



KIS News



Our IB PYP Journey by Ms. K. Jones

It hardly seems possible that it's been four years since KIS began this journey to IB authorization. It is not unusual for a journey like this to take time - there's much to do and learn along the way, requiring the time and energy necessary to accomplish the goals set out along the way.

On March 4th and 5th, we moved a little farther along in the journey as we hosted another IB visit. The IB Visitor, Mr. Darren Arbour (the Deputy Regional Manager of IB AEM - Africa, Europe, and Middle East) gave positive feedback after spending time meeting with our parents, faculty, and students. The growth and learning curve of all our faculty and staff greatly impressed him, as

did our commitment to getting the PYP in classrooms absolutely right. He commended KIS on how thoroughly we responded to each of the 11 "Matters to Be Addressed" laid out in the pre-authorization visit from last year.

Serving as our IB consultant and "destination guide" these seven months, Dr. Clarence Coombs has helped us achieve new heights this school year and he will always remain in our hearts and minds. His informative and inspiring workshops and advice has inspired all of us to become better and better at what we do. We will all miss Clarence so much.



takers and learn a new methodology. Our students who are the single most important factor in all of this are the ones who will truly benefit from all the hard work done at KIS on this journey. As we prepare our children to face a sometimes difficult world, I am confident the PYP experience will serve them well in the years to come.

As we continue travelling down this road together, KIS is committed to being the best IB PYP school we can be. Here's to the journey of life-long learning!



Our parents and faculty have learned so much about PYP over the years and I am so grateful to all of you for your patience and willingness to be risk-



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Special Points of Interest:

- © PYP Coffee Mornings for Parents
- © Highlights from the KIS International Night at KIMEP
- © Reflective students at KIS & how parents can be involved
- © Find out more about the upcoming KIS Fundraiser

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PYP Coffee Morning for Parents *from the PYP Coordinator*

On Monday, March 14th, after the Share Time Assembly, we hosted our third PYP coffee morning. The parent turn-out and participation at these meetings has been impressive.



Thirteen parents, representing grades Pre-K through Grade 4, attended the last meeting. Our theme was Language Acquisition, looking into various beliefs and misconceptions. We shared our own experiences and discussed our personal impressions. Thank you to those who have come to our PYP meetings.

The goal of these meetings is to give parents an opportunity to learn more about PYP (Primary Years Programme) and have an open forum where they can ask questions.

Our next PYP coffee morning will be April 15th and will be about our

school's Programme of Inquiry (POI). Please mark this date on your calendar and join us!

Here's an introduction to our next PYP Coffee Morning:

The PYP focuses on the total growth of the child, touching hearts as well as minds and encompassing social, physical, emotional and cultural needs in addition to academic welfare. The philosophy of the PYP, as it directly affects the child, is expressed in a series of desired attributes and traits that characterize students with an international perspective. Taken together, they create the learner profile, with these attributes: inquirers, thinkers, communicators, risk-takers, knowledgeable, princi-

pled, caring, open-minded, balanced and reflective.

At KIS we aim to enable students to become life-long learners and to equip them with academic and life skills to take them into the rapidly changing global world as responsible citizens.

The most important premise of the PYP is that children learn through their own curiosity - and that it is the school's responsibility to encourage them to be curious, to ask questions and to explore ways of finding the answers to their questions. This is called Inquiry Based Learning, and it shapes our entire program.

"Why isn't every KIS parent at this meeting?" - asked by a KIS parent who attended the last PYP Coffee Morning.

Looking forward to seeing you on April 15th!

Reception Students Discover How to Be Safe

What is the best way to get Reception students to inquire about safety? How about using the philosophy of reverse psychology? We took the opposite of what is safe to create an interest for learning how to be safe.



Hibbah and Nitzan scratching the skin off the potato

To introduce the unit and get the students thinking about what is safe or not, we intentionally created an unsafe (but not dangerous) classroom in the morning. We turned the chairs

upside down, put matches on the desk, spilled water on the floor, put a banana peel on the floor, stacked baskets with toys one on top of another, put sharp pencils out, etc.

The students were split into three teams and had to make a list of all the things in the classroom that are not safe, explain why they are not safe, and how we make the classroom safe again.

How many times do the children fall and scratch their skin? We heard lots of stories of when and why that happened. To experiment and learn what

to do with scratched skin, we found eager volunteers - potatoes.

Children also learned what to do if their clothes catch on fire—we used our bodies to pop balloons on the floor to demonstrate: "Stop, Drop, and Roll."

Naomi learning to "Stop, Drop, and Roll" if your clothes catch fire



KIS International Night at KIMEP



The explosion of colors, sounds, and smells clearly marked another annual KIS International Night at KIMEP this past February 26, 2011. We all enjoyed the rich celebration of nations, languages, cultures, and traditions as we tasted the many foods, listened to the variety of music, and watched the dances and presentations.

This is KIS at its best - International Night! We are proud to be a part of a school that reflects an international community coming from over 25 different countries and nationalities.

Thank you to our PTA and all the families who put together such beautiful displays of culture and tradition—from right here in Kazakhstan to Vietnam and Malaysia and Korea to Bangladesh, Turkey and India to Germany, England, Canada, and America

Thank you to our KIS father, Adam Torry, for being our MC for the evening and helping to coordinate and host the program we all enjoyed. The evening wrapped up with teachers, children, and parents dancing to some favorite tunes.

As an IB Candidate school who is striving to reflect and be a model of international-mindedness, our International Night is the most natural example of what this looks like—all of us coming together and sharing our different cultures and traditions and blending together, reflecting how we value diversity. This is just one example of international-mindedness at KIS.



Each Learner Has His Own Pace *by Dr. Clarence Coombs*

My educational background and 12 years as a PYP Coordinator in a variety of schools, working at all levels of the implementation process for an internationally recognized PYP (primary years program), provided me this opportunity to be a part of Kazakhstan International School this year. I came to KIS as a mentor for Ms. Elena, the newly appointed PYP Coordinator. Another major task this past year included helping KIS address the 11 "Matters to Be Addressed"—given by the IB organization, advising KIS how to best implement PYP for authorization.

IB PYP authorization provides KIS with a benchmark against which we can measure ourselves according to international standards and gives our international parents an opportunity to continue with their child's education in a like environment when they move. Currently, there are 764 PYP schools in 92 countries and growing rapidly. After the authorization visit on March 4 and 5, 2011, we hope that our efforts prove fruitful and we will join this elite group.

It has been an enjoyable process for me, though I am not sure it was equally so for the open-minded, knowledgeable and dedicated teachers at KIS. They have endured at least two-hours of planning a week, as well as two hours after school every Wednesday. In addition, they have given up three Saturdays for workshops on a variety of topics. We have completed many major tasks, from revising report cards, revising various policies, and developing clear standards and benchmarks.



Our teachers, like most parents, want to know what is expected at each grade level as well, hence the standards and benchmarks. However, as educators we also realize that language acquisition cannot be guided by grade levels, but rather by a learning process - a continuum.

How do you feel about the following statement? "There is no such thing as a Grade 2 reading level or a Grade 4 reading level." This is what the people who make the money and sell the textbooks tell us and we buy it.

However, we all know - though may not want to admit - that all children learn to read at their own pace, in their way, and with their own style of learning. Thus, the learning process does not relate to the grade level, but rather the developmental level of each individual child. Comparing your child to another child or to the class is probably the biggest disservice you can do for your child. Your child will learn to read when he/she is ready for the next level of concepts. It is the teacher's job and the parent's job to support that learning process.

Thank you to the parents who attended the four PYP Coffee Mornings and the monthly Share Assemblies. Please remember - these share times are for classes to share what they are study-

ing to help inspire and promote discussion amongst students. It is not a presentation where teachers have rehearsed and rehearsed. The point is to share and learn from the learning process.

Thank you, parents, for your understanding and patience as KIS goes through this very vital process. As you know, there will always be some bumps in the road when going through changes, which temporarily slow the process, allowing us to proceed with more awareness.

Thank you, PTA, for your positive and consistent feedback and insights. If you have issues and concerns, please make them constructive and join the PTA - after all, parents are a vital part of the school community.

Thank you as well, Administration, for your willingness to change, organize, and otherwise support the learning process for our teachers.

I wish KIS, the teachers, and especially the children all the best as they work through the IB PYP learning process. I have seen much progress over the past seven months and I know it will continue.

Our road toward international mindedness is best exemplified at International Night—one of my favourite experiences since I have been here. This type of inspiration and the commitment by the teachers have made it a guarantee that KIS will become a member of the IBO World Schools in the near future.

Become Reflective

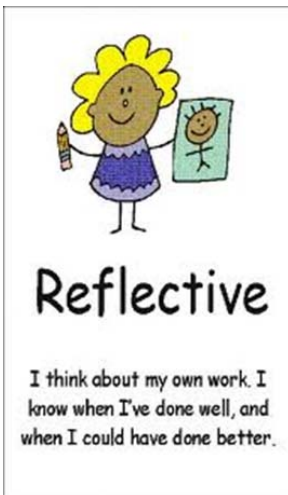
Faced with a growing number of choices in our technologically fast-paced world, thinking things through and making good decisions is something we want our children to know how to do.

According to the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IB-PYP), people who are THINKERS exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to make sound decisions and to solve complex problems (IBO, 2000).

THINKING SKILLS

The search for understanding is central to the Primary Years Program, but this emphasis on the development of concepts does not change the fact that the development of skills is important. Students need to develop a whole range of skills beyond those normally referred to as basic, including skills, which transcend the individual subjects.

Here is a break-down of the IB-PYP THINKING SKILLS, from simple to complex:



Knowledge: Gaining and remembering specific facts, ideas and vocabulary.

Comprehension: Grasping and communicating meaning from material learned.

Application: Using previously acquired knowledge in practical new ways.

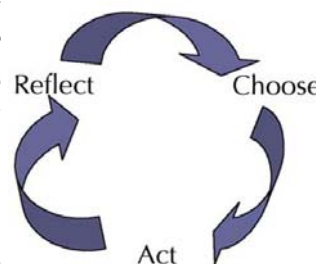
Analysis: Taking knowledge or ideas apart; seeing relationships; finding unique characteristics.

Synthesis: Combining parts to create wholes; creating, designing, developing, and innovating.

Evaluation: Making judgments or decisions based on criteria, standards, and conditions.

Dialectical Thought: Thinking about two or more different points of view; being able to construct an argument for either point of view based on knowledge; realizing that others can also take one's own point of view.

Meta-cognition: Ana-



lyzing one's own and others' thought processes; thinking about thinking; thinking about how one thinks and learns.

These are important skills our students need to succeed as they face an ever-changing and challenging world.

How does the Learner's Profile connect to the IB-PYP Attitudes?

The IB-PYP Attitudes help us to develop positive attitudes towards people, the environment, and learning. Here are some of the attitude connected with THINKER from the Learner Profile:

1. INDEPENDENCE: THINKERS are independent—they think and act independently, making their own judgments based on reasoned principles. THINKERS defend their judgments.

2. CREATIVITY: THINKERS are creative and imaginative in their thinking and in their approach to problems and dilemmas.

"The unexamined life is not worth living," Socrates

How Can Parents Help Develop Reflective Children?

Encourage your child to try to think of multiple solutions to problems independently.

- Catch your child being a thinker. Make sure your child knows he/she has done something good. Expressing your approval is a powerful way to reinforce the profiles.
- Help your child to become a better thinker by allowing them to

solve problems and make decisions on their own.

- Talk with your child about current events from multiple points of view.
- In mathematics curriculum, students are often asked to explain their thinking. As your child completes homework, ask him/her to orally rehearse their thinking—it

will



make it easier to write it down.

**Based on information from IB-PYP Profile Newsletter, Alpine Elementary May, 2007*

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More than Academics



We nurture each child without prejudice. Education—the axis for balance, for now and the future.

Every individual matters.

Each one challenged.

Everyone successful.

At Kazakhstan International School, we expect nothing less than the best from each individual—from students to parents to faculty and staff—each person developing his/her innate potential to achieve more than academics. With unlimited possibilities, our students are supported by a multicultural community of lifelong learners who will guide them in their quest to answer who am I and what will I become.

KIS Annual Fundraiser—Friday, April 22, 2011 at the RIXOS

We are planning our second annual fundraiser for Friday, April 22, 2011 at the RIXOS. This promises to be a fun evening of light-hearted entertainment with groovy prizes to give away from Holiday Inn, Royal Tulip, Procter & Gamble, and Turkish Airlines, just to name a few.

This is a great opportunity for KIS to show off our school for the greater Almaty business community and raise some money toward our library project—expanding and updating our library resources. A portion of the money raised will go toward purchasing resources needed for the orphanage where our grade 5 is doing their community service project.

Whether you support KIS by attending this event or help in some other way, we appreciate your support!

**KIS INVITES YOU TO
ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK
AND DANCE TO THE 60'S AND 70'S!**

**SIT BACK AND ENJOY NEW FRENCH CUISINE
AND TAKE HOME SOME GROOVY PRIZES**

DRESS CODE: BLACK TIE

APRIL 22, 2011 19:00

18 000 KZT

RIXOS BALLROOM

BROUGHT TO YOU BY KAZAKHSTAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

**FOR TICKETS, CONTACT MADINA KENESBAYEVA AT +7 (727) 225-0030 OR 701-123-2217,
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