



news

news from the trunk

Thursday, March 1, 2018



Khartoum American School Musical Performance of

Clowns

By

Craig Cassil



Featuring Elementary Students

This Evening | Quad Area | 6:00pm

Produced by: *Khartoum American School*

Directed by: *Mrs. Lirimar Ianario*



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Superintendent's Message

More New Staff Coming to KAS Next Year

I am pleased to let the KAS community meet new staff who will join our school next year. We have been able to attract some experienced quality educators to work with us. I will be letting you know about them during the next month by printing short biographies in E News.

High School Math – Quazanne van der Bijl

Quazanne van der Bijl is currently teaching middle school and high school Math at the American International School in Niamey, Niger. Quazanne previously has taught Math and Science in Khartoum at the Nile Valley School and at the Khartoum Community International School. She also worked for a short time at KAS. She has taught Math at schools in Abu Dhabi and Hong Kong. Quazanne has a Bachelor's degree and a PGCE from the University of South Africa. Quazanne is single and a citizen of South Africa.

Elementary Physical Education – ASAP Coordinator – Jeremy Albright

Jeremy Albright will be our Elementary PE teacher and ASAP Coordinator next year. Jeremy is currently teaching PE at the Hodgin Elementary School in Albuquerque, New Mexico in the U.S. Jeremy has a Bachelor's degree in Education from Columbia College in Columbia, Missouri. Jeremy has also taught early childhood grades in the Dominican Republic and Kindergarten in Vietnam. Jeremy is coming with his wife Janet who will be our first grade teacher next year. They are both American citizens.

Grade 1 – Janet Albright

Janet Albright is currently teaching Pre-School at Hodgin Elementary School in Albuquerque, New Mexico in the U.S. and previously taught Grade 2 at the same school. Janet has a Bachelor's degree from Columbia College in Columbia, Missouri. Janet has also taught elementary classes in the Dominican Republic and at the Singapore International School in Vietnam. Janet will be coming to KAS with her husband Jeremy who will teach Elementary PE here next year. They are both U.S. citizens.

Steve Alexander
KAS Superintendent

MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL KNOWLEDGE BOWL



Letter from the Middle and High School Principal

The habits your child is developing in school will prepare him or her for future challenges and responsibilities. One of the most important habits that we would like to help your child with is punctuality. We would like to see your child arrive to school on time everyday.

Students who continually arrive late to school miss important announcements and part of the academics of their class. These students also require special attention and take time that could be used otherwise. Students' tardiness also disrupts the learning of other students in their classes and can also negatively affect the overall classroom environment.

Research also indicates that:

- Tardiness problems correlate directly to achievement problems.
- Arriving late to school can also mean that students miss out on activities designed to build connections with their peers, potentially impacting their social interactions.
- Tardiness problems are associated with lack of preparation for higher-grade levels, college and entering the work force.

At Khartoum American School we take tardiness very seriously. Our student's record shows no distinction between arriving one minute late, fifteen, or one hour. If your child arrives late for school and misses a morning class, he/she will be marked absent for that class. Arriving late is very disruptive to your child as well as to others.

Parents, The school administration, teachers and your child's classmates appreciate, your efforts to help your child get to school on time. Thank you for giving them a great opportunity for success by ensuring that they come to school and are in the classroom on time.

Have a great weekend!

Susan Boutros
Middle & High School Principal



ANNOUNCEMENT

KAS POOL

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**THE KAS POOL
WILL BE CLOSED
THIS THURSDAY
EVENING, MARCH
1, 2018**

Saying of the Week



The **Rule Of Thumb** is a rough estimate based on experience rather than formal calculation. The Romans used the tip of the thumb (from the knuckle upward) as a unit of measurement, as any thumb would fit roughly 12 times into the next unit of measurement, a foot. The French word for inches is 'pouces' which translates to 'thumb' and that remained a standard unit of measurement until metrification. The Roman bricklayers used their thumbs to estimate measurements and the phrase has been in standard use ever since.

Minette van der Bijl
High School English Department

Reasons to Read

Nowadays, a number of middle school and high school students wriggle, squirm and roll their eyes when you ask them to read a book. Even reading two or three chapters from a text-book can be like asking them to climb the North Face of the Eiger in Switzerland. They try to evade reading at all costs. Technology adds to and exacerbates the problem.

Recently, I've had quite a few students openly profess a dislike for reading. Parents frequently ask how they can get their children to read. With the proliferation of technology over the last few years both parents and educators feel they are fighting a losing battle. As teachers we all know that reading is important for a multitude of reasons such as: to gain knowledge, for building and developing vocabulary, as well as enhancing writing skills. Reading also activates the imagination and can reduce stress. There are still many people, myself included, who read for pleasure. Getting this message across to students is a challenge!

Not discounting their importance, but leaving aside the aforementioned reasons, I would like to draw attention to two other reasons for reading. We live in an age in which we find ourselves subsumed in technology. Our busy lives are technology dominated, which pulls us every which way: checking emails, connecting through a myriad of social media applications, and chatting to colleagues and friends on Facebook. This high intensity cyberspace multitasking can leave a person stressed and at times unable to focus. By its design online information compels us to flit from one site to another at great speed and thus develop a butterfly syndrome, which greatly reduces our concentration. Its instant gratification is rather addictive making us crave more and more sites, resulting in little or no knowledge retention and even less productivity. On the other hand, reading a book forces the individual to focus solely on what he or she is reading. By immersing oneself into the plot and characters of a story, concentration and focus is enhanced. Setting aside 30 minutes, three or four times a week, as reading time, could work wonders for concentration, focus and the retention of information. Critical thinking skills now form the corpus of every bona fide curriculum and the ability to think critically is high on the list of employers' hiring criteria. These skills are also useful when it comes down to making life decisions and choices. Our day-to-day decision-making, however great or small, is incumbent upon finding solutions to the vicissitudes that life throws before us. Undoubtedly, the more we read the more we think and process. The more we think and process the deeper our understanding becomes regarding what we read and process. This understanding is important in the development of life-skills and goes towards acquiring wisdom, which is underrated in some societies, but highly valued in others. In addition, recent research has found that people who read literature in the shape of novels are much more empathetic than those who don't. In the post-modern world, driven by jobs in the media, public services, and the hospitality industry, empathy and emotional intelligence are starting to play a key role. Reading literature allows us to enter into the lives of the characters in stories and feel their joy, happiness, love, frustrations and anger. Understanding the human condition is very desirable people-to-people

skill.

A recent paper by Elizabeth A. Daniell for the Yale Initiative to strengthen teaching in public schools, suggests that applications such as Twitter, Facebook, and SnapChat might be destroying our students' ability to read and comprehend lengthy text. She goes on to say that reading 140 characters on a smartphone doesn't have the same stamina and intellectualism as reading Shakespeare's Richard III. Incidentally, the opening soliloquy, "Now is the winter of our discontent made glorious summer by this sun of York," contains 1689 characters, more than ten times longer than the average tweet. Daniell goes further to say that our classroom assignments focus mainly on the short story and poem instead of a long play or novel. This does not challenge their stamina or intellectualism in the way a full novel would. In short, she suggests that neglecting this skill leaves students inadequately prepared and ill-equipped for college level academics and the challenges of working world.

With regard to reading longer texts and complex works penned by authors in the vein of William Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, William Wordsworth, and T.S. Eliot, to name but a few. Researchers including psychologists, academics, and scientists from the University of Liverpool monitored brain activity while volunteers read the classics. They observed and recorded data, as these volunteers read from long, difficult and archaic texts. They then compared brain activity to a group of volunteers who read the same texts translated into modern day English. The results were quite revealing and confirm that it is essential to read longer more complicated pieces of original literature. Reading the original texts set off far more electrical activity in the reader's brain than the translated text. The researchers found that reading and interpreting the difficult texts caused both hemispheres of the brain to light up. Philip Davies, Professor Emeritus of Biblical Studies at the University of Sheffield, stated at the North of England Education Conference in January 2013, "Serious literature acts like a rocket booster to the brain." In a nutshell, grappling with complicated syntax in Dickens' stories, exploring the imagery in Wordsworth's poems or trying to unlock Shakespeare's figurative language challenges the student to work harder when processing and comprehending the material. Putting intellectual demands on the reader that modern day English doesn't.

Therefore, time spent on what some people may regard as bygone, old-fashioned language could make us smarter. An academic investment so to speak and a way in which we can also become refocused and improve our concentration. However, convincing our students is another matter and not within the scope of this paper to address, but will be dealt with in another essay.

Sources:

www.readingrockets.org/article/when-kids-hate-read-teachers.yale.edu/curriculum/viewerinitiative_13.03.11

Jananne Healey
Grade 5 Teacher