Hello everyone,

NAPLAN, the standardised national test for year 3, 5, 7 & 9 students has nearly been knocked over for another year. Students now only have the Maths and a few catch up tests left to go tomorrow. The children have coped well. Many myths surround NAPLAN but there is one universal truth: that there is an important correlation between report card information and NAPLAN data. This means, while NAPLAN provides useful data for individuals as well as the system as a whole, it is the concentration on teaching the curriculum, using effective assessment and moderation processes, and focusing on the progress of every student in every classroom that really makes the day to day difference. That’s why Swayneville State School is all about teaching and learning.

Thankyou to the Cauchi, McFadzen, and (Eli) Hauwert families for the donation of eggs for the cooked breakfast. The year 3 and 5 students enjoy a bacon and egg burger (prepared by staff) each morning of the test.

I hope all the mothers enjoy their Mother’s Day gifts. While not a fundraiser that raises huge amounts, the Mother’s Day stall is certainly appreciated by families in the school, with near 100% student participation. I cannot accurately describe the looks of concentration and then pride when the children selected their gift for Mum. It means so much to the children. Thankyou organisers!

The Mother’s Day Morning Tea was also a success, with many positive comments being expressed. While the P&C have not yet finalised the amount – that will happen at tonight’s meeting – I do know that the room was full, and that the event drew people from beyond the Swayneville Community. Again, thankyou and well done!

-- Roslyn Waldron (Principal)

Wild About The Weather

The past few weeks have flown by! The students are having a great time learning all about the different weather cycles and what causes some of the rare and interesting patterns that occur – not just here in Queensland, but all around the world. We made a cyclone in a bottle this week, and there were many excited conversations about how objects move in very strong winds, and to see this in the bottle was thrilling.

We have also started our Monet Masterpiece unit in Art and the students are excited about looking into the life and times of Monet. We are also going to be analysing and reproducing some of the artists’ paintings using different materials.

Important Dates:
10 – 12 May: NAPLAN (Year 3, 5)
11 May – P&C meeting @ 5:00pm in the library
24 May – Under 8’s Day
23 – 27 May – Book fair
31 May – Student Council’s Biggest Morning Tea
2-3 June – Principal conference

Our Learning Objectives: 1. Reading and writing must make sense! 2. Student know what they know, and know what they need to know next!

Swayneville Swag
This year’s theme is - Early Learning, Everyone Benefits; Queensland Celebrating 60 years of Under Eights week. There are so many new and exciting things to do this year at Under 8’s Day. We have a very long list of activities that will be set up and ready for the kids to play with.

As with past years, we rely on parents to help us with some of the making of items that are needed for the morning. We are looking for parents who are willing to make the play dough. It can come in at any time as it is easy to store.

For a textual experience, we are having a JELLY tub. Not in a bath tub! Nothing that extreme, but it should be awesome fun. As many hands make light work, closer to Under 8’s day we will send home (year P – 2 students only) a packet of jelly crystals and a few things to put into the jelly. We request that each household make up a packet and bring it in on the morning.

Thank you for the help!

We are looking forward to seeing you at Under 8’s Day, as parents are needed to take their child from activity to activity. Bring a friend -- any child from birth – Year 2 is welcome, as it is a community event.

Currently in the Year 5/6 Class… an investigation is underway to use comprehension strategies to analyse information, integrating and linking ideas from a variety of print and digital sources. The “Riddle of the Black Panther” is just one of our challenging investigations tasks, our mission? “Track down a black panther reported to be prowling around a town. Interview witnesses and gather information from sources such as a website, advertisement and newspaper article. Notice that some of the statements may be wrong and the opinions may be biased. Choose the evidence most likely to be accurate. Rate reliability by using the SAFE test (Source, Attitude, Facts and Emotions). Identify when, where and how to find the panther.”

Stay tuned for the next update!

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Recapping … Homework can get to be a real bore if it’s the same thing day in day out. Form my personal experience, I have found that making up some simple activities to create a fun homework time that holds my child’s attention. All he wanted to do after a day of school is run around and play. So I made some of the homework part of the play time. These ideas have helped my child through their homework tasks over the years, so I wanted to share them with other families who are finding homework a challenging time.

- How many spelling words and sight words can your child spot in their favourite book, comic book or magazine?
- Make a spelling collage out of letters cut out from old magazines or junk mail.
- Using a highlighter to mark out spelling words and sight words in old newspapers or magazines.
- Have your child write out the shopping list for the trip to the shops.
- Read the overhead signs leading into each aisle in the supermarket.
- Play hangman with a magnetic white board on the fridge, or on a sheet of paper while making dinner.
- Play board games together where you need to create words eg. Scrabble, Boggle.
- Writing out the spelling word on a Mega Sketch board.
- Using magnetic letters on the fridge to practice spelling words.
- Tossing small bean bags onto spelling words written out on the floor, closing their eyes and spelling them.
- Hop Scotch drawn with the chalk on the veranda with sight words inside the squares. It also could be drawn up on the beach in the wet sand.
- Write the sight words out twice, and cut out into cards to play snap sight words.
- Sitting on a fit ball while doing homework can be helpful.
- Tie a Pilate’s band around the front legs of the chair so they can stretch out the bands with their legs as they work at the table.

For interest sake, when the brain receives an abundant supply of fresh oxygen either through movement or with a correct sitting posture, this stimulates receptors and helps to cement the learnt activity in the memory.

So why don’t you have a go at making some small changes even once a week and see if this improves the motivation, mood and memory around doing homework with your child?

by Tania Vonhoff
(The above resulted from a parent/teacher conversation.)