



Principal's Corner

Dear Theodorians
Children need to learn philosophy!



I am revisiting the theme of children learning philosophy. This concept was prompted by reading the Washington Post online and I came across an article that resonated with me, Theodor Herzl School and South Africa at large.

The author of the article, Steve Neumann, acknowledges that the very idea of children learning philosophy will be scoffed at by school boards, teachers, parents and philosophers alike. The latter will question whether children can even do philosophy, while the former may only have a passing familiarity with it.

However, Neumann contends that children should not be taught philosophy, as reflected by university readings of Plato theory, but rather that children should learn to become citizens by turning the classroom into what the philosopher, John Dewey, called the “embryonic society”.

So why is it vital that children at school learn to be citizens? The school value this year is ‘compassion’. The very nature of compassion implies being aware of others and being a sound citizen.

I am sure that you, like me, have been bombarded by the negative media covering inter alia, the unrest across our world, crime statistics and financial woes of the country, and instances of prejudice in a country that once prided itself as being the “rainbow nation”.

Am I being naïve? Why can people not just respect each other, engage in healthy discourse and frankly, sort out their differences? Show compassion for each other.

A healthy society is one that involves compromise. To achieve compromise, children need to learn critical thinking, effective communication and compassion for their fellow man. As Frederick Douglass once said, “It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.”

At Theodor Herzl, we pride ourselves on encouraging our students to challenge, to offer and defend a point of view;

to show compassion, even if you do not, in principle, condone the situation.

Dialogue is essential, as it allows students and teachers the opportunity to air assumptions, conclusions and differences. In doing so, students learn the art of sound reasoning and exercise sound judgment. This allows them to become better empathetic citizens, leading to an enhanced compassionate civil society.

You may ask, how can Theodor Herzl make a difference to civil society in South Africa? We are a small school, and compared to the wider South African society, we are the proverbial “drop in the ocean”.

Are our children compassionate philosophers? Perhaps they are not students of Socrates, but they are sound principled and empathetic citizens, who have outstanding social skills to navigate the complex world. Hopefully, in their small but significant way, they will lead by example, to make society stand up, notice and emulate the conduct of our wonderful students.

Kind regards
John Alexander
Executive Principal

Grade 7 News

The Grade 7 pupils organized a Fun Day at school for all the Primary School children as a Fundraiser. We appreciate their efforts, as the day was a huge success and all who participated had FUN!



Xhosa Assembly

Pride is the word we will use to describe how we felt in Monday morning's Primary School assembly when our Xhosa pupils had the opportunity to show us what they have been learning in their Xhosa lessons this term.



Drama

The High School Drama production Great! "ISM" it? is underway. With only two shows left, we encourage you to buy your tickets now! Contact Mrs Angela Kennedy on 041 5814244.



Interhouse Gala

We had OODLES of FUN at the Foundation Phase Gala! Well Done to Weizmann who was victorious on the day. Follow us on Facebook for the results of our Senior Primary and High School Galas.



Dear Theodorians, Parents & Friends of Theodor,

The Pre-Primary School has been very busy with a new recycling project:



In order to coincide with our theme of "Compassion" this year, the Pre-Primary have decided to show compassion towards the environment and to those less fortunate by collecting bread tags and bottle tops for the Sweethearts Foundation's Tops and Tags initiative. The Sweethearts Foundation recycle the bread tags and bottle tops in order to provide those less fortunate with wheelchairs. Depending on the recycling company, the foundation is provided with either a standard size adult wheelchair or funds to use towards purchasing a wheelchair. In addition to recycling the plastic bottle tops and bread tags, they are reducing their carbon footprint on the environment and preventing plastic from landing up in a landfill site, all while simultaneously giving the gift of mobility to those who need it most.



The Interact Pet Competition is in full swing and competition is hotting up! We have entries of cats, dogs, bunnies, reptiles, a horse and even a marine shrimp called "Bubba"!

Entries are R10 per photograph and you may enter as many times as you would like to. Entries close on Wednesday the 11th of March and winners will be announced in the following week. All donations of pet food are welcomed and monies raised through the competition will be given to our local Animal Welfare Organization.

Hop along



Spiky Star



Mutt



Bob Lees



Barbie



