

Learning at JIS – from Cath Wan, Deputy Principal/ PYP Coordinator

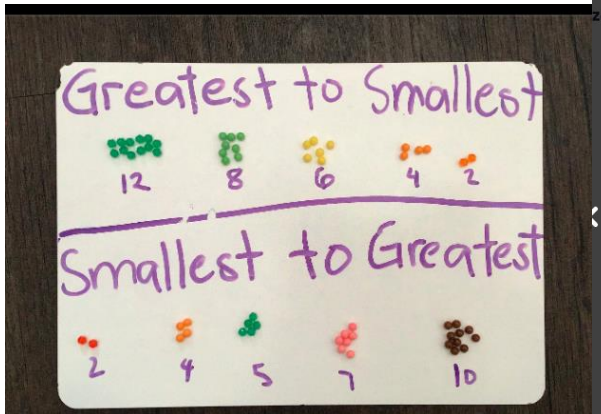
Learning, Growing and Staying Connected

Wow - what a term it has been! Online, half in school, all in school, back online again, new timetables, perspex, sanitisation - the list goes on. But it is good to pause for a moment and celebrate what has NOT changed: the children are still learning, they are still growing and although it is not as 'real' as we would like, we have still stayed connected as a community.

This term, Reception, was the first set of 3 and 4 year olds I have ever seen to learn to use technology so quickly and effectively to connect with their new classmates. Upon their return to school, we didn't experience any tears - students transferred their online connections to physical connections with the ease and resilience of which I have never seen before. They have developed their maths skills by going on number and shape hunts around their homes; making their own 'ten frames' and developing their number sense. They have started to develop strong foundations for reading and writing; their verbal communication has developed during online and real-time opportunities to listen to and share their ideas. Reception students have developed relationships, responsibility and independence through play and in their current unit have developed awareness of their own and other's feelings - essential in developing intra and interpersonal relationships.



Primary 1 students have been just as busy. They have completed a phonological awareness programme which gives a solid foundation for reading skills and have developed their language and mathematical literacy skills through a wealth of activities, many of which were linked to their units of inquiry. P1 students have been particularly creative with using objects around their home to help develop their number sense. They also became our 'plant experts', learning about life - cycles and how to care for plants.



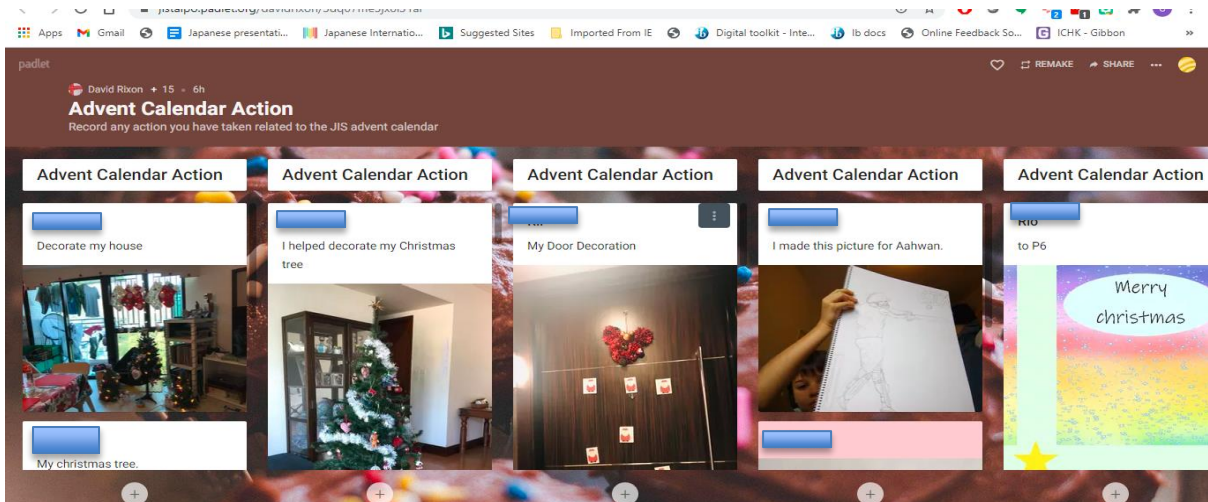
P2 has been an action packed class all term. Their first unit of inquiry this year, was very relevant as they investigated how to take care of themselves -both physically and mentally, More recently, P2s have learned all about the global goals , making connections to caring for our environment.

P3's were our space-explorers at the start of the year, not only researching about our solar system, but also adding their imagination to create stories based on planets that are able to sustain life. In their unit Sharing the Planet, P3 students proved themselves capable of linking their research to practical action that we can take to protect our environment; it was great that we managed our Tai Po Kau trip before school closure!



P4's have been true scientists this term. Their investigations into the human body, as well as developing their scientific understanding, gave them opportunities to take action and make wise choices in caring for their own health. In their How the World Works unit, students managed to carry out scientific experiments into materials and matter at school, as well as refine their research skills to become experts on the production and use of their chosen materials.

P5's have had a true variety of inquiries this term -starting off with investigating art through different contexts, including mathematics; continuing to develop their understanding of the scientific principles of energy and applying their understanding to real world applications. They are presently working with P6s developing their scientific skills; learning how to create deep scientific questions which can be investigated with fair tests.



Before joining the P5s with their scientific inquiry, P6's were incredibly busy developing their leadership skills when investigating how organisations function and way back in August, they made great progress with their research skills, particularly in their selection of sources, in the civilisation projects.



In addition to academic learning, our students' social skills have still grown. Online, they have learned how to communicate effectively with each other through class discussions, use of video and written communication. They have practiced gratitude, kindness and mindfulness - skills that they can use throughout life to build resilience and empower their own emotional well-being. When we did come back to school, everyone's enthusiasm at being able to reconnect was a delight to be part of. Older children and younger children played together on our new 'loose parts' equipment and there was one memorable morning when the P6', taking action from their unit, took the initiative to create and lead a playground game involving students from across the school!



The above, is just a tiny snapshot of the learning and growing that has taken place this term - when I reflected on the students' work this week, I could have written a book about it. Times may be challenging, but our students are living proof - our JIS community is still learning, still growing and still staying connected!