we are asking ourselves some questions:

What are all the elements of Literacy? Writing text, reading text, verbal and non verbal communication, visual texts such as illustrations, movies, youtube clips, diagrams and charts, genres of text and more. Are we exposing our students to a wide variety of literacy?

How can we ‘immerse’ our students in rich literacy? What examples of great literacy are we surrounding our students with? Are we giving great examples – giving them inspiration and models to follow?

How can they tell the good stuff from the bad? How do we teach students to evaluate and to be critical – analysing why, or why not, this would be ‘good’ literature, seeing the world views and thoughts forming the literacy?

How do we bring our students into just the right depth? How do we teach our students to go further than just dipping their toe in – gently pushing them deeper in their skill development and understanding of what literacy is and how to create it well? What are the best assessments to use? Does our program allow for each child to work at their optimum level?

How do we show our students Literacy as a whole entity? How can we help them see, and understand, the interrelatedness of literacy – that reading and writing are the same thing from different ends, that talking and writing, and words and pictures all connect together in our attempts to communicate? Are we showing the relationship between spelling and word history and vocabulary? Is our program too segmented and broken up into isolated skills and components?

How do we provide for our students a literacy program full of choice ingredients, that is sumptuous (awesome word!) and abundant and productive?

How can we help our students learn to negotiate and effectively employ all these elements? What strategies, rules, patterns, skills and insight can we guide them in?

How do we celebrate the complexities of the English language rather than being frightened of them? Are there things that we can teach that help it make more sense?

How can we immerse ourselves into rich literacy? Are we learning more ourselves about literacy as teachers and pushing ourselves to be immersed and experience literacy in new ways? Are we finding excellent resources to enrich our program?

How do we create a program that celebrates the gift of Literacy? Are we ‘playing’ with literacy – having fun and being adventurous, working together, enjoying literacy, revelling in the diversity and beauty of this area of our life?

What about the students who aren’t ‘into Literacy’, or who don’t seem to connect with it? Are we accepting that; or are we instead finding ways that are meaningful for them, that work for them? Is our program diverse and broad? Are we using different teaching and learning methods? Do we limit literacy and the way we present it?

And now, some questions for you as parents:

What does this have to do with you? What are your responsibilities in developing rich literacy for your child? Are you exposing yourself to rich literacy? Do you talk about it? Are you celebrating literacy in your family? This is a vital part of our curriculum – God has designed us as beings able to, and needing to, communicate. He calls us to do this with passion and vigour and joy. He calls us to do this well and to do this faithfully, immersing ourselves in the richness of the literacy he has blessed us with. Let the adventure continue....

Melissa
Assistant Primary Coordinator & Senior Primary Coordinator

How are we showing our students the power of Literacy? Are they learning about literacy’s power to convince? To create? To comfort, to connect, to destroy, to reflect? To bless, to persecute, to humour, to bring truth, to present lies, to unite, to divide? Are we encouraging our students to see their opportunity for using the power of literacy?

Year 12 Mentor Supper

On Thursday 14 May, the Year 12s met with their mentors in the theatrette to hear from two past Year 12 students, Laura and John. The night was really influential and encouraging as the speakers told us about their own experiences in Year 12 and their methods of getting through the year positively. We were given tips on how to study well, given a brief insight into how University will be so different from high school and told to really make the most of the rest of this year while we can. On the whole it was definitely a worthwhile night and we were all able to take something away from it, whether that be extra study tips, or encouragement that no matter what score we get at the end of the year, that won’t define us. As Laura quoted from Einstein, “Everybody’s a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it’s stupid.” I think I speak on behalf of the whole year level when I say that we are all so thankful to Laura and John for finding the time to speak to us and also to the teachers for being so supporting and encouraging towards all of us throughout the year.

Alyssa
Year 12 Student
Fun Times with the Preps

Last week I had a lovely opportunity to hang out with the Preps. I was invited to their classrooms to talk about my role in the school. They are thinking about all the different sorts of people that help them; I am pleased that I am counted in that number! They asked all sorts of questions about the school, what I do, my office, my favourite football team and so on. Next week they are looking forward to the visit of the local Fire Truck. This is always exciting and another great day to look forward to. Priceless moments in the life of a school!

Reports

Teachers are working hard at the moment preparing the written reports that parents will receive at the end of this term. A huge amount of work goes into preparing reports that provide accurate and helpful comments about each child and their learning progress. A key aspect of our partnership with parents is clear communication of learning progress so I commend these reports to you.

Planning and Enrolments for 2016

Would you believe we have already started planning for next year? It’s always a bit of a jigsaw puzzle as we manage a complicated range of pieces! Staff are presently being surveyed about their intentions and interests for next year, so likewise, if you have any changes on the horizon let us know as soon as possible. In particular, if you are considering Ranges TEC as the next step in the educational pathway of your child, you might like to attend their Open Day next Saturday 30 May. The Ranges TEC staff will be there to answer all your questions and take you on a tour of the facilities. This is an exciting opportunity for a number of our Year 9 and 10 students.

Heading off to Canberra

On Thursday of this week I head off to Canberra for six days to participate in some training for Principals, attend the Christian Education National (CEN) AGM, the Australian Association of Christian Schools (AACS) AGM and then the Policy Forum, which is a conference for all Christian schools across the country with a policy and political advocacy focus. I then return on Tuesday night to attend the Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) AGM. Phew! What’s the importance of attending all these events? It’s good to be part of various networks and organisations that support and advocate the role of Christian schools in Australia and the choice of parents to choose the type of school and education that best suits them. We are grateful for the positive relationship our school enjoys with these bodies and invite you to uphold them in prayer as they seek to serve independent schools, and more specifically, Christian schools across Victoria and Australia.

FOCUS On... Primary Music

‘Music is God’s gift to man, the only art of Heaven given to earth, the only art of earth we take to Heaven’. Walter Savage Landor

Music is a universal language that all life entities appreciate. It can develop into a deep expression toward God and a vessel to hear from God or be used to give back and connect with him in worship. We believe a comprehensive music program in a Christian school is imperative.

While children come into the world ready to decode sounds and words, music education helps enhance those natural abilities. A music-rich experience for children of singing, listening and moving brings a significant benefit to children as they progress into more formal learning.

For children ages two to nine – music benefits language development. The ‘Do-Re-Mi’s can help children excel in ways beyond the basic ABCs. Making music involves more than the voice or fingers playing an instrument; a child learning about music has to tap into multiple skill sets, often simultaneously.

Music learning supports all learning. This is why our MECS Primary Music program is:

• Engaging – using our senses – hearing, touching, co-ordination, emotion and cognitive processing.
• Fun – enjoyment in creating and experiencing music together.
• Interactive – goals are more than just the music, they bring the body of Christ together with all it’s differences and skill levels in harmony and rhythm (involving listening, patience, contribution, imagination, turn-taking, courage and satisfaction)
• Inclusive – music unifies and focuses us together toward God and encourages us to have a go with confidence and without fear of failure or a sense of being measured.
• Appreciative of faith-centered music.

For a short and very interesting article by Anita Collins on how playing an instrument benefits your brain, please go to: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R0JKCYZ8hng&feature=youtu.be

Carolyn & Helen
Primary Music Teachers
**MS Art**

**Year 8 Story poles**

The Year 8 Students created story poles in art that are visual descriptions of the following questions: What was God’s intention for His creation? What went wrong? How is mankind redeeming creation? The story poles will be ‘planted’ in the MECS Gardens when complete.

**Friends of MECS**

**“Did you know...”**

MECS has 3 facebook pages, one for the Kindergarten, one for past students and a general one. We use the pages for regular updates and reminders and last week we put up a few camp updates. If you ‘like’ our pages you can receive these updates.

_Nicolette_  
**Community Relations Officer**

**Like us on facebook!**

Mount Evelyn Christian School - MECS  
MECS - Kindergarten  
MECS - Past Students

**Entertainment Book**

The Entertainment Books are now available. There is a sample book in the main office for you to look through. Some of the things you could save money on include:

- Woolworths Wish Cards – save 5% on your groceries/petrol all year
- Big W gift cards – save instore 5% all year
- Reading Cinema tickets – $11 all year
- Dinner vouchers for many local and not so local restaurants
- Coffee vouchers and much more.

You can either purchase a book or a digital membership which you can have on your phone everywhere you go.

To order please fill in the flyer (available in the office) or go online to: www.entbook.com.au/193f695.

**Drama Ensemble**

**Drama Ensemble ‘Leaving & Arriving’**

Leaving one’s homeland to start a new life in a foreign country is a common story in Australia and the subject of this year’s VCE Drama ensemble performances. Students have been working on creating original drama work on the theme of leaving and arriving for over three months, beginning with researching true stories, and are almost ready to bring these to the stage!

However, this year we are doing things a little differently. To meet VCAA requirements regarding small class sizes, we are joining with Yarra Hills Secondary College for the presentation and assessment of the ensembles. This will be a great opportunity for our students to share their work with an audience outside of the MECS community and to also see what other Drama students are up to.

So, if you are coming along, please take note of the different venue:

VCE Drama Ensembles, **Wednesday 27 May, 7pm**, Yarra Hills Secondary College, Mooroolbark Campus, Performing Arts Centre.

_Marlene_  
**SS Drama Teacher**

**MP Science Incursion**

This week the Middle Primaries were able to be a part of a Weather Science Incursion.

There were so many amazing experiments used to demonstrate how weather works. Some highlights were learning that slow moving air gets sucked in by fast moving air demonstrated by using a leaf blower and toilet paper! It was also amazing to see the power of air when it was used to completely crush a coke can after it was heated and then quickly cooled. Learning about extreme weather like tornadoes was also very interesting and it was good to gain an understanding of how to stay safe in an electrical storm!

_Justine_  
**Middle Primary Teacher**

**MS Art**
When to Visit First Aid

With the advent of the cold weather, the number of students visiting First Aid seems to have jumped to record levels - we had one day with 40 students last week! As much as Heidi and I love to see and care for the children, there are many visitors to First Aid who really don’t need to be there. This is a good time to ask you to talk to your children about what constitutes a good reason to go to First Aid and what doesn’t. The teachers often remind the ‘frequent visitors’, but some reinforcing from home is essential. This will help us to keep First Aid available for those who really need it. Here are a few good reasons and not so good reasons to come to First Aid.

Good Reasons to Visit First Aid
• I have hit my head hard and have a lump/headache/feel dizzy
• I have something in my eye
• I got stung by a bee/wasp/ant at school
• I have growing pains
• I have just remembered I have a sore leg (and the bell has just rung or I have Maths test next period!)
• I just broke up with my boyfriend!
• My fingernail is broken
• I have a mozzie bite that is itchy
• Mum told me to see you because she didn’t want to take me to the doctor
• No one could look after me at home so I came to school sick
• I love band-aids and I need one for my microscopic sore/cut/bump
• I am so cold/hot and First Aid is so nice and warm/cool
• I am hiding from my friends or other kids
• I want to be your helper/rearrange your cupboards/play with the stethoscope/write on your whiteboard
• I have a maths test, science lesson, sport etc next which I am trying to avoid, so I thought I’d come to First Aid and pretend I was sick
• I was just walking past and decided to come in for a chat
• I heard you kept cough lollies/jelly beans in First Aid and I wanted one!

I hope you all get the picture! We love seeing and treating your children and enjoy a chat when we are not busy, but we really need to give priority to those children who genuinely need First Aid. If we have to spend our time on non-first aid issues then those really in need will miss out, or worse yet, when a child in the habit of coming unnecessarily to First Aid really needs help they may not be believed. Please chat with your children about this at home (especially if you know your child is a regular visitor).

And a reminder for parents: it’s tough when your child is sick and there isn’t an easy solution to care for them, but sending them to school when they are sick or injured is not a good option. Your child’s ability to learn is diminished, we don’t have the resources to care for them, they may deteriorate and their illness could spread. Remember too, that we provide first aid, not nursing and we are certainly not a medical clinic. We do our best to care for your children but there are significant limits to what we can and should do. Thank you for taking your partnership in this seriously.

Thanks so much.

Melinda
First Aid Officer

Schooling for a trade future

Full time education
Year 10
unique program for hands on learners
Year 11 & 12
Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning
Including Certificate II programs:
• Building & Construction
• Electrotechnology
• Engineering
• Furniture Making
• Horticulture
• Hospitality

Open Campus
Sat 30th May, 2015
1—4pm

AGM
Thursday 28 May
7.00pm - Coffee & Supper
7.30pm - Meeting Start

All Welcome

Melinda
First Aid Officer
JP & MP Indigenous Incursion

Junior Primary Indigenous Incursion

On Monday 18 May, Junior Primary students were privileged to have Shawn from Indigicate come and share Aboriginal stories, music and culture. The students loved hearing the story of ‘How the kookaburras started to laugh.’ They were absolutely enthralled as Shawn played the Yitiki (didgeridoo) and made various animal noises. Shawn also taught the students about the importance of respecting elders in Aboriginal culture and how they can show respect in the way they watch and listen.

Student comments

I liked the story of the goanna and the snake.

Mikayla

I learnt how to make a Yitiki and I liked when he made animal noises with the Yitiki.

Charlotte

I learnt how kangaroos got their name.

Ambrie

I really liked the story of when the two nephews face planted in the mud.

Sam

Junior Primary students also had a very exciting and creative afternoon exploring a range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts, crafts and activities. Students used dot painting and cross hatching to decorate boomerangs and fish. They painted and coloured a range of sea creatures from the Torres Strait and created beautiful frangipani flowers. Students also worked cooperatively to collage 3 amazing Australian, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags.

Kaye

JP Teacher & Cluster Leader

Middle Primary Indigenous Incursion

Shawn also came to visit the Middle Primaries on Monday. Years 5 and 6 met him at Camp Jungai and thought it would be great for the rest of us to get a chance to meet him and learn from him. The Middle Primaries were treated to some ‘didgeridoo’ played on a traditional Yitiki. We learnt (teachers included) that the indigenous word for music is didgeridoo and what we all thought was a didgeridoo is actually called a Yitiki! Shawn told us that this was because of misunderstandings between languages when Australia was first being colonised. He was a fantastic story teller and had each one of us wanting to hear more.

Derek

Middle Primary Class teacher
Year 11 Physics Excursion

On Friday 15 May, the Year 11 Physics students went to Scienceworks.

We first looked at some of the displays in the general viewing area, helping us with our understanding of forces, energy, sound, light and technology in building and technological developments in medicine.

The students observed how even the sound from a whisper can be focussed and transmitted more than 10 metres using a parabolic reflecting surface.

We then increased the energy level as we visited the Lightning Room, where we looked at charge, electricity, how to avoid dangerous current transmission through our body and how some safety devices work.

This was a great opportunity for students to consolidate some of their understanding so far and to look ahead to upcoming studies in electromagnetism and electric power.

We ended the day with a journey in the Planetarium, from Earth way out through our planets, the Asteroid Belt, the Kuiper Belt and through the Oort cloud where we were able to learn more about some of the amazing stars, star forming regions and galaxies, binary stars and red giants and planetary nebula, before returning to the safety of our little blue dot of Earth.

Paul
SS Physics Teacher

Year 8 Man Camp

On Tuesday 12 May, 26 brave Year 8 boys left MECS with the aspiration to return as men. For the next three days the boys had to endure tent-flooding rain, gale force winds, hail and a swarm of angry wasps as they pushed themselves to their limit. The regime of activities included building shelters with their bare hands, innovative ways to soft boil an egg with no cooking utensils as well as a high ropes course and teamwork challenges. Little did the boys know that the path towards manhood was more often a journey inwards rather than forwards. Over the course of the week, as the boys trained their physical exterior, they also tempered their spiritual interior. Invaluable time around the campfire, eating marshmallows and making damper gave space for them to address the thematic question of ‘What is a man?’; exploring their own identity and responsibility as future men. The boys were given the opportunity to spend a day with their fathers or another significant man in their lives which was a beautiful experience of bonding and learning, that became the highlight for many. On Friday, 26 men returned to MECS, having grown in stature and maturity, one step closer to their dads.

Callum, Riley & Asher

Year 8 boys went off on a trip to Gillwell Park in Gembrook to become men. Some of the highlights on this camp were hanging out with our dads, doing the initiate course and also the flying fox and high ropes course. One of the interesting things that happened on this camp was when we were all walking past a wasps nest and then someone knocked a log and it fell and split the nest open and we were attacked and most of us got stings. Another incident was everyone’s tents getting flooded. Overall I learnt that teamwork can earn you a $20 movie voucher.

Aiden
### Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fri 22 May</td>
<td>Secondary Tribal Cross Country</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 25 - Fri 29 May</td>
<td>Year 9 Special Week</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 25 May</td>
<td>JP CERES Excursion</td>
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<td>Tues 26 May</td>
<td>Year 10 interschool Soccer Worowa Reconciliation Carnival excursion for Year 9 &amp; 10 girls</td>
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<td>Wed 27 May</td>
<td>Fire Truck visit for Preps</td>
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<td>Thur 28 May</td>
<td>Association AGM 7pm Supper, 7.30pm Start, Main Staffroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 29 May</td>
<td>Year 7-10 interschool Cross Country</td>
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<td>Sat 30 May</td>
<td>Ranges TEC Open Campus 1-4pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 8 June</td>
<td>Queen's Birthday Public Holiday</td>
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<td>Tues 9 - Fri 12 June</td>
<td>Year 10 Trans Ed Week</td>
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<td>Tues 9 June</td>
<td>3 yo Kinder Wegs Wildlife Mini Beast Incursion</td>
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<td>Wed 10 June</td>
<td>GAT Exam</td>
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<td>Thur 11 June</td>
<td>MS Connect Morning Tea 9am Staffroom</td>
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<td>Thur 11 - Fri 12 June</td>
<td>Year 11 Exams</td>
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<td>Fri 12 June</td>
<td>Year 12 PE Excursion to RMIT</td>
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<td>Wed 17 June</td>
<td>Year 10 PE Excursion</td>
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<td>Preps Mount Evelyn Vet Incursion</td>
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**2015 Term 2 Week 6:** 18 May - 24 May

**2015 Term 2 Week 7:** 25 May - 31 May

**2015 Term 2 Week 8:** 1 June - 7 June

**2015 Term 2 Week 9:** 8 June - 14 June

**2015 Term 2 Week 10:** 15 June - 21 June

### 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.**

#### Need a Painter?
Indoor/Outdoor. Large or small jobs. Callum Farman (dad of Hamish in Prep) qualified painter/decorator. SMS 0430 147 074 to arrange for a quote.

#### Pasture Hay for Sale
Weed free pasture hay, this season. Small square bales. $8/bale. Phone Tim on 0490 464 852.

#### Cross Country Day
Yarra Ranges Athletics Cross Country Open Day will be held on Saturday May 23, at Wandin Park, 305 Victoria Rd Gruyere (10 mins from Mount Evelyn). First event 10am. Medals will be awarded to the first three placegetters in each age group and gender from under 6 to under 15, as well as the male and female open 3000m and 5000m events.

Registration is available online or on the day. More information and online entry at www.yarrarangesathletics.org.au. Juniors $8 ($10 on race day), Seniors $12 ($15 on race day). BBQ canteen with EFTPOS available.

#### National Walk Safely to School Day
Friday 22 May
Families, parents and carers can get involved on the day by simply walking to school from home with their children, or walking with them to the school bus. If parents or carers have to drive, park the car a short distance away from school and walk the rest of the way, but please remember, until they are 10, children must always hold the hand of an adult when they cross the road - any road!

Visit walk.com.au to find out more.

### Apples & Pears Tomorrow
Next delivery is tomorrow, Friday May 22. Varieties available include Fuji, Granny Smith, Pink Ladies, Golden Delicious and Green Pears. Bags are 5-6kg and the cost is $10 for apples and $8 for pears. Please submit your order to the main office by 10.30am on the day of delivery and ensure you have your name and order written on the front of the envelope, with the correct money enclosed.

**Cassie Nation**

**Receptionist**

### Vaccination Survey
Have your say about childhood vaccinations!
The University of Queensland is looking for parents of children aged 5 years and under to complete an anonymous online survey about vaccinating their child which will take about 15-20mins. This is a valuable opportunity to have your say about vaccines, and to help the field learn more about parental attitudes and beliefs towards childhood immunisations. We are interested in finding out:
- What concerns do you have about vaccinations?
- What are your beliefs and attitudes about vaccinations?
- How did you decide whether or not to vaccinate your child?
- What information sources did you use and find trustworthy?

For further information and to complete the survey: https://exp.psy.uq.edu.au/vax/

### MECS Matters Notices

**Notices sent home this week and on Website**

- Music Recital Notice (last week)
- Request for Parents re Year 12 Exams July
- Year 9 & 10 Performing Arts Parent Letter
- Prep C Reports Notice (last week)
- Kinder Connections No 4, May 2015
- Tertiary Open Days for Years 10-12

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**Newsletter deadline is 11am Tuesday on published week.**

Email articles (images attached as jpg) to the Newsletter Office.