



Postgate School

"Ma te mahi ngatahi, ka tu pakari te matauranga" "Together, We Learn and Achieve"

Kia ora koutou,

Welcome to the first edition of Postgate School Literacy Newsletter, brought to you by the Postgate School Literacy Curriculum Team. The aim of this newsletter is for each syndicate to share with you what they have been targeting to support our tamariki's development in Literacy, and provide you with ideas for how you can help at home to support your child during Term 4.

Exploration:

In Exploration, we are currently focusing on developing independent writing skills. The students have worked very hard on their sound and word knowledge, and are now applying these skills to write stories. We are supporting students to do this by demonstrating how we use our sounding out skills to write unknown words. This is supported by the use of a sound and word card, which shows students how to write known high frequency words and unknown sounds. Students also collaborate with their teacher to write sentences and stories. This helps to build their confidence by allowing them to use their skills and ideas whilst being supported by the teacher. Students are learning to reread their writing to themselves and others, which helps them to maintain meaning and fix errors.

At home, it would be fantastic if you could continue to build your child's confidence and excitement about writing. Work together to sound out words and see if they can practise writing them. You might like to get your child to help you write the shopping list, start a diary or create a story for you. Support your child as needed, but continue to encourage them to use the skills they have to write independently.

Endeavour:

This last term in Endeavour students continued to develop their skills in non-fiction writing. Our particular focus has been explanation writing. This is where students were learning to explain how or why something happens. Sentence structure was identified as an area of need early in the term. Teachers targeted this daily through small group teaching. These small group lessons involved talking tins, oral language games, buddy writing, shared writing and sentence building resources. Shared writing has proven to be very beneficial in improving sentence structure and vocabulary. Shared writing is where students work with the teacher and others to construct a text. The students talk and share ideas, while the teacher records, prompts and questions. This provides an effective model for students and develops their ideas into a structured piece of writing. We have seen the positive impact of this approach in students' independent writing across the syndicate.

Phonics continues to be a vital part of our writing instruction. This term we consolidated our knowledge of vowel patterns and began learning spelling rules. These spelling rules related mostly to plurals, tenses, and when to use a particular long vowel pattern when sounding out new words.

At home, find authentic purposes for writing like making cards for people, shopping lists and gear lists. Help them to sound out unknown words and encourage them to proofread their writing to check meaning.

Voyager:

In Room 6 and 7 we are working on sentence structure and punctuation. We have been thinking about what each sentence must have, where a capital letter and a full stop goes and how we can use question marks and exclamation marks. We have learnt to use conjunctions such as 'and', 'but' and 'because' to extend sentences and add detail into our writing.

Parents can help at home by continuing to read a variety of texts with children. When visiting the library, issue nonfiction texts as well as fiction texts. Sit with your child and talk about the language used, noting the different punctuation and in what ways the author has added extra detail for the reader.

In Room 5 and 4, we have been working on editing skills. We are learning to proofread our writing and identify any missing punctuation, capital letters, misspelt or missing words. We have also been learning how to correctly use more complex punctuation, like speech marks, commas, semicolons and apostrophes to improve the quality and readability of our writing. It is important that we are able to identify when we have made a mistake, or when a sentence is not easy to read, and correct it.

Parents and Caregivers can help at home by asking their child to read their writing aloud and discuss any moments where the child hesitates, or corrects their work as they read. They can also continue to read a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts with their children. Discuss the punctuation in the text and identify how it helps you read easier by knowing when to pause, stop or identify which character is speaking.

Crows Nest:

Crows Nest will begin the term focusing on Persuasive writing which will link into formal speeches. We will be looking at structure (including the focus on strong main idea sentences), emotive language, the use of rhetorical questions to add emphasis, “cause and effect” text connectives (such as “consequently”, “accordingly”, “as a result”, & “because of this”).

Parents can help support their child by listening to them practice their speeches at home. Encouraging your child to speak confidently in front of an audience, focusing on voice projection, intonation, clarity, body language and gestures.